Developing Markets

This article provides a critical, state-of-the-art review of the literature on development and markets. By questioning current understandings of development and examining the role of markets in promoting or hampering human development and well-being, we develop a framework that brings together and builds upon key insights from macromarketing and Transformative Consumer Research or TCR.

Development has been a central topic of macromarketing research. Researchers have discussed development in many ways including top-down approaches (Inglebeek 2014), bottom-up approaches (Viswanathan and Sridharan 2009), rural (Dapice and Xuan 2012) and urban contexts (Papadopoulos and Malhotra 2007), and in relation to globalization (Kilbourne 2004; Shultz, Rahtz, and Speece 2004). Approaches to "developing" markets, however, have been largely dominated by economists and financial analysts. Yet, there is a growing awareness about the issues of human development beyond economic and financial measures, especially with the recent series of global crises. Given the history of discourses on development (Escobar 1995), and the failure of many developmental programs, there is a need to interrogate what "developing markets" are and the role of markets in development. In addition, macromarketing needs more approaches that highlight sociocultural and situational contexts and "unveil hidden or little known social problems that can improve well-being by revealing these problems, seeking their deeper understanding, and attracting public attention and resources" (Mick et al. 2012, p. 15).

At the same time, marketing and consumer research scholars are increasingly becoming interested in producing and transmitting knowledge to help populations that are encountering social problems or are disproportionately disadvantaged. The more recent TCR movement has been pivotal in advancing a platform seeking to "encourage, support, and publicize research that

benefits quality of life for all beings engaged in or affected by consumption trends and practices across the world" (Mick et al. 2012, p. 6). TCR conferences[1] differ from others in that they are purposefully organized to foster group discussion rather than presentations of individual work. Groups of scholars take part in divergent tracks to explore and discuss ways to produce insights for advancing research that can be transformative for consumers' lives. However, the focus of TCR on consumers' well-being limits a full understanding of the circumstances causing social problems, inequalities and poor quality of life, because most of consumers' problems originate in the structures and contingencies of markets. In addition, in many contexts, especially those associated with emerging and pre-capitalist markets, the role of the consumer is hardly dissociable from other roles in the market. Therefore, we argue that TCR can benefit from a macromarketing perspective on development, and that a macromarketing approach to development can benefit from sociocultural and situational approaches of TCR.

The first section provides an overview of the different streams of literature on development. This examination of conceptual issues demonstrates that development is far from being a neutral, harmless enterprise. We show that notions of development are closely related to specific views and theories in which discourses of development are articulated. Understanding the view that informs specific goals regarding the development of markets is a first step to move both the TCR and macromarketing transformative agendas forward.

Next, we argue that scholars at the TCR/macromarketing intersection can benefit from focusing on markets as the central organizing principle to understand human development (Peñaloza and Venkatesh 2006). Through contingent and contextualized investigations of market systems, researchers can gain further insights into key issues related to inequalities in the market (and consequently the well-being of consumers), such as the conflation of

consumer/producer roles, market and consumer agency, market hierarchies and power dynamics, and market ethics and responsibilities. We enhance our argument by examining how these issues emerge in specific markets for OTOP in Thailand and mobile telephony in Africa.

We conclude the article by emphasizing the symbiotic relationship between researchers in the TCR and macromarketing traditions. We argue for further cross-fertilization, highlighting that a macromarketing perspective can provide TCR research with a more systemic view of the role of consumers in market systems and a TCR perspective can help ground macromarketing research.

What is development? What are markets?

Pieterse (2010, p. 3) defines development as "the organized intervention in collective affairs according to a standard of improvement," adding that the term "development" tends to act as shorthand for the western development model. This definition implies two broad sets of actors: those responsible for the "organized intervention" (comprised of a wide array of actors and institutions, including marketers) and those whose "collective affairs" are targeted. Development rests on the idea that certain actors and institutions can and should intervene, organize, and shape the economies and societies of a target (poor) population, with the ostensible aim of improving a particular aspect of economic and social life of the target group.

In mainstream discourses the term "development" generally has a positive meaning, implying progress for the better. Yet there is considerable debate on how to define and measure progress, and whether or not it is a desirable thing to pursue. The current prevalent mode of economic growth benefits certain sectors of the population across the globe, at the cost of increasing the relative (and in many cases absolute) deprivation of others, as evident in the growing disparities along not just economic but also socio-cultural, political, psychological, and

ecological dimensions (Frank 1969; Illich 1974). Some scholars observe that the emphasis on economic growth tends to neglect transformations along these hugely important dimensions of human experience (e.g. Ger 1997). Like many concepts, our understanding of development has been biased in favor of wealth generation over social provision, cultural preservation, and justice to the non-human world. However, certain practices call for rethinking what it might mean to be "developing." Consider the coffee producers in Uganda, for instance, who refrain from trying to maximize their profits – as neoliberalism would demand – in preference for community building projects that cement social relations (Auerbach 2012).

Development discourses and projects have had and continue to have profound effects on the social world. Social movements and social justice activists have posed theoretical and empirical criticisms to development projects (Bohm and Brei 2008). They challenge development efforts to meet the needs of the whole population, not just a limited subset of affluent consumers (Varman 2008). Development has also been critiqued for its failures (e.g. Escobar 1995; Sachs 1992) and even for being a part of the "Western hegemony bent on denying or destroying popular practices and knowledge" (Olivier de Sardan 2005, p. 5). Yet development programs may also fail due to the complexity of the social processes and the mechanisms at work in the implementation of such programs. On-the-ground fieldwork reveals that development is far from operating as a single, monolithic system, and even a single policy implementation can be considered simultaneously as a success and failure, depending on the criteria and perspective with which one evaluates it (Crewe and Axelby 2012). In order to untangle the complex phenomenon of development and better understand what is at stake, we briefly sketch the different perspectives that have emerged since the mid-twentieth century. While the predominant focus in this work is US-based models of development, we acknowledge

alternatively modern traditions in other nations where governments historically (Kravets and Sandikçi 2013) and marketers at present (Denegri-Knott, Witkowski, and Pipoli 2013) orient market development efforts for collective advancement.

