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Of Heroines and Victims:
Women and Economic Development
in Medellín, Colombia

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As in many parts of the world, women in Colombia participate in economic development projects ostensibly designed to improve their own lives and those of their communities. Indeed, women's development has become a huge world-wide industry, so much so that most developing countries today must demonstrate attention to women's situations in order to receive international development aid.[1] In fact, over the past four decades women's development has been pursued by many nations as part of an argument about "efficiency"; it is more efficient to harness women's energy for development than to allow them to "waste" it languishing in the home (Moser 1989).[2] As development strategies have shifted toward neoliberal approaches that involve cutting state budgets for health care, education, and other social programs, there is an even greater expectation that women will fill the gaps left by state withdrawal (Boesten 2003; Lind 2003). In this climate, women have become the virtual heroines of development, committing time, energy, and resources to help their communities and their nations.

Under circumstances where women are increasingly relied upon for development work, some important questions need answering. Are women victimized or empowered by their participation in development? This is not a new question, and obviously the answers are complicated. Clearly, women's often heroic participation in national development schemes can be both empowering *and* victimizing. However, through the examination of three case studies from Colombia, I will argue that the shift toward neoliberal development policies creates conditions under which women's participation in development is both more necessary for survival, and more difficult to maintain. These policies, slashing state budgets for social services, increasing unemployment rates, and exacerbating social conflict, make demands of women that ate perhaps both unreasonable and unfair.

Asking After Women's Development

The question of whether development is good for women is not a new one. Esther Boserup first introduced it in her 1970 ground breaking study "Woman's Role in Economic Development." A number of studies at the time questioned the impact

of development around the world, but Boserup specifically asked whether *women* were doing better or worse after a decade of development. She showed that in fact, women's economic status in many developing nations had decreased: many women who had previously had some economic independence (through participation in the market for instance), had been shunted into subsistence agriculture while their men entered the cash economy through small-scale production or wage labor.[3]

Importantly, Boserup believed that women's marginalization from development was not only devastating to women, but was also disastrous for developing countries. Integrating women into development would ultimately help everyone, she thought, because women who were doing better would help their families, and in turn their nations, to do better as well.[4] In this view, women could be the *heroines* of development, if only they could be fully integrated into its processes.

Almost immediately, Boserup's view was contested. Other feminist theorists such as Lourdes Benería and Gita Sen (1981) argued that just as developing nations were deeply integrated into world markets in ways that perpetually subordinated them, so were women.[5] Women had not been marginalized from development, but instead had been integrated into development processes in very particular ways. The growth of formal capitalist economies in developing nations depended upon women's cheap or unpaid labor (whether in the home, or as part-time, seasonal, or otherwise underpaid workers). Similarly, the growth of community development programs depended upon women's volunteer labor (Lind 2003). Some argue that this has constituted the "super-exploitation" of women: adding organizational work and development planning to their already overloaded "double shift" of family responsibilities and work in the formal and informal economies (Benería and Sen 1981; Sen and Grown 1987; Young 1993; Marchand and Parpart 1995; Ward and Pyle 1995). In this view, women are the *victims* of development—"integrated" in ways that fail to recognize the contributions of their labor but that nevertheless make that labor indispensable to the process.

The point of agreement in both sets of claims is that women's heroism in development can be either empowering or victimizing, depending upon the conditions of their participation.[6] Actually, if one views these terms as opposite points on a continuum, then participation in development can be both empowering and victimizing at the same time, but the balance between the two can be affected by surrounding circumstances.

If the circumstances in which development is undertaken are what make the difference between abject victimization and some balance between "good" and "bad," then we really need to understand the exact conditions under which women labor (Lind 2003; Álvarez 1996). In particular, as neoliberal development policies are implemented throughout the developing world, we need to understand how these policies affect women.

The Neoliberal Development Context and Women

In Latin America specifically, earlier import substitution development policies that created jobs and protected local industries have been gradually eroded. In their place are neoliberal policies that revive liberal economic faith in the viability and justice of free markets, and the sole responsibility of individuals to survive by selling their goods on the market (whether these "goods" are labor or commodities). Such policies emphasize free trade on the international market, decreased government intervention in the economy, and correspondingly downsized government budgets (Rosen and McFedyen 1995). Development programs under this rubric increasingly focus on the production of goods for sale as a panacea for growing unemployment, under-employment, and associated poverty. Placing the locus of responsibility for economic development on the individual, these policies frequently fail to consider how individual capacity is shaped by larger social contexts within which people live. Indeed, in many parts of the world, neoliberal economic policies themselves create circumstances that make successful initiatives more difficult than ever. In Latin America, scholars have demonstrated that neoliberal policies have had drastically negative effects on the social fabric as the gap between rich and poor grows wider, and crime rates and unemployment soar across the region (Portes and Hoffman 2003; Phillips 1998; Kuczynski 1988; George 1997).

Women are particularly burdened. While women's labor has long been crucial to the development process, neoliberal development programs make that labor especially difficult as women are increasingly expected to provide care and services that the state had earlier supplied (Bakker 1994; Benería and Feldman 1992; Vavrus and Richey 2003; Lind 2002). For instance, under neoliberal emphases on privatization of the economy, women have been laid off from government employment and expected to rely on male partners' wages, or targeted for small business loans that allow them to pursue activities such as selling sodas and ice cream out of their front parlors. In Colombia, as unemployment rates soar, women are expected to fill income gaps, or even support entire families, on the monies they might receive through such small business enterprises. This makes often unjustified assumptions about family structure, as over one-third of Colombian families are headed by single females (Bonilla 1985). Such a policy also makes unrealistic demands on women forced to rely upon the precarious informal economy, defined by the lack of guarantees such as a minimum wage, insurance and health benefits, and healthy working conditions (Babb 2001; Isserles 2003).

The Colombian case is especially interesting because it has only recently undergone some of the structural adjustment programs that have ravaged much of Latin America over the past twenty-five years. Moreover, Colombia suffers the effects of a very complicated armed conflict. As a result of both circumstances, poverty and violence are endemic issues that women participating in development must face. Under these conditions, women find that their participation in development can be "good" for them in that it often strengthens their sense of capability and personal worth; at the same time, it is "bad" for them in that, as development

participants, they are often exposed to greater violence and even greater poverty than they might otherwise be. Development is a paradoxical practice for women in Colombia, one that makes them both heroines and victims.

