

## **Remaking Lives in a Multifaceted Market**

### Trust Reconfigured: An Ethnographic Study of Financial market in Taiwan

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An open and transparent financial market usually earns investor's trust to invest their money in traditional economics' thinking. The past decades have seen Taiwan's financial market trying to keep the trading system open, fair, and efficient. However, Taiwanese investors do not just enter the market because of its fair system or open information; on the contrary, less and less individual investors are willing to invest.

Why do Taiwanese investors decline to enter the fairer market as expected by the economics' thinking? There must be factors outside the pure economic calculation. The paper hence aims to explore the holistic milieu that affects Taiwanese investors' actions. It specifically focuses on the trust among securities professionals and investors that has been modified by the more transparent financial market. I believe the open system has isolated individuals, and broke the trust between securities professionals and investors that has attracted people to invest in the first place. I shall observe and interview securities professionals at their daily practices so as to examine how they win the trust from investors. I conclude by pointing out that the trust culturally informed plays a crucial role in financial market in Taiwan even when it moves toward a more rationalized system. And this is important for understanding how economics and culture intertwine in society such as Taiwan.

### The Rational Economic Woman

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This paper argues that in Tanahun, Central Nepal, a microfinance institution and a local cooperative are trying to impose a neoliberal model of woman onto their clients, the 'Rational Economic Woman (REW)' (Rankin 2001). The discourses illustrating the desirable characteristics suggest that the main required features of REW are: controlled, hardworking, disciplined and profit-oriented. The analysis suggests not only that this desirable dimension of womanhood must be Brahman, but also that the dominant high-caste Hindu model of woman and the REW discourse are mutually reinforcing. Therefore, microfinance practices subtly preach a 'Brahman-ization' of womanhood, reinforcing discourses of domination based on the caste system

Resisting or Embracing? A Case Study on Yi Farmers' Agricultural Livelihoods and  
Uncertainties in Northeast Yunnan, China

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When witnessing and experiencing the dramatic agricultural transformation from subsistence farming to cash cropping, what are the strategies that Yi farmers have adopted to cope with such changes, and what are the perceptions Yi farmers have gained towards various hazardous weather events and policy changes? To address both questions above-mentioned, this paper uses a mixed method to explore Yi farmers' livelihood in a remote village named Zhanhe in Ninglang Yi Autonomous County, which is located on the edge of Northeast Yunnan, China. I present the results of approximately 40 semi-structured interviews with Zhanhe residents, which aims to gain understandings on Yi farmers' risk perceptions regarding sustaining their livelihoods under agricultural transformation. Although the results show that Yi farmers are inclined to embrace the new agricultural policy, which emphasizes on replacing subsistence crops, such as tartary buckwheat with commercial crops (Walnut and Chinese medicine) their responses suggest that there are a great deal of uncertainties involved at the same time. I interpret the findings in the context of literature on cultural theory of risk and China's modernization trend for understanding the interrelationship between economic development and the uncertainties that farmers are facing. I consider the implications of these findings for better navigating agricultural policies in rural China today.