From Modernization to Human Development

Development is an inherently managerialist discipline that involves "telling other people what to do—in the name of modernization, nation building, progress, mobilization, sustainable development, human rights, poverty alleviation, and even empowerment and participation (participatory management)" (Pieterse 2000, p. 182). In the initial version of development that emerged in the wake of the Second World War, the state plays a large role in brokering/fostering economic growth. In 1949, Truman added an American leadership dimension to the practices of development by explicitly setting out a political agenda to reduce poverty around the world by increasing industrialization, economic growth, and modernization. Walt Rostow's *Stages of Economic Growth* (1960) perfectly outlines the ideology of development-as-modernization at this time. Third-world nations represented a special case that need unique policies and interventions in order to catch up to (and look like) modern Western capitalist industrialized societies (Pieterse 2010).

The assumption that industrialization and economic growth would inevitably lead to poverty reduction was the lynchpin of development as modernization. In the field of macromarketing, Kilbourne, McDonagh, and Prothero (1997) identify the persistence of this perspective today as the Dominant Social Paradigm (DSP). In this view, markets (defined as relationships of exchange between producers and consumers) are fundamentally good but may have unintended consequences that hamper development. Promoting sustainable development means promoting growth while working to lessen those unwanted outcomes (e.g. social

inequalities, global warming, and inhumane labor conditions) (Hunt 2012). The various institutions of global capitalism reproduce this dominant model. The recent inclusion of social marketing education in business schools or the ubiquitous appeal of the formulaic triple bottom line are examples of this view (Savitz and Weber 2006).

By the 1970s, dependency and world systems theories critiqued development for ignoring the history of colonization and the deep exploitation of European imperialisms on the Third World, or "the development of underdevelopment" (Frank 1969, 1975; Wallerstein 1979). Like modernization, dependency theory also places central importance on economic growth for social change. As Frank (1969, p. 46) asserts, if the Third World was to truly modernize in the footsteps of developed nations, it would first have to find other populations to exploit for profit, just as European colonizers did.

The 1980s saw an emphasis on poverty reduction rather than economic growth per se at the level of international institutions such as the World Bank (WB) and the International Trade Organization (ITO). For example, Robert McNamara implemented a programmatic re-orientation directed specifically at poverty reduction at the WB and the ITO undertook a diverse set of market-based poverty reduction schemes in Africa and Asia. The 1980s also saw anthropologists entering development institutions, with the hope that they would facilitate greater appropriateness to local cultures and conditions. The notion of human development and the 1990 human development index created by Mahbub ul Haq and Amartya Sen (Sen and Anand 1990) for the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) represented an important shift away from the narrow focus on economic growth. The Human Development Index uses Sen's capability approach as its framework, in which the main goal of development is "to improve human lives by expanding the range of things that a person can be and do, such as to be healthy

and well nourished, to be knowledgeable, and to participate in community life" (Fukuda-Parr 2003). However, a common criticism of the new paradigm of human development and capacitation is that in its implementation, development policy continues to favor instrumentalization and measures results in the form of statistical indexes and standards, so it becomes very close to looking just like the "development-as-economic-growth" model (Pieterse 2010, p. 105).

The marketing and consumer research literatures reflected these shifting perspectives. As a case in point, Dholakia and Sherry (1987) identified three main paradigms of development: positivist (modernization theory), radical (dependency theory) and neo-Marxist (focus on emancipation, social and economic change). Critical marketing authors writing from a neo-Marxist perspective would remind us that consumer capitalism effectively works like a "force-field" delimiting what we see and appreciate (Murray and Ozanne 1991). The primary focus of this paradigm is the social inequality and injustice stemming from the expansion of capitalism. It charges that the spectacle of consumer capitalism and the instrumentality of marketing activities detract attention from the structural inequality and problems that accompany "market development" and globalization. This perspective views consumer capitalism and development discourse as thriving on commodity fetishism and collective amnesia (Billig 1999) and suggests appropriate consciousness raising efforts as a remedy (e.g. McDonagh 2002).

Related to poverty reduction and human development approaches, Kilbourne, McDonagh, and Prothero (1997) describe an alternative to the Dominant Social Paradigm in macromarketing that associates development with improving the quality of life of citizens. Although critiquing the DSP, this approach nevertheless remains rooted in capitalist economic systems (Prothero and Fitchett 2000). It suggests that studies aligned with the DSP fail to

understand the relationships between developmental issues and markets because they seek causes of poverty and social problems that are external to the constructs they examine. For example, they critique the implicit assumption of the DSP that consumption is fundamentally good because it satisfies the needs and wants of consumers, as it fails to consider detrimental aspects of consumption itself. The same oversight is evident in investigations of how other stakeholders such as large-scale producers or policy makers foster development without considering the problems their forms and interventions pose. In challenging the DSP regarding the role of consumerism, materialism, and growth in capitalist economies and their linkages to long-run social inequality and ecological unsustainability, Kilbourne, McDonagh, and Prothero (1997) emphasize finding solutions to macro-social, institutional and bio-political problems. Their approach to economic growth and development focuses on improving markets, societies, and quality of life. As an example, Prothero and Fitchett (2000) discuss how green activists can use the re-channel commodity discourses to reduce consumption and foster the "green" agenda.

Development Today: Under Attack from All Sides?

By the 1980s, even as human development became the primary model for development policy in the West, the idea of development itself came under attack as too costly and ineffective from neoliberal advocates. According to the perspective of neoliberal economics, state governments should not be involved in development efforts; they should simply get out of the way of the market, and economic activity will place developing economies on an appropriate social course that also benefits the business community. In the neoliberal view, the best prescription for the developing world is deregulation, liberalization, free trade policies, privatization of previously government-run industries, and structural adjustment policies. Conventional (neoliberal) marketing sees the expansion of markets as both a useful tool for development as well as

development's ultimate goal (Mitchell, Wooliscroft, and Higham 2010).