The Colombian Cases

Political Economy and Women's Development

The particular historical moment in which I began this research was an especially difficult one for Colombians. The country's development strategy of import substitution and the protection of local industry had begun to erode earlier, but it had retained a fairly stable economy even through the debt crisis of the 1980s that so affected other Latin American countries (Sánchez 2001). However, in September 1998, President Andres Pastrana announced an "economic and social emergency"[7] and instituted austerity measures that cut state budgets for health care, education, and development programs, as well as subsidized food, utilities, and transportation for the poor. By 1999, the country was in "full recession" and the "official unemployment rate reached 20%" (Reina 2001: 75).[8]

In addition to the economic troubles, social problems also worsened. Colombia had enjoyed a period of relative respite from violence following the signing of the new 1991 Constitution and the death of the infamous drug-trafficker Pablo Escobar. However, when President Pastrana went forward with plans to negotiate for peace with the Armed Revolutionary Forces of Colombia ["Las FARC"] in 1998, Colombia's conflict reasserted itself. In order to strengthen their position, or in some cases, to demand a place at the bargaining table, both the FARC and other armed actors escalated the violence (Bergquist, Peñaranda and Sánchez 2001).

The working poor were especially hard hit by these events. On the slopes located at the northern end of Medellín, one-half of the city's 2 million inhabitants lived in what were collectively known as "the communities" ["las comunas"] (Naranjo-Giraldo 1992).[9] Stereotyped as poverty-stricken and violent, these areas have been plagued by drug-traffickers, guerrilla groups, paramilitaries, and self-appointed vigilantes, all of whom have contributed to the creation of numerous gangs, over 200 of which operate in the northeastern communities alone (Salazar 1990, 1993). During 1999, unemployment in these areas reached 60% and by 2000 when I left the field, 42% of the population had decreased its food consumption in order to survive (Departamento Administrativo 2001). Gangs helped to assuage the crisis through illegal money-making schemes including the drug trade, black market in alcohol, cigarettes, clothes, etc., and through extorting protection money from busdrivers, store-owners, and other entrepreneurs.

Refugee families fleeing the rural violence exacerbated already-existing pressures on poor communities.[10] In particular, they not only competed with long-term residents for jobs and state funds for development, but also tapped into utility lines feeding nearby homes thus driving up costs for all. In general, these parts of

the city were not well-equipped to receive the influx of refugee families, and tensions abounded.

Women seeking help with these problems from government agencies were sorely disappointed when funding for women's development was also drastically cut. This was especially devastating given the earlier commitments various governments had made. In 1992, Governor Juan Gómez Martínez had founded the Women's Department ["La Consejería Para la Mujer"] of the state of Antioquia in exchange for electoral support from the region's women's organizations. This Governor envisioned the Women's Department as part of the overall "modernization" project of the state. Under the leadership of this agency, the state launched a series of wide-ranging projects that encouraged women's participation in the region's economic development.[11]

However, by the time I began fieldwork in 1998, changes were afoot. The new Governor of Antioquia, Alberto Builes Ortega, facing budget restrictions, was less committed to the agency. As a result, the Women's Department faced a budget crisis and staff were reduced, programs disappeared, and the once-influential Women's Department appeared to be limping along, hoping to hold out long enough to survive into the next administration.[12]

Similarly, the City Agency for Women ["La Casa de la Mujer," literally the "Women's House"] was suffering under overall budget restrictions and decreased spending on women's development. The City Agency had opened in 1994 with the explicit goal of decreasing working-class women's reliance upon state agencies to resolve their economic and social problems. By promoting women's self-esteem and involving them in small-business enterprises (often involving the sale of cooked foods), the agency hoped to foster women's participation in development, and their ability to improve the quality of their homes and communities. In 1998, its staff was continuing to work in these areas, but with less money to help a population facing cutbacks in government services, growing unemployment, and worsening violence.

Methods

It was in this context that I began my research. From September to December 1998, I hired a research assistant whom I had first met in 1996 when he was still employed by the Women's Department. As one of the founding employees of this agency, he had numerous contacts with government officials as well as with women's organizations all over the city and state. He introduced me to a number of women who had been involved in development programs organized by both of the central agencies I have discussed, and was invaluable to my research in these arenas.

During this time period, I interviewed officials in both the state and city women's development agencies, attended workshops, and visited women's groups that were involved in these government programs. I also interviewed leaders of 11 different women's groups, and visited specific development projects in both urban and rural areas around the state. Of these various interviews and projects, I have

selected three that were most representative of the kinds of problems faced by those interested in women's development.

The Recycling Project

About 60 miles southeast of Medellín, in an economically depressed area, the Women's Department of Antioquia helped a women's group start a successful re-cycling program. My assistant took me to observe the project, and as we drove through the twisty mountain roads, he explained the economic situation for the surrounding region. It had been planted in coffee, but the debt crisis of the 1980s had resulted in a transformation: small coffee farmers sold their land and moved to the city, and wealthier people bought up the land to use for cattle grazing and country homes ["fincas"] for weekends and holidays. Although the town was nestled in a small, very picturesque valley, what few tourists it attracted were drawn to the countryside and rarely ventured into town. As a result, the 13,000 people in the town lived primarily from the declining coffee industry and were frequently un-employed. In an effort to generate income in this difficult economic climate, a small women's group picked up recyclable materials from participating households, then cleaned, repackaged, and resold the stuff to businesses in Medellín.

During our day-long trip, I was able to interview the group's leader, attend a group meeting, and also visit the processing center where materials were prepared for shipping. I learned the history of their organization, and the kinds of work they were presently doing. I was impressed by the pride the group showed in their accomplishments, and at the same time distressed by the wide variety of obstacles they faced.

The group had originally formed in 1994 with 40 members interested in pur-suing some kind of income-generating development project. During their first two years, the Women's Department was one of many agencies engaged in social development projects for women, and provided the group with training in women's economic and political rights in relation to their families and the state. They were also put into contact with the smaller agencies that eventually funded them.

They were successful in making these contacts in part because their president had a particularly conducive social situation. Her husband, a college graduate with a degree in Sociology, was very interested in supporting women's development work, and encouraged his wife's participation. Moreover, they owned a wood-working shop and had no children, so in addition to her husband's emotional support, the president also had the free time and financial means to travel across the state meeting development agents, attending workshops, and drumming up support for the group.