On the other end of the political spectrum, the anti- or post-development perspective criticized development for other reasons. Post-development theories view development as a discourse elaborated to help establish and maintain power relationships between the European and North American colonizers and their former colonies. According to this perspective, development discourse represents a "top down, ethnocentric and technocratic approach that treats peoples and cultures as abstract concepts, statistical figures to be moved up and down in the charts of progress. It thus comes as no surprise that development became a force so destructive to third world cultures, ironically in the name of people´s interests" (Escobar 1999, p. 98). The main tenet of post-development is that it is logistically impossible for the majority of the world's population to achieve a middle-class lifestyle (Dasgupta 1985). This has led to a total rejection of development, as epitomized by the critique that, for the poor who have long been the targets for intervention, development is "a bad joke" (Pieterse 2000), responsible for actually increasing poverty and misery, rather than reducing it.

Despite attacks from all sides, the machinery of development is so entrenched in our political, economic, marketing, and social systems that it is not likely to be dismantled and radically altered any time soon. In between mainstream human development and the more radical positions of anti-development sit a range of perspectives and practices, advanced as "alternatives to development" (Escobar 1992). While approaches such as participatory rural appraisal (Chambers 1983, 1997) attempt to put those who are the target of development intervention at the center of policy, respecting their agency, skills, knowledge, and desires, critiques of these alternative approaches always illuminate examples that fail to live up to these high standards (Cooke and Kothari 2001).

For us, like Pieterse, the question should be what *kind* of roles should markets and states play (Pieterse 2010, p. 47), and how to fairly and justly regulate markets. It follows that any investigation or re-thinking of development must tackle the issues of human development, including inequality among other indicators of development, and direct some attention to the structures and effects of the markets under consideration for their global features as well as local manifestations.

What Are Markets, and Why Do People Want them?

Many researchers appear to operate on the assumption that people seek to participate in markets in most economically developed and less developed regions of the world. Researchers should investigate the validity of this assumption in the field where they are active. In cases where this assumption is observed to be correct, the researcher needs to investigate the reasons for such seeking. In cases where the assumption does not hold, study of why people reject the market needs to be undertaken. Related to the question of whether or not people seek markets is the need to distinguish between facilitating consumers' and small/micro- business owners' access to local markets on the one hand, and development processes shaped by global market forces (e.g. the removal of government welfare programs) and free trade on the other. In many cases people may want access to markets ultimately to improve their lives—access to goods and services, access to customers for the goods and services they have to offer—simply because alternatives are hard to find or nonexistent.

In the lower Amazon, for example, one of the main concerns for farmers is improving roads and access to better modes of transportation in order to get their goods to the marketplace. Many development programs in this region focus on connecting rural farmers with national and international buyers in larger towns and cities. Likewise, consumers in rural parts of the

Amazon face limited options and higher prices for goods that are readily available in urban areas. For these consumers and producers alike, better and more reliable access to markets is highly desirable (Brondizio 2008). Similarly, the work of Catherine Dolan, Linda Scott and colleagues focused on the sales of products door-to-door or via community networks reminds us that the market and marketing agencies can bring economic and social benefits for those at the base of the pyramid (Dolan, Johnstone-Louis, andScott 2012; Scott et al. 2012). Even so, we encourage caution and concerted research examining the specific contexts, activities, and effects for those so engaged in financially and socially precarious positions.

In efforts to expand markets globally, a problem of defining markets and understanding the social processes and effects of market exchange may be encountered. Here, the analytical dichotomy detailed by Polanyi (1944) – between Euro-American market systems as they emerged in 19th century England and other non-Western economies (Blanton and Fargher 2010) – has been extremely influential. Since the majority of development efforts focus on regional and national economies, gaining an understanding of the variety of markets, types of market exchange, and marketplaces cross-culturally is of the utmost importance (Peñaloza and Venkatesh 2006). Granovetter's (1985) observation that all market transactions presuppose social relationships, and all market exchanges and markets in general are embedded in social norms and practices is highly cited and well known. Yet the neoclassical economic idea that everyone everywhere will use the same logic to make economic choices stubbornly persists in the field of marketing, which may be partly the result of our refusal to acknowledge that western formal economics is itself a cultural construction.

Part of the problem with Polanyi's legacy, and mainstream economics in general, is the reduction of all market exchange systems to prescriptions of the "free" self-regulating market.

According to Feinman and Garraty (2010), this legacy is partly the result of, and partly responsible for, the neglect of attention to preindustrial markets. As archaeologists investigating preindustrial markets and marketplaces, they propose their own definitions that do not assume a capitalist economy or self-regulation. They define markets as "social institutions predicated on the market exchange of alienable commodities," and market exchange as "economic transactions where the forces of supply and demand are visible and where prices or exchange equivalencies exist" (Feinman and Garraty 2010, p. 171-2).

Recent archaeological research of ancient and preindustrial markets, as well as anthropological studies of post-socialist economies, points to a high degree of diversity in the ways markets interact with other social institutions, and the degree of commercialization in specific settings; other research reveals remarkable market dynamism over long-term periods (e.g. Braudel 1985; Collins 1990; Smith 2004; cited in Feinman and Garraty 2010). The main lesson is that markets, market exchange, and a wide variety of socially embedded market logics have existed around the world long before (and simultaneous to) the emergence of Western European capitalist systems. If the goal of development is to make some measure of improvement in peoples' lives through the medium of markets, then we need to be very careful about the kinds of assumption we make regarding how people act in and what they want out of markets. In macromarketing, Kilbourne, McDonagh, and Prothero's (1997) second alternative to the DSP focuses on the linkages between development and markets in pre- or non-capitalist realms. While some recent work has been done in this domain (Nguyen and Pham 2012), the field remains underexplored in marketing research and scholarship.

In sum, we suggest that scholarship on development and markets address the pros and cons of markets. For example, forms of sociality and political freedoms may be curtailed by or

unrelated to markets. Alternatively, liberalized markets may actually enhance violence among various ethnic or other minority groups and a dominant group favored by the market (Chua 2002). Perhaps alternative imaginings and vocabularies can be used to redress the role of markets in development. Movements like the World Social Forum and scholars like Arturo Escobar promote alternative social structures that can provide forms of development that are not dependent on traditional markets. Escobar (2004), for example, has examined subaltern intelligent communities in cyberspace. This model dramatically contrasts with the paradigmatic top-down, action-reaction model of information exchange featured in conventional development efforts. To uncover effective transformative paths, scholars need to focus on the particular interactions between the state, international bodies such as the World Bank and IMF (International Monetary Fund), and the global and domestic markets at the specific locale of interest. Such an approach would accord with the non-linear frameworks on multiple modernities (Eisenstadt 2000).

Development and Consumer Well-being: The Market as the Unit of Analysis

We argue TCR can benefit from the inclusion of empirical studies that have markets as the unit of analysis. This is largely informed by our understanding that consumer well-being is deeply embedded within and contingent upon larger market processes and structures, such that disentangling each becomes difficult, if not impossible. And, when one considers that the majority of the world's population live outside the conventional capitalist Euro-American sphere, in markets where the roles of consumer and producer are often blurred (DeBerry-Spence 2010), the benefits of market-centric approaches to understanding consumers' social problems are further revealed. Therefore, consistent with a counter-DSP paradigm, we encourage research that takes a macro-social, institutional and biopolitical approach to markets and consequently

reframes the TCR goal of consumers' well-being as a search for human development (i.e. the expansion of what people can be and do in markets and society). Such a stance involves a more visible role for contextualized accounts of markets and market-systems and the underlying market mechanisms that perpetuate and maintain disenfranchisement.

Our call further aligns with existing TCR research on poverty, even as we extend this body of work. Specifically, we contribute to a growing body of TCR research on consumer experiences of poverty and felt depravation by recognizing that "consumption capabilities in poverty are shaped by the broader marketplace structures" (Blocker et al. 2013, p. 1199) and by examining the structuring forces that perform, combat and/or maintain structural inequalities, as practiced in macromarketing studies. In these ways, empirically grounded investigations of how markets shape consumer well-being and human development pave the way for more comprehensive theorizing and transformational impact.

In the next section, we present two cases from emerging and developing economies to illustrate the role of markets and development. The first case discusses Thailand's One Tambon (sub-district) One Product Program (OTOP) and looks at markets and development in the context of a country-specific public sector-initiated entrepreneurship stimulus program that centers on the marketing and production of local, traditional cultural products. The second case discusses mobile telephony in Africa and looks at markets and development in the context of a private sector-driven, multi-billion dollar industry that centers on technology-related products and services that cut across many industries (e.g. agriculture, banking). A number of differences distinguish the cases. In particular, they represent different world regions; numbers of consumers; types of sectors (i.e. public sector-initiated versus private sector-initiated); industry size (i.e. small versus large); product types (i.e. local, cultural traditional products versus non-

local and local-inspired technology product and services); and involvement of multiple-industries (i.e. a single industry-cultural product versus engaging non-related industries). Together these cases provide diverse examples of how markets impact human development. They also show that in contemporary history, humanity and markets are indeed blended (DeBerry-Spence 2010), and thus establish a similar intertwining of markets and consumer well-being.

Another possibility is to think about development outside of markets, or without the market as central to the organization of human lives, but as one of multiple orders of human life (Fırat and Dholakia 2006). While the market order constructs the human being as a consumer, individuals do not act as consumers in other orders. We will continue to discuss contemporary conditions of development recognizing the import of the market and of the individual-as-consumer to articulate the potential implications of this condition; but we will also illustrate how development efforts within this condition create increasing dependency on the market.

The Case of OTOP Program in Thailand

Thailand, like many emerging economies, employs favorable policies for foreign direct investment, particularly in industrialization and export expansion. While achieving high economic growth, the country has simultaneously faced problems of inequality, specifically between urban and rural areas. Realizing this, the Thai government has prioritized rural development since the fifth national socio-economic development plan (1982–1986). In 2001, the One Tambon One Product (OTOP) program was initiated following the success of the One Village One Product initiative from Oita, Japan. It aimed to cover over 7,000 Tambons nationwide. The main goal was to encourage rural development through community-oriented activities by using local resources and knowledge to create value for selected local products (Witkowski 2006).

Consumer Well-being and the Management of Resources in Market Systems

Inequality in Thailand is a critical situation stemming from earlier policies that focused on urban development, leaving the rural communities with severe problems of poverty with limited access and capabilities to leverage the local resources (e.g. natural resources, local wisdom, history, cultural capital). The unfair distribution of income and opportunities was exacerbated when outside groups (e.g. large companies) came in to take advantage of the abundant resources. As a result, many local people migrated to the big cities as laborers, while those remaining in rural communities became trapped in a system that exploited local resources.

The OTOP program was initiated to address such problems, based on the fundamental belief that local communities can achieve advancement through their valuable resources *only if they can manage them appropriately*. The program intended to create a marketing support system by 1) enhancing local production of agricultural products, textiles, crafts, or other goods depending on each community's experience and interests; 2) facilitating channels of distribution; and 3) promoting the OTOP brand to raise awareness and generate interest among potential buyers and consumers. Consistent with macromarketing approaches, program managers believed that market creation would enhance the community's well-being in the long run because the continual exchanges of products and people's relationships could promote future possibilities.

Until now, this program has assisted several communities, mainly through community-based enterprises, to gain reasonable benefits from the value creation of their local resources. This opportunity can to some extent encourage local people to protect and use their resources carefully, while the support system helps generate income and opportunities within the rural areas, leading to some reduced problems of inequality and migration. Furthermore, it can help

sustain local cultural identity, promote active citizenship, and elevate cohesiveness of the community. This demonstrates the role of the market in promoting the well-being of both the community members and the consumers who are keen to support expansion of cultural products. However, in implementing market mechanisms, concerns have been raised about threats to community development, such as the non-committed agency, imbalanced power management, and dependency issues. The following sections illustrate details of these issues.