In 1996, the group decided to form a recycling business and received funding from two different state-sponsored sources. This funding enabled them to access training and equipment for the collection of recyclable materials, and to start edu-cating the public about their project.

Education was a big task, as the town had never participated in a recycling program before, and townspeople did not understand how it was supposed to work. For instance, it took the women 2 years to teach townspeople to sort their own trash. They accomplished this in part through flyers, but also through the local radio station which allowed them to broadcast in 10-minute slots 3 times a week.

There was also a great deal of prejudice against trash collectors in the town. Many members of the original group quit over the recycling project because they felt it was "denigrating work" ["un trabajo denigrante"]. In Colombia, as elsewhere in the world, the very poor regularly visit garbage dumps and trash heaps in search of food, clothing, items to sell, etc. It is quite common to hear these people referred to in unambiguously negative terms such as "disposable ones" ["desechables"] or "garbage-pickers" ["basuriega"]. In 1998, workers said that they were recognized as "recyclers" ["recicladoras"]; however, many people in the community still failed to understand the value of the recycling program. They continued to believe that they were doing women a favor by "allowing" them to pick up their trash and sell it. In other words, residents who recycled their trash believed that they were engaged in charity work rather than being provided with a service!

It was true that recycling was performed by very poor people. By the time I met the recycling group in 1998, their numbers had dwindled to 18, and only 8 of the very poorest members of the group actually did the recycling labor. Colombia's public utilities companies assign every household to a particular economic stratum, ranging from "stratum 1" which is the lowest, to "stratum 6" which is the highest.[13] These assignations are quite familiar to almost everyone, and people readily speak about economic status in these terms. Most development projects target only members of strata 1 and 2, and in this case, funding specified that only women in these economic strata could benefit from the project. The president and other members, occupying strata 3 and 4, were not eligible to receive a salary from the project proceeds.

The project had been successful from a financial standpoint; in 1998 the women were earning enough money from the sale of recycled materials to pay their own salaries and were no longer dependent upon financing agencies. In part, this was the result of savvy investing. When they still had financing, they had agreed to keep their wages low so that surplus capital could be invested, and they then paid wages out of that investment. At the suggestion of the president and her husband, the laboring women had agreed to continue to receive very low wages in the hopes of building up more capital for future investment.

They were also successful in that the project had grown more respectable and townspeople seemed to better understand the process. Residents were finally sorting their own trash so that organic (or solid kitchen) waste went into 5 gallon black buckets, while bottles, plastics, paper, and cardboard went into separate plastic bags. On collection days, every other Monday or Tuesday, the 8 women walked down the streets with wheelbarrows yelling "recycling, recycling" ["reciclaje, reciclaje"] and people brought their trash out to them.

The rest of the work-week, the women spent their time sorting and processing the trash. The processing center, on the outskirts of town up a small dirt road, was an open-walled brick shed with a large storage room and several sinks along one end. There, women cut open, washed, and sorted plastic drink bags by color. Plastic bottles were washed and sorted by color and type of plastic. Paper and cardboard was sorted and then repackaged by type. Glass bottles were sorted by color, and then smashed up against a wall so that the pieces fell into a bricked-in space. Once the trash was sorted, cleaned, and re-bagged, it was taken by truck to Medellín where businesses bought recycled materials.

While the project was successful, women continued to face several obstacles that made their participation more difficult. First, the 8 women worked five days a week for 8 hours a day, earning about US$64 every *month*. This was considerably less than the Colombian state's mandated minimum wage of US$119 per month. Worse, the actual cost of living—food, health services, housing, transport, education, and entertainment—for a family of five had been calculated at more than twice that amount—roughly US $286.[14] This meant that more than 2 minimum salaries were required for sustaining the average household, while these women earned less than one.

I asked the president why women were willing to work for so little compensation. She shrugged her shoulders and answered, "their standard of living ["condiciones de la vida"] has not improved substantially. Perhaps they are assured of sugar and rice that they did not have before, but their conditions have not improved!" Then I asked, "So why do they do it? What did they live on before?" She answered with a laugh, "from the weather! ["del clima"]." Then more seriously, she admitted, "This is a question that I have asked myself, because they have now worked under these conditions for two years, so this must represent an improvement. . . . It must be that before, they were actually hungry." I then suggested that perhaps the women had partners who helped support their households. She said, "Yes, some of them have partners who work and earn a little money, but there are several who do not have any other income." After I had turned off the tape recorder, she added that perhaps they continued in the project because their only alternative was prostitution.

Poor working conditions were also a problem for the group. The collection work was especially difficult as women walked several miles in the hot sun (or pouring rain) with many pounds of trash piled high into wheelbarrows. Once they arrived at the processing center, its structure was not designed to protect them from the elements. They worked in the open patio area even in the heavy rains that fell in the afternoons and had nowhere to sit and relax except on plastic bags full of recycled materials. Breaking glass bottles by hand was obviously hazardous business and one admitted that she cut her hands frequently as glass bounced back off the walls. They had recently bought heavy uniforms in the hope of protecting themselves from the dirt and cutting edges of the materials they worked with, but some refused to wear them because they were too heavy or too hot. In addition,

the project was too poor to provide health care or retirement benefits—so getting sick or injured on the job was a serious problem.

Another problem was that of transport. The town loaned them a truck a couple of times a month to get materials to Medellín where they could be sold, but there were often days when the truck was not running, or when the roads were washed out.[15] When I arrived, it had been 5 days since they had been able to use the truck, and their processing shed was overflowing. If the truck were not repaired soon, they would have to stop collecting materials until they could get some things to the city. This was a serious problem as it disrupted the flow of goods and capital, and could potentially endanger women's paychecks for weeks at a time. Further, it could damage the fragile reputation they had worked so hard to establish with the town's residents. Undoubtedly, they needed a more reliable source of transport.

As I left the town that night, I reflected on both the successes they had won, and the continued challenges these women faced. These women were clearly "heroines" in the sense that they provided a genuine service that under different circumstances would have been provided by the state. Their participation did seem to deliver on some of the "empowerment" promises; women were clearly proud of their labor and of the project's successes. At the same time they were victimized by the process in that they labored under very difficult circumstances and on top of that, were still perceived as the recipients of charity despite their ingenuity and hard work. Like so many development projects for women, this one seemed to be relying upon women's back-breaking labor to provide a community-wide service in exchange for minimal remuneration. The conditions, at least at that moment, seemed to tip the balance from empowerment toward victimization. .