The Role of Markets in Constraining or Fostering Agency

Notably, the community is the focal interest of the OTOP program, although members had limited involvement for a number of reasons. Besides the state-enforced nature of the program and the normal practice of the authorities who regularly perceive their role as providers, basic problems lie in community-level interventions (Nuttavuthisit, Jindahra, and Prasanpanich 2014), especially where the community holds core attributes of the market unlike the other types of development (e.g. infrastructure). In terms of attitude, the local community has tended to simply go along with the program because they are unfamiliar, unclear, and unsure about the initiative. Limited knowledge of the system and lack of awareness of their rights to adjust the program has led community members to leave guidance in the hands of others. Being accustomed to the follower's role, they eventually lose confidence in their ability to pursue their own ideas. Additionally, they may lack certain skill sets, such as managerial and entrepreneurial skills, and often, because of their limited capabilities, prefer to simply comply with directions. This is due to the deep-rooted hierarchical structure in Thailand, the dominant culture of compliance, and the custom of taking it easy (*sabai sabai*). Finally, the local community may lack the necessary connections to carry on with the plan, making it difficult for them to exert their voices in the process of making and selling OTOP products.

When the community is not fully engaged in the market system it leads to incomplete development. Many OTOP products have valuable, inherent qualities yet to be further developed. However, community members need full command of the necessary skills to achieve this crucial step. Often communities end up working at the surface level, such as simply copying what other communities are doing or reproducing the same product without pursuing innovations that could leverage local knowledge and resources. Thus, many items available in the market are criticized as dull and underdeveloped. Nevertheless, in some cases when outsiders make improvements (e.g. channels, third parties), the output is criticized for being industrialized, lacking local identity and defeating the original aim of the program to emphasize unique cultural assets. Though it is argued that such emphasis could only attract a relatively small and specific interest, the niche market might better suit the local capacity.

Power Dynamics and Inequalities in the Market.

The implementation of the OTOP program has required collective efforts not only between the government as funder and local communities as participants, but also with other stakeholders, such as the local government units as implementers of the initiatives and the connected channels to buy and sell the products. The general mechanism involves the local government units identifying the communities and their potential products to undergo the development process, for example, adjusting design to suit the current demand, improving tools and technology, or training of human resources. Then the communities begin production with initial investment from the government who will help connect them with the available channels of distribution (push strategy) and launch branding and communication campaigns to the general public (pull strategy).

Despite the grand scheme to support this national program, multiple issues of power dynamics and conflicts have arisen. One criticism has been that the central government has used this program as a way to influence local government units and gain votes. Other concerns have included local government units assuming the right to choose their preferred groups and in some cases siphoning funds from allocated budgets. As for distribution channels, those who formerly took advantage of the underpriced outputs often have disagreed with the program, while others, who participated mainly for commercial interests with less understanding of the local conditions, have tended to disregard or discount most of the available products due to their incompatibility with commercial demands. The government responded by creating alternative channels such as marketing events and exhibition centers, and since 2003 more efforts have been placed on export channels with the scheme to find OTOP Product Champions.

To solve the problem of substandard quality, concrete interventions (e.g. training workshops, quality control) have been implemented. But other issues such as product design and aesthetics, which are subject to differing tastes, are more difficult to manage. Despite several attempts to fine-tune the balance between the communities' embedded resources and market demands, tension has persisted particularly in the fundamental conflict between achieving economic advantage versus the development process grounded in sociocultural heritage and communal practices. With the limited understanding of situational embeddedness of people's experience and condition, this tension has led to various problems ranging from the mismatch between demand and supply, to inconsistent quantity and quality of production, and troubles with financial management.

Ethics, Responsibilities, and Risks

Results of the OTOP program were demonstrated through participation of about 38,000 OTOP producers and over 1.3 million members and employees (OSMEP 2008). OTOP product revenue grew from baht 245 million in 2001 to baht 77,705 million in 2008 with 86% generated from the domestic market. Nevertheless, implementation of the OTOP program during the initial years drew widespread criticism, mainly because of shortcomings in enhancing the communities' self-reliance (Natsuda et al. 2011). While the objective of rural development could be achieved economically with regard to poverty alleviation, other important aspects seemed to be neglected, for example, the ability to form organized civil society and build capabilities of active citizens. Since 2007 the OTOP policy has been revised in alignment with the tenth national socio-economic development plan (2007-2011). The movement has emphasized the importance of the "sufficiency economy" concept with the goal of achieving balanced living and sustainability. For the OTOP program, this means emphasizing the use of more locally available resources and knowledge, and encouraging the communities to take leading roles while the authorities become catalysts to facilitate coordination and cooperation among a network of communities. This emphasis is illustrated by one community leader who mentioned that her community members decided to turn down the offer from one big corporation to buy a large bulk of pesticide-free fruits from the village because agreeing to do so would mean abandoning other aspects of community living and turning the existing natural farming into large-scaled industrial agriculture (Nuttavuthisit, Jindahra, and Prasanpanich 2014).

To achieve the sustainable development goal, the OTOP program would benefit from efforts to combine the current macromarketing perspective that aims to manage the complex interactions between markets, marketing, and society and the TCR approach that highlights sociocultural and situational contexts. Such an extension would not only allow authorities to

better respect and regard the local circumstances and demands but also allow the communities to better realize their potential to foster their own developmental efforts. With more grounded research and proposed solutions derived from the local people, the cross-fertilization of macromarketing and TCR will support the OTOP program to achieve sustainable development and well-being of the community.