The Bakery Cooperative

Back in the city, I was anxious to observe one of the City Agency's more successful projects, a women's restaurant and bakery cooperative located in a northwestern neighborhood. My research assistant and I took the bus up the hill to visit them one warm, sunny morning. We spent the day talking with the group's president, touring their premises, and hearing the history of the group's development.

The Bakery and Restaurant Cooperative was formed in 1994 originally as a neighborhood organization with some ties to the local Protestant church. Although much larger in the beginning, they had gradually dwindled down to the current 21 members. When they first started, most of the women worked as domestic servants during the day, and at night worked as a group cooking sausages and tamales, and creating Christmas decorations for sale in their neighborhoods.

At this same time, the City Agency was conducting programs for ex-guerrilla members ["reinsertados"] in the area. Urban guerrillas ["milicianos"] operated in many of the city's poor neighborhoods, and the state from time to time offered alternative employment and development schemes to these areas in order to control or dampen guerrilla activities. As part of an overall effort to establish a positive

state presence, these programs often extended beyond the guerrillas themselves to other members of their communities, including women's groups.

As part of such a program begun in 1995, this women's group was contracted by the City Agency to provide meals the city fed to the homeless. The group worked "night and day" to provide 500 sandwiches a day for the city. After five months, the city gave them money to buy equipment and receive training in bakery and restaurant management.

In 1998, they were still running strong, and their circumstances attested to the success of the program. They had a contract with the City Agency to provide breakfasts for the homeless, and also lunch meals for the city-wide workshops often held for women involved in other City Agency programs. They rented a large building with a covered patio for outdoor seating, a counter from which they sold candies and pastries, a large kitchen area with space for stove-tops and baking ovens, and several large storage rooms. They prepared the food on-site, and then transported it via taxi or private car to the workshop sites the City Agency had chosen for particular days.

The president was very proud of their work, adding, "I am very pleased with my good fortune." In fact, she had invested a great deal of time and effort in the project. It was because of her efforts that the cooperative was able to buy food on credit from the grocer down the street. She and the grocer had reached an agreement that the cooperative would not have to pay him for groceries until they had received payment from the City Agency. She had also been responsible for the development of their food menu. Although she consulted with a nutritionist from the City Agency, she designed her own menus to be "more filling and more tasty." She said these were better for the homeless who were unlikely to get other meals, and designed to keep clients (such as the state) coming back for more.

Like all development success stories, this one too had its problems, most of which were economic. Of the 21 members of the cooperative, only 7 (including the president) actually worked in the restaurant preparing food. This was in part because there was only enough money for an honorarium ["bonificación"] of about US$20 a month for each worker. Even for these small sums, they often waited weeks to be paid by the city. As a result, they lost working members who could not afford to wait long periods for cash. Moreover, there were many months when the debts for groceries, transport, utilities, etc. were such that all the money went to pay debts, with nothing left over for the honorariums! This meant that many of the workers were either women whose husbands' salaries could support the household, or they worked elsewhere and labored in the restaurant during their "off" hours. The restaurant was actually open from 5:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Monday through Saturday, and a few workers, along with the president, were there every day. In fact, the president worked so many hours that she only saw her two sons on Sundays when the restaurant was closed; the rest of the time, they stayed with her mother.

In addition to wage problems, the group faced a precarious situation in terms of their building. They had rented it from the nearby Protestant Church without any problem until 1997, when the church changed pastors. That year, they had had to work hard to convince the new pastor to allow them to stay in the building. In an effort to avoid such difficulties in the future, they had unsuccessfully tried to get a loan to buy the building. They were turned down by several lenders in part because as a cooperative of women with little property to offer as collateral, they had trouble qualifying for small-business loans (usually made to individuals). The president had heard that sometimes the leaders of such cooperatives had put up their own homes as collateral for the group, but she had thus far been dissuaded from that strategy by City Agency employees concerned for her long-term welfare.

Their business was also rather severely affected by the reduced subsidies to the poor initiated by President Pastrana. For instance, the cuts in government subsidies for electricity meant that they had to shut down the electric bread ovens, so the bakery section of the business was closed for the time being. Other daily necessities were also more expensive, such as groceries, water and sewerage, and telephone services, all making it more difficult for the cooperative to make ends meet.

Lastly, without the ability to secure a loan, they were also unable to buy their own transport. In order to get the cooked food to the workshops, they had been using a private truck that they rented from a local man who worked for them while seeking more lucrative employment. He finally found a good job and his truck was no longer available. They were on the lookout for another driver, but in the meantime were using taxis that apparently jostled the food so badly that city workers had complained. The group worried over this because, as part of neoliberal privatization of government programs, there was growing pressure on government agencies to use local private restaurants rather than cooperatives to provide food for city functions. The group did not want to give the City Agency any excuse to terminate their contract.

Despite their difficulties, the president clearly felt that her participation in this project had been tremendously empowering; the women had learned how to run a small business, and were convinced that they were capable. She said she worked "night and day" because she loved it so, despite the hardships it created for her family. Her children in particular complained to her, "You are being a fool. Go back to where you worked before, you were doing better there." She had worked as a maid, and earned more money there, but said, "I know that I do not have any money, but I feel good about what I am doing." She explained that some people "do not understand what a cooperative program is. This is not for getting rich, but rather to offer a contribution, this is a contribution that one makes." She indicated a sense of eventual personal gain as well, saying, "One day this cooperative will succeed and I will be able to take better care of my children." For the other women, also working only for honorariums, one might suspect that they too were similarly motivated.

As I said goodbye to this group, I began thinking about how to evaluate the project. I was struck by the fact that the City Agency relied upon these women to provide cheap cooked meals for the city's homeless and other populations in need. In exchange for their long hours of dedication and hard work, women received minimal compensation, and were also prevented from expanding their operation by certain government policies ostensibly designed to decrease the dependency of the poor upon the state. Clearly, neoliberal economic policies created conditions that hindered, rather than supported, women's entrepreneurial activities. Mandated cutbacks in state spending made it difficult for women to maintain daily operations. Restrictions on lending that favored the individual entrepreneur rather than cooperative enterprises made it hard for women to access small business loans. Additionally, with little provocation the City Agency might turn from state-established cooperatives to private industry to supply their needs. In this case, the state exploited (and benefitted greatly from) women's willingness to become the "heroines" of development.