Market Development and Mobile Telephony in Africa

The population of Africa currently exceeds 1 billion and over the next four decades the number of African consumers will surpass that of India and China. Multinational corporations, among others, are now racing to participate in the renaissance of African markets. Presently, however, African countries remain some of the poorest in the world. On many important human and economic development measures, Africa, like most developing economies, exemplifies the failure to meet the needs and well-being of its global citizens. Additionally, resource scarcity, lack of infrastructure, and ethnic conflict plague the continent and serve as visible reminders of the aftermath colonialism exerts on Africa's development some fifty years after independence. Yet, in the face of these and other challenges, Africa has managed to "leapfrog" its Western counterparts in its adoption and use of one of the most profound technologies of our time: mobile telephones. With an estimated 750 million mobile connections (the second largest in the world) and an ecosystem consisted of five groups (infrastructure vendors and support services, the network operators themselves, handset and device manufacturers, distributors and retailers, and content and service providers) and valued at $US65 billion (Kearney 2011), the "new talking drums of everyday Africa" (De Bruijn, Nyamnjoh, and Brinkman 2009) have redefined the way contemporary African consumers live by offering the promise of transformation and human development through its application in agriculture, financial services, medicine, politics and

education. This has led many to assert digital inclusion as a basic human right. The following account of various market players (e.g. consumers, large telecom companies, microbusinesses, and governments) in the African phone industry illustrates that markets and consumer well-being are inseparable in understanding key developmental issues: access and training; power dynamics and information asymmetries; agency and informal markets; and collective action and violence.

Consumer Well-being and the Management of Resources in Market Systems

Unlike advanced economies where development is linked to jobs and incomes generated by large corporations, the day-to-day survival and well-being of many Africans depend on income generated from microbusinesses, typically featuring three or fewer employees or even only the microentrepreneur. Further, a significant interdependence exists between microbusinesses and consumer well-being, in that microenterprises represent 97% of all African businesses (Spring and McDade 1998) and often include a community of persons living and working together, thus contributing to employment creation and to poverty alleviation (Rogerson 2001). Regarding mobile telephones and related technologies, local microenterprises have played a critical role in underserved markets, enfranchising millions of consumers to participate in and be heard on important economic, social, and political matters that affect them.

In 2008 Africa had an estimated 376 million mobile phone subscribers or one-third of sub-Saharan Africa's population, with over 65% of the population having mobile phone coverage (Aker and Mbiti 2010). Projections suggested that by 2012 most villages in Africa would have coverage with only a handful of countries unconnected (Aker and Mbiti 2010). These figures are outstanding given that over 400 million Sub-Saharan Africans are classified as poor, living on US$1.25 or less per day (World Bank 2010). Local microbusinesses have been key to this market development and technology transformation. While large telecom companies like the MTN

Group and Vodafone have used acquisitions and strategic alliances to achieve unprecedented growth, their greatest success has been their ability to combine global tools with the continent's existing business structures (i.e. microentrepreneurs) to provide opportunities for crafting African-relevant strategies to reach the poor (DeBerry-Spence, Bonsu and Arnould 2012). This is exemplified in their distribution strategy, which keeps barriers to entry for retail operations extremely low, such that microbusinesses selling everyday necessities, like food, toiletries and clothing form a vast network of retail outlets where consumers in urban and distant rural locales may access mobile services. By providing convenient and easy access, microbusinesses, many of whom are "poor" themselves, have helped facilitate the participation of other poor consumers in important industries like financial services (e.g. mobile banking), a sector deemed critical for long-term poverty alleviation. They have opened the financial sector to previously unbanked consumers by not only making it geographically accessible, but also by serving as an important resource for consumer learning. Where formal mobile technology education is either unavailable or unaffordable, informal training provided by community microbusiness mobile retailers has been critical to the rapid adoption of mobile money, like Safaricom's widely successful "mobile wallet" M-Pesa, and to the rise of mobile money remittances currently observed in West Africa. It has also allowed consumers to acquire important financial literacy and technology skills that benefit them far beyond mobile phone usage.

The Role of Markets in Constraining or Fostering Agency

African mobile phone consumers exert agency when they transgress the limitations and boundaries of formal economies (Wasserman 2011). In response to the large formal mobile sector a sizeable informal economy of consumer-merchants has emerged and proliferated with people selling airtime, ringtones, phone accessories, as well as charging, fixing, and renting

phones (Etzo and Collender 2010). These informal economies "crisscross formal economies, undermine them, and articulate with people's everyday lives" (Wasserman 2011, p. 154). From this point of view, African mobile phone users are not just passive victims of big company exploitation, but are also "active" consumers (Wasserman 2011) or producers. They have inserted themselves into the market not only through the consumption of services provided by large companies, but by producing a large informal industry that delivers products and services uniquely tailored to meet their needs. In addition to providing jobs and incomes, these informal markets represent resistance, in the sense they have given consumers what Wasserman (2011) notes is the ability to circumvent or lessen the felt impact of excessive fees and charges imposed by large formal cellular companies. And consumers are able to do this in ways that afford greater mobile usage (not less), and generate revenues for smaller informal businesses (not large cellular companies). Participating in these informal mobile phone economies necessitates different skill sets (i.e. with information and communications technology) than large mobile companies envisioned for Africa (see Southwood 2008). Consumers must know, for example,

> "how to unblock secondhand phones so they can use different SIM cards, how to switch different prepaid SIM cards so as to optimally use the free minutes provided by each, how to transmit and receive money or vouchers in return for favors, …and [how to] use 'flashing' or 'beeping' as a code of communication when you have run out of money for airtime" (Wasserman 2011, p. 155).

These mobile phone practices illustrate how African consumers as producers are active agents in shaping markets and how "the creative ways in which Africans have adopted and adapted the mobile phone, rather than the technology itself, is what makes mobile phones a [potential] force for social change" (Ekine 2010, p. xi).