Refugee Women's Organizations

The last set of projects I want to look at are women's organizations that the City Agency has helped to establish in refugee neighborhoods. My research assistant was working in these neighborhoods at the time, helping women's groups to organize so that they could qualify for development funding from the state. He had good relationships with women in these areas, and as a result, I was able to travel with him to visit them.

Groups fleeing the rural violence founded these neighborhoods. In some cases, they had advance warning that guerrilla or paramilitary were going to attack their town or village and could pile their belongings together onto a truck. These families arrived with beds, televisions, refrigerators, stoves, and other material goods that made setting up house a bit easier upon arrival. In other cases, people fled in the middle of the night and came to the city with only the belongings they could gather as they ran. When they arrived in Medellín, they had to begin rebuilding their lives from scratch. At first, they got very little help from the state.

Refugees built their neighborhoods on squatted land located on some of the most precarious terrain in the city. The evening news was frequently filled with stories of yet another squatter settlement that had been destroyed by landslide, or moved by police for fear that such an event would occur. Refugees began to petition the state for the right to build on squatted land as soon as they arrived, but while awaiting legalization, they built houses, stairways, sidewalks, community centers, schools, and even roads with the bits of money they were able to save as construction workers, night watchmen, or domestic servants (Naranjo-Giraldo 1992).

Visiting these neighborhoods involved climbing steep, curving roads up through the northeastern communities until finally we reached the peak and the road ran

out. Sprawled on the hillside below the road, we reached the houses by climbing down vertiginous stairways carved literally out of the side of the mountain. Shacks ["ranchos"] built of found wood, cardboard, tin, and sometimes brick if the families were lucky enough, protected families from the elements. Ugly snaking electrical lines were strung haphazardly between the houses, tapped illegally into the official grid further down slope.

Gaining legal recognition for their neighborhoods, and thus access to all the amenities that came with that recognition—sewerage, electricity, water, telephones, schools, roads, garbage services, etc.—was one of the main goals for neighborhood women's organizations. Women whose husbands had the best paying jobs did not work outside the home, and thus had time for organizing, garnering official support and recognition, and participating in community development. They engaged in activities that benefitted the entire community, including poorer families and those women left widowed with children by the war.

In Medellín, it was necessary for women's groups to have a legal structure in order to be eligible for government funding. My research assistant worked with the City Agency to help women get through this process. It involved the election of a Board of Directors, the construction of By-laws, and participation in a series of workshops covering a variety of issues. I had the opportunity to attend the workshop during which women in one neighborhood adopted a formal legal structure. The process was complicated and revealed a serious obstacle to women's organizing in this manner.

Unfortunately, although Colombia reports an official 98% literacy rate (UNDP 1999), many people still found it difficult to attend school in the late 1990s.[16] In particular, people living in isolated rural areas were often quite far away from the nearest schools and had to be boarded during the school year. This could be expensive, and families were especially reluctant to send daughters away to school. The result was that many of the adult women in refugee women's organizations were functionally illiterate. Instructions for preparing By-laws had to be read aloud to them by development workers, and the details painstakingly explained over and over again. Even the election of Board members was made difficult: women could not read a ballot nor write out individual names. Voting was thus conducted by having everyone close their eyes and raise their hands when development workers called the names of women for whom they wished to vote.

There was another, more serious obstacle that made this kind of development participation difficult. There was little state presence in these communities other than the few development workers who ventured up the slope, and gangs of all kinds proliferated. Perhaps not surprisingly, armed groups were displeased by women's organizing strategies, especially when they tended to increase the state's interest in their neighborhoods. Women in many organizations reported being threatened by gang leaders who told them that they would be killed if they continued their activities. Development workers reported being caught in the middle of gunfights between rival gangs while trying to conduct empowerment workshops.

I knew from personal experience that state officials were careful to leave refugee neighborhoods before nightfall. In short, women and development workers sometimes risked their lives in order to galvanize state interest in community development.

Despite the difficulties, women also clearly felt empowered and were pleased by their participation in these programs. After the meeting when women elected their first Board of Directors, the group brought out a surprise feast of Christmas treats that they had collectively prepared for the City Agency workers who had been helping them. The president of another group had become a very familiar face at City Hall demanding that the state recognize and provide services for her community. She had braved her husbands' displeasure and risked violence at the hands of gang members to do so, and was very proud that government workers were beginning to recognize and respect her.

In this last example, once again women appeared to be both the heroines and the victims of development. Their efforts were heroic given the circumstances under which they struggled to rebuild lives torn apart by violent conflict. Forced to flee their homes by a war that the state had failed to resolve, and forced to rebuild those homes under a neoliberal economy that prided individual initiative but would not easily support it, they were both empowered and victimized by their own heroism.

Conclusion

In the forty years since Boserup started the wave called "women's development," we have learned that questions about women's participation in development have complicated answers. Clearly, development can be "good" for women, and conversely, women are "good" for development. In fact, women make obviously heroic efforts to contribute to their communities' and their nations' development projects. In the process, they learn skills, garner supports for their organizational labor, and gain a profound sense of accomplishment.

At the same time, they often engage in these practices under extremely harsh circumstances and may be victimized by their very participation. Colombian women in the three case studies were limited by a neoliberal economy that cut social spending while raising unemployment, and by a violent social conflict that increased tensions in marginalized neighborhoods and made organizing for change more difficult.

Under such circumstances, it is important to ask after women's development and in particular, it is important to ask about the viability of a neoliberal doctrine of individual responsibility and "hard work" in world regions afflicted by violence and rising social inequality. Relying upon individual women's resources as the major means by which countries will become "developed" in today's world seems a serious overestimation of these would-be heroines' capacities. Ultimately, the Colombian cases raise questions about both the justice and long-term feasibility of

putting the burdens of economic development on the backs of the world's poorest citizens. We must ask ourselves, how likely is it that "hard work" and "self-reliance" alone will accomplish development goals—and equally important—how fair is it to ask the world's most vulnerable to put right what powerful states will not?

Acknowledgments

Notes

1. For instance, Ghodsee (2003: 33) reports that the World Bank "requires 'Gender Impact Assessments' for all of its development projects."

2. This particular rhetoric suggesting that women's work in the home does not contribute to national development is ironic given that women's dedication to home and family is so often deemed an essential contribution to nation-building (Radcliffe and Westwood 1996).

3. Boserup contended that women had been marginalized from economic development as a result of Western biases in major development institutions. According to Boserup, Western gender ideologies based on a public-private dichotomy (the idea that the proper role for women was in the home, doing domestic labor, while men belonged in the "public" world of politics and commerce), had informed development practitioners' views of women's roles, and had resulted in the marginalization of women from productive labor.

4. The idea was that women would share their good fortune with others, using money to feed children and send them to school, etc.

5. This is an argument from the dependency school of development (Frank 1967; Cardoso and Faletto 1979).

6. For more recent feminist development thought *see* Elson 1992; Young 1993; Kabeer 1994; and Saunders 2002.

7. All translations from the Spanish are my own, unless otherwise indicated.

8. President Gaviria's development plan (1991-94) accelerated the economic "apertura" [opening] begun tentatively in the 1950s; with a more neoliberal economic policy, foreign investment in Colombia doubled between 1990 and 1994 (Bergquist, Peñaranda, and Sánchez G. 2001: xvi), and international goods entered the country at an unprecedented rate. Reina (2001: 75) argues that the apertura "devastated broad sectors of Colombian industry and agriculture thus exposed to the competitive pressures of the world market."

9. These communities were built upon the northern slopes on each side of the central valley where the downtown area was constructed. In 1998, the northwestern slope was home to 500,000 people, while the northeastern slope was home to another 500,000. Both sides are collectively known as the most violent, poverty-stricken areas of the city, but the northeastern

communities ["la comuna nororiental"] are widely thought to be "worse" in part because the drug-trafficker Pablo Escobar concentrated his gang-creating activities there in the 1980s.

10. In 1999, Colombia had the third largest internally displaced population in the world, after Sudan and Angola (Bergquist, et. al 2001, page 230, citing 1999 World Report of Human Rights Watch, published in 2000).

11. The preceding is taken from two documents supplied to me by Women's Department staff—"Democratic Leadership with a Gendered Perspective: Projection of EPAM" and "Toward Planning with a Gendered Perspective."

12. In fact, they never received the budget they needed to function at full speed, but were still in existence when I left the field in December 1999.

13. The price paid for public utilities all over Colombia is graduated according to the value of property and housing, so that lower income persons pay less for electricity, water, sewerage, etc. (Berry and Urrutia 1976: 168-169). Stratum are determined by a combination of size of household, number of persons working, income, housing materials, durable goods, etc.

14. The exchange rate at that time was about 1.7 pesos to the dollar. On December 20, 1998, Antioquia's regional paper, *El Colombiano*, published the summary of a report produced by the National School for Labor Unions, a Medellín-based NGO that worked with the country's unionized workers, that calculated the cost of living in 1998 using figures from the Administrative Department of National Statistics ("DANE").

15. The region was geologically unstable, and landslides strong enough to wash out the roadway were quite common. When this happened, travelers could be stranded for days at a time waiting for the state to provide road crews who could repair the way.

16. Although education is more widely available today than it was in the 1950s (Puyana and Orduz 1998), there are still many people living in and around Medellín who were unable to finish high school. Even in 1995, in the northeastern communities of Medellín, attendance at high school was estimated at only 78% (Departamento Administrativo 1995).

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Women and Development in Postsocialism: Theory and Power East and West

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Introduction

Socialism's fall in Eastern Europe has resulted in rearrangements of political, economic, and social forms, all of which have far-reaching implications for the lives of women. Women, who are frequently the primary caregivers of children and families, are struggling to make a living amidst formidable challenges. In Ukraine, for example, women's earned income is only half that of men's.[1] Additionally, women's representation in official politics has plummeted across the region.[2] Many East European women have taken up the strategy of founding non-governmental organizations (NGOs) called "mutual-aid associations" that seek social justice for disadvantaged groups such as large families, orphaned children, the elderly, and the disabled. In some ways, the emergent civil societies in states such as Ukraine have a distinctly "women's face." While women's social justice struggles have resulted in social and political reforms, they also have engendered highly meaningful personal transformations for women leaders.

I have been carrying out ethnographic research in Kyiv, Ukraine, since 1998. To date, this work has analyzed popular, political, and academic engagement of the "civil society" construct in the postsocialist context by examining ten non-governmental organizations (NGOs) led by women.[3] Further goals of this research have been to outline the challenges facing women in the post-Soviet period, and to examine the long-term effects of the Soviet gender contract. I argue that, in many cases, leadership roles in social organizations are a form of alternative employment for women, who have been forced out of their jobs in the context of postsocialist economic crisis and a revived nationalism that emphasizes women's domestic, care giving functions.

I therefore conceptualize the space of civic organizations, and particularly caring-oriented "mutual-aid associations," as a niche that is being carved out specifically by and for women in post-Soviet Ukraine. Within this niche, circulate competing discourses on women and their roles, the state and its responsibilities towards citizens, and class differences and criteria of social worth (Stark 1994). While a few women take up discussions of women's rights in their organizing efforts, many draw on "traditional" notions of femininity and women's "natural" roles as mothers. By examining these different discourses, in my research I have analyzed the

social space of civic organizations as a locus of complex personal, local, state-level, and transnational transformations.

This work adds to research on women's social justice struggles and post-Soviet women's movements by documenting the gendered nature of civil society in post-Soviet Ukraine and analyzing discourses on gender, class, activism, the state, and civil society that position women within Ukraine's so-called non-governmental sphere. I take up discussions of transnational interventions in Ukraine's NGO development, particularly exchanges between Western feminist groups and local women's groups in Ukraine. I examine how Western feminism(s) translate into the Ukrainian context, pointing out ways in which Ukrainian women activists take up or reject feminist discourses, and how they may localize them to better suit their own experiences and worldviews. The research has examined the "feminizing" of organizational life in Ukraine as the combined result of women's practical concerns and practices (i.e. for survival), local and transnational discourses on women and their roles in civil society, and transnational initiatives to empower women.

Ten organizations (encompassing eleven women NGO leaders) have constituted the major sources of information for my research. I chose mainly civic organizations structured as "mutual-aid associations" that simultaneously act as both a support group and a humanitarian (charity) organization. The organizations in my study have included groups for the following categories of persons: large families, women pensioners (retirees), persons with spinal cord injuries, women with disabilities, and children with cancer and their families (two organizations). Three other organizations were charity or service organizations that had no fixed membership but usually had very specific target groups (such as children with cerebral palsy, and "Chernobyl children"). My study also includes one non-profit cultural organization whose members strove to instill a sense of patriotic pride in Ukrainian youth. Only two of the ten organizations were founded on a specifically women's platform—the organization for disabled women, and the organization for women retirees. Primary research methods have included participant observation, unstructured and semi-structured interviews with the directors and assistant directors of the organizations, life history interviews, and media analysis.

Debates: Women's Empowerment and Civil Society after Socialism

Since the fall of socialism in Central and Eastern Europe, Western scholars and those from the former Soviet Bloc have scrutinized "post-Soviet" women and the various transformations, struggles, and achievements that have characterized their lives during the "transition" to democratic, capitalistic forms of government (Bridger and Pinnick 1996; Buckley 1992; Drakulić 1992, 1998; Edmondson 1992; Einhorn 1993; Funk 1993; Funk and Mueller 1993; Gal 1997; Gal and Kligman 2000a, 2000b; Handrahan 2002; Haney 1999, 2000, 2002; Ishkanian 2000; Kay 2000; Moghadam 1993; Pavlychko 1992, 1996; Rivkin-Fish 2000; Rubchak 1996, 2001; Sperling 1999; Walsh 1998; Watson 1993, 1997a, 1997b, 2000; Zhurzhenko 2001).

Many of these researchers have pointed out the relative advantages that democratization and the development of civil society in the region have created for men. A representative example of this work includes Peggy Watson's article, "The Rise of Masculinism in Eastern Europe." In the article Watson (1993:72) writes the following:

> . . . the changes which have been wrought [in Eastern Europe] now offer systematic advantage to men. That is because civil society offers an enhanced but unequal scope for action in the new public sphere, while the private sphere—the traditional domain of women—is set to lose much of its previous significance. Civil society means the empowerment of men and the enactment of masculinity on a grand scale.

Similarly, of civil society in postsocialist states Barbara Einhorn (1993:65) has written that:

> . . . women's relegation to the hearth is occurring precisely at the moment when the private sphere has lost the significance it inadvertently gained as a substitute civil society. In other words, at the very moment when women are being once again assigned to the private sphere, it is the public sphere which is being revalued, at least for men.

These analyses are not so much generated from a misrecognition of the substantial roles that women now play in the postsocialist "third sector" of non-governmental organizations, as from the assumption that, since their civil society activities are usually relegated to the (supposedly) non-political sphere of NGOs, women's interests and needs are thus devalued. Indeed, many scholars see women's focus on "traditionally feminine" issues (and scholars' insistence on underlining the "maternalist" orientations of many women's groups) as a threat to women, whose influence and activities are thus relegated to a realm outside the bounds of meaningful political decision-making. Of Russian NGOs, for example, Liborakina (1998) writes: "The nonprofit sector shows signs of turning into a female ghetto of low pay and little power." Handrahan, who has studied NGOs in the former Soviet republic of Kyrgyzstan, asserts that the "gendered nature of civil society . . . represents a negative trend of lack of female access to genuine decision-making positions" (2000:19). Furthermore, she argues that ". . . because: (a) NGOs are not seen as important by local political leaders, and (b) NGO work is difficult, and brings fewer financial rewards, women have been allowed to dominate the non-formal-civic public space" (2002:83). Handrahan believes that Western governments who drive "civil society building" efforts in the region "fail to understand the implications of a female-driven civil society" (ibid., 82). Because donors equate NGOs with civil society, she writes, they automatically assume that greater women's participation in NGOs is beneficial to women. She states, ". . . the happy assumption that a proliferation of women active in NGOs adds up to an equality in

political decision-making is both erroneous and detrimental to authentic political participation for both women and civil society as a whole" (ibid.).

These conclusions may be countered, however, by theoretical arguments made by scholars studying women's civil society initiatives in other parts of the world. Even when women's activism in NGOs is "patriarchically oriented" (that is, "woman-centered," as opposed to "feminist"), argues Tyyskä (1998:398), for example, women have the potential to have political influence from the "outside" (ibid., 407). Tyyskä studied various organizational strategies of women in Canada and Finland to assess the relative effectiveness of strategies she calls "insider" and "outsider." Asserting that, "women are relatively invisible in Canadian politics," she writes that, "making important gains in areas deemed to be 'traditionally feminine' not only establishes women as major political players but also creates a legitimacy for a large number of 'women's' issues which have traditionally been assigned a secondary status" (ibid., 407-408). As William Fisher (1997:446) pointed out in his seminal critique of discourses surrounding the work of NGOs, "non-governmental" (as in non-governmental organizations) does not mean "non-political."

While I am sympathetic to arguments made by scholars such as Handrahan and Tyyskä at both ends of the "empowerment" spectrum, I would assert that the question of women's empowerment through civil society initiatives is somewhat more complicated than either "side of the house" admits. In focusing my research and analysis on the NGO sector as a creative gendered space for women, I have tried to show that, contrary to statements made by Watson (1993) and Einhorn (1993) a decade ago, women do seem to have found an avenue for entering the "new public sphere" by taking up meaningful roles as social activists (c.f. Phillips 2000). Granted, to describe their activism they often refer to tropes of domesticity such as motherhood and care giving—common indexes of the presumably devalued private sphere—but competing ideologies of womanhood produced tensions that the women constantly negotiated, both individually and collectively (Berdahl 1999:197). I found that some of the activists I knew began to take up narratives on women's rights, narratives that were transformative for them.

One of my primary research methods, the collection of life histories from women activists, yielded an abundance of narratives that illustrated women's complicated subject positions. When I asked them about the history of their lives, the women produced what I call *braided narratives*, or narratives through which they wove together seemingly contradictory discourses (maternalist/motherist, feminist, nationalist) into unexpected accountings for past, current, and future actions (Stark 1994). The life history narratives illustrated how women's roles as social activists fit into their lives as a whole, as they outlined the circumstances through which they had come to this work, and the significant others (persons and institutions) who had influenced them. Tracking these narratives thus allowed me to analyze the various tropes of womanhood, femininity, and social justice the women in my study took up to describe their lives over time.