Power Dynamics and Inequalities in the Market

Increasingly, African consumers and businesses are using mobile phone technologies to decrease information asymmetries between market participants and bypass unfavorable power dynamics reproduced in markets (Aker 2010; Aker and Mbiti 2010; Pierskalla and Hollenbach 2013). A well-cited example is found in agriculture, the largest sector in Africa, which represents 15 percent of the continent's GDP (Kartik, Riese, and Sanghvi 2010) and where more than 60 percent of Africa's active labor force earns a livelihood (OCED 2008). African subsistence farmers have used mobile technologies to monitor prices and sell goods in markets without needing to leave their farms and travel long distances (Aker 2010; Aker and Mbiti 2010). Having greater and easier access to timely information levels the playing field for small-scale farmers by helping to reduce price dispersion (Aker 2008) and to improve overall labor and market efficiencies. It also allows African farmers to better establish linkages with international markets (Pierskalla and Hollenbach 2013), something that has historically been a significant barrier to internationalization and participation in global markets.

The use of mobile phones to counter power imbalances is also evidenced in political spheres. Everyday citizens are using mobile phones to collectively disrupt and decrease corruption, which in Africa remains one of the continent's most difficult obstacles to development (Bailard 2009, Kimenyi and Mbaku 2011). These efforts include documenting and sharing reports of human rights violations caused by repressive regimes (Kreutz 2010; Simon 2008). Additionally, activists seeking to address injustices use mobile phone technologies to archive the work of social movements (e.g. the Abahlali base Mjondolo in South Africa), to orchestrate visible public displays of activism like mobilizing street protests (Ekine 2010), and to increase citizen participation in and monitoring of elections (Aker, Collier, and Vincente 2011).

In the 2008 Ghana Presidential elections when monitors would send SMS messages to an operational center operated by the Coalition of Domestic Election Observers (Verclas 2008).

Some question, however, whether the shifts in market power dynamics that mobile phones seemingly promise are permanent. They argue that mobile activism may not be an effective agent of social change because it is based on weak ties that demand low-risk participation (Gladwell 2010). Mobile networks of consumers and citizens are viewed as "leaderless" and unable to "think strategically" because they lack hierarchical organization (Gladwell 2010). This implies that while mobile phones may make it easier for consumers to express themselves, it is not as easy for mobile activism to have an impact (Gladwell 2010). Walton and Donner (2010) express similar sentiments, arguing that the temporariness associated with mobilizing counter-publics via mobile phones leads to an inability to sustain higher levels of accountability beyond the brief amplification of events. For example, as part of the Mozambique "bread riots" residents of Maputo took to the streets in response to texts prompting them to "enjoy the great day of the strike" and to "protest the increase in energy, water, mini-bus taxi and bread prices" (BBC 2010; Jacobs and Duarte 2010; Wasserman 2011). Under pressure, the government allegedly ordered mobile providers to suspend text messaging services and colluded with phone service providers to block all text signals (Jacobs and Duarte 2010). To some extent then, consumer use of media technologies, which include mobile phones, are not always enduring and may not radically alter prevailing hierarchies and power structures.

Ethics, Responsibilities, and Risks

The mobile explosion in Africa is not without ethical complexity. In much the same way mobile phone technologies are helping citizens enact collective resistance to positively impact well-being, they have the potential to facilitate organized collective violence. Pierskalla and

Hollenbach (2013, p. 2) observe that, "improvements in the ability to organize collective action do not automatically produce purely beneficial effects for overall society. Rather they empower political agents and groups more generally, which can raise the human costs of political struggles." Groups may leverage improved communications to better coordinate violent collective actions (Longe, et al. 2009), which are often directed at governments. In recent years, concern and fear by governments about the collective action that mobile technologies bring is on the rise. Countries such as Pakistan, Bangladesh, the Philippines, and Thailand have considered and/or have introduced tighter cell phone restrictions due to concern over their utility for violent groups (Shapiro and Weidmann 2011). Many African countries have introduced similar policies where, for example, consumers cannot activate SIM cards without registration and are limited in the number of cards an individual consumer may register.

A number of factors contribute to the potential for mobile phone technology to lead to greater collective violence. In many places in Africa, mobile phones are not merely an additional form of distance communication, but often the only form of interpersonal communication because landlines were never connected in many areas (Pierskalla and Hollenbach 2013). Thus, in the past, organizing collective violence across distance was more difficult. Mobile network coverage alone, however, is not what makes this region potentially ripe for collective violence. A number of areas in Africa have active or simmering civil conflicts (World Bank 2011) where cell phone technology has recently been made available (Pierskalla and Hollenbach 2013). The question many are now raising is whether the "[cell] phone is mightier than the sword?" (Shapiro and Weidmann 2011, p. 1). This suggests the need for greater research investigating the positive and negative influences that markets play in human development.

Towards a TCR/Macromarketing Approach to Human Development

The two cases highlight three points about human development resulting from the cross-fertilization of TCR and macromarketing. First, we argue for a shift in the unit of analysis from consumers to markets. In informal economies, the role of the consumer is hardly dissociable from other roles (e.g. merchant, entrepreneur) in the market (Viswanathan, Rosa, and Ruth 2010; Viswanathan et al. 2014). As described above, the conflation of roles is observed both in small markets like the OTOP or bigger markets such as the African mobile market, with the consumer assuming the role of producers and microentrepreneurs. This blurring underscores the difficulty, if not impossibility, of disentangling markets and human development, which justifies research with a combined approach of TCR and macromarketing. Indeed, promoting consumer well-being means promoting the conditions for these consumers to also engage in productive and entrepreneurial roles.

Second, research must be conducted to understand the role of markets in constraining and fostering agency. In our two cases, the market represented unparalleled opportunity for expansion of new forms of agency. But we have also demonstrated that market hierarchies can constrain consumer agency, which may lead to lower quality of life and substantive freedom (Kilbourne 2004). While the human-centered focus of TCR may help us understand the concrete benefits of consumer/producer agency in the market, the systemic view promoted by macromarketing can help us grasp the structural constraints to agency imposed by the organization of market systems.