This article will focus on the experiences of one consultant, Ivana, whose life history narratives were very indicative of the braided narratives I have been de-

scribing. Ivana was 47 years old when I first met her in 1998. We met at a confer-
ence in Kyiv on women and children's health, and she introduced herself to me as
the assistant director of an organization for youth called Hope (her husband was
the director). I found out that Ivana was also a high school teacher, and that she
conducted extracurricular activities for her students to educate them about issues
pertaining to health, hygiene, and sexual reproduction. Ivana had worked for 10
years as an engineer in the late seventies and early eighties, but left what she called
a "promising" career to teach preschool when her children (now aged 16 and 21)
were young. After her children started school, Ivana became qualified to teach
high school. She founded the public organization Hope in 1996 with her husband
to help disadvantaged teens, especially girls. The organization's activities included
mainly what Ivana called "enlightening" (Rus. *prosvetitel'skie*)[4] or educational events,
focusing particularly on providing teenage girls with sex education courses, the
focus of which included family planning and the prevention of sexually-transmit-
ted diseases.

I remained in close contact with Ivana throughout my two years of fieldwork,
and was thus able to track her career as a social activist. By the end of December
1999, Ivana had quit her teaching job of 15 years and was working for the voca-
tional education division of the Kyiv city administration. She was very active in
Kyiv's NGO community, and had become a "trainer"[5] for an international foun-
dation in Kyiv that promoted civil society development. Although her work in the
Kyiv city administration was very poorly paid,[6] her position as a trainer provided
the opportunity to make additional income.

Because I knew Ivana longer than I knew almost any other consultant, it was
possible for me to witness the various transformations she went through during
the two years of my extended fieldwork in 1998 and 1999. Ivana's story typified
ways in which civic organizing simultaneously engendered changes in profession,
expertise, and interests of women activists, and also sparked personal transforma-
tions. For some activists like Ivana, these personal transformations were very
significant. She told me that her organizational work had given her increased self-
esteem and a greatly improved self-image. In many cases, activists' personal
transformations could be traced to discourses brought to Ukraine by representa-
tives of international foundations that encouraged women to become leaders in
their communities, to "realize themselves," and to organize for "women's human
rights."

It was interesting to note how local women received these "feminist" discourses
from the west, especially in light of the nationalistic narratives that configured
women's roles in the country. In Ukraine, which gained its independence from
the Soviet Union in 1991, women are assigned moral responsibilities as "hearth
mothers," the nurturers of the first generation of free Ukrainians (Rubchak 1996).
Women are being encouraged to devote themselves to home, family, and children,
to fulfill what Mikhail Gorbachev called their "purely womanly mission"
(1987:117). Nationalist discourses in Ukraine are also taken up to articulate women's

dissatisfaction with the Soviet gender contract. As some scholars have noted, post-Soviet women have tended to organize not around the "right to work" or an "escape" from domesticity (Sperling 1999:70), but rather around the right *not* to work, and the freedom to "realize themselves as women." Both sentiments are a result of the failed Soviet policies to liberate women, which guaranteed women's participation in the labor force, but did not alleviate any of women's domestic burdens such as childcare, housekeeping, cooking, and laundering. The complex ways in which women activists weave together these various discourses of womanhood, nationalism, and women's liberation is striking. Examples from Ivana's life history narratives illustrate this well.

Analysis of Ivana's narratives affirmed the benefits of utilizing ethnographic methods to develop understanding of women, civil society and empowerment after socialism. Seemingly unrelated events were stitched together by Ivana in a seamless narrative of self-development and "self-realization" as a woman and an activist. The parallels between how Ivana described the various "turn-arounds" (Rus. *povoroty*) in her life were particularly notable. As mentioned earlier, Ivana left a successful engineering career to be a "nanny" at the daycare facility her children attended, a move that brought with it a dramatic decrease in professional prestige and salary for Ivana. In explaining this choice, Ivana said that trying to enter a "masculine" profession had been a big mistake, and that working with people, not with instruments, was her true "womanly" calling. Ivana said she had realized that she was "an engineer of human souls." Ivana indexed stereotypes of gender and work that ascribe some professions or orientations to men, and others to women. She implied that her efforts to transgress these "norms" had been misguided. When her children started going to elementary school, Ivana decided not to go back to engineering, and she studied to become a teacher. She narrated these career choices as a realization that her calling was to work with people—especially children—and to disseminate knowledge, activities that she said suited her as a woman.

This same narrative line figured into Ivana's explanations for how she entered public life through social activism. She saw herself first and foremost as a woman, a woman who was taking up "womanly" roles and responsibilities in promoting social change. As Linde (1993:72) has noted, in relating life history narratives, people often pause to take an evaluative stance, thus indicating how they would like their comments and the experiences they are describing to be interpreted. This was certainly true of Ivana, who's evaluative comments were often critical of a Soviet gender ideology that had placed more focus on production than on families, and that had championed women as workers above all. Importantly, she indicated that, in trying to establish herself as a professional and thus focusing on her career goals (something she believed the state had encouraged—indeed, forced—her to do), she had nearly failed to "realize herself" as a woman. She said, for example, "Back then I tried to prove myself as a worker; now I am proving myself as a woman." Also indicative of this stance (criticizing the Soviet state for champi-

oning women and men as workers, rather than as family members with familial responsibilities) were the numerous narratives in which she emphasized the centrality of the family in general, and the importance of her own family specifically.

These tropes describing "women's nature" were used by Ivana (and other consultants) to forward explanations of why so many social activists in Ukraine were women. Social activism, which in Ukraine was often carried out on a platform of caregiving and charity, was seen as a particularly "womanly" endeavor. Ivana's following narrative is indicative of such narrative lines:[7]

> All of these problems that we solve, they involve those problems that probably somehow touch the emotional sphere more. These are the kinds of problems that women can see better, and how to solve them. A man is more rational. Sometimes he thinks that these problems can be solved only in a pragmatic fashion. And a woman—she can solve these problems just by talking to a person—a psychological effect. With some of her own more . . . emotional methods. And men, to be honest, often think that these problems don't need to be addressed, that they will solve themselves. And they occupy themselves with more practical things, really. And since men don't attempt to solve such problems, namely drug abuse, alcoholism and so on—this means they think that specialists—specially prepared persons—must solve these problems. But in this case—myself, for example— these problems can be solved by having turned it into a kind of dedication. My husband thinks that it is all nonsense; [he believes that only] specialists can solve those kinds of problems...A woman knows how to solve these problems, in what way they can be solved better, and more simply. Somehow you must say to the girls . . . What is their problem? Listen to them. One must have patience to hear out these girls who have such problems. To listen and give some kind of advice, probably. To come to a solution of these problems and this kind of patience—it is up to women of course. To mothers