Third, a TCR/macromarketing perspective can help shed light on power inequalities in the market and their implications for market ethics. Our two cases show that each situation involves a very specific set of issues related to how power is distributed in each market and how

inequality leads to further issues of ethics, responsibilities and risks generated and reproduced in markets. This underscores our view that human development can only be understood as situated in specific markets. On the one hand, the grounded methodologies proposed by the TCR agenda (Crocket et al. 2013) can help demonstrate how power inequalities and ethical issues become intertwined at the level of consumer-producer directly affecting well-being. On the other hand, the macromarketing perspective helps us understand how power inequalities and ethical issues are reproduced by structural relationships of diverse actors in market systems.

A Call for More Cross-fertilization of Macromarketing and TCR

In this article, we have worked towards building a bridge between macromarketing and Transformative Consumer Research to advance knowledge of economic and human development as a complex "macromarketing issue." By critically engaging with the existing literature on development and reframing markets as the central organizing principle to understand development as the improvement of living conditions and well-being, our aim has been to work towards a framework that connects previously disparate studies and identify avenues for future research, particularly in the area of "marketing and development" (Ingenbleek 2014; Kilbourne 2004; Nguyen and Pham 2012; Shultz, Rahtz, and Speece 2004; Witkowski 2005).

As a research orientation, macromarketing seeks to advance knowledge of the complex, systemic interdependencies and interactions between markets, marketing, and society that shape quality-of-life, stakeholder well-being, environmental sustainability, and general societal welfare in the global economy (Shapiro 2012; Shapiro, Tadajewski, and Shultz 2009). TCR, for its part, is a scholarly movement that seeks to advance research that enhances consumer welfare and quality of life (Mick et al. 2012; Ozanne 2011) by striving to "respect, uphold, and improve life in relation to the myriad conditions, demands, potentialities, and effects of consumption" (Mick,

2006, p. 2). By combining concepts and ideas from these two streams of literature, we shift attention to the political, cultural, and ethical complexities that contemporary debates on "marketing and development" entail, particularly regarding consumer welfare.

As our critique of the existing literature on marketing and development illustrates, a TCR-perspective urges macromarketing scholars to address current theoretical and empirical questions about the role of marketing in economic and human development in ways that highlight the complexities that arise from the sociocultural context and situational embedding of consumer experience and well-being (Mick et al. 2012). The two cases have illustrated the impossibility of disentangling issues of consumers' well-being from the market in which they are embedded. In both Thai and African markets, the roles of consumers and producers become blurred. Solutions for well-being and inequalities must come from grounded research addressing the systemic nature of markets, social problems, power inequalities, agency and ethical issues. By taking such a perspective, we argue, researchers become better equipped and more inclined to focus on what Mick (2006, p. 1) calls "real problems"—problems that are relevant and pressing for consumers and society and offer analyses that can inform policy recommendations and transformative action in the marketplace (Ozanne 2011).

For the TCR community, a macromarketing lens might encourage them to focus more scholarly attention on the ways in which they are implicated in the many politically value-laden regimes of truths about "consumer welfare" and "development." A macromarketing perspective might help them to better understand how these discourses and practices are continuously constructed, mobilized, invoked, and enacted in the market to shape the needs, wants and behaviors of consumer-citizens. As discussed in the first part of this essay, development is a contested concept and a powerful discourse that involves a broad range of actors, activities and

institutions. The cases have illustrated how development can be unpacked as situated issues related to agency, ethics and power inequalities in the market.

Overall, then, the role of markets and marketing in economic and human development is a complex theoretical question that begs further macromarketing analysis. For scholars interested in advancing knowledge in this field, a cross-fertilization of macromarketing with TCR would open up new theoretical perspectives that can potentially shed light on the implications of marketing and development projects as a "systemic project." This also implies research on the broader social and political issues that surround marketing as a practice and institution. From this viewpoint, consumers, marketers, and researchers are not innocent bystanders and passive recipients of the structures of global capitalism that produce social inequality and environmental degradation. Questions of development rather necessarily entail a complex dynamic of power, identity, and culture that is inadequately addressed as a tug-of-war between marketers and consumers.

In the contemporary conditions of global capitalism, the relationships and structures researchers employ to construct and shape understandings of development and consumer welfare in the market involve multifaceted and shifting alliances and conflicts. Consumers not only respond to or are constrained by marketing activity. They also contribute significantly to the practices and processes through which marketers create value and effect social change. As a number of scholars have argued, consumer-citizens are increasingly taking on new and evermore productive roles, serving as "co-creative labor" (Benkler 2006; Jenkins 2006, 2008) and "immaterial labor" that is put to work for the benefit of business organizations (Cova and Dalli 2009).

To conclude, we argue that theoretical advances concerning the relationship between

marketing and development would benefit from a research agenda bridging macromarketing and TCR and building new trans-disciplinary approaches that acknowledge the politics of development and the complex nature of contemporary marketing as an institution. Since consumers play important roles in the development of markets and social welfare, combining the two research areas strikes us as a meaningful and worthwhile project that has both transformative potential and scholarly relevance. We have attempted to lay down some of the key questions and problems on which such a project might focus.

Note

1. The fourth TCR Conference that took place in May 2013 included a track on Developing Markets. Thirteen participants of this track met for two days vigorously discussing themes that arose from the implications of the title of the track itself and from the differences in perspectives taken by the participants. The group realized that in order to address the topic of "developing markets," a researcher would first have to be aware of and address multiple complex issues regarding development and the role of markets in it. While we were sympathetic to the idea of "developing markets," the managerial framing of the title was disconcerting. It almost makes the idea of market development appear to be a foregone conclusion. Our discussion quickly revealed each group member's belief in the pluralization of development discourses, the need for contextually sensitive analyses, and for incorporating other voices in development processes. More appropriately, "developing markets" should be followed immediately with a question mark: "developing markets?" We decided that a significant starting point to contribute to TCR efforts around development and markets would be to articulate these issues for researchers to be aware of as they planned and carried out their projects. This article was the result of such discussion.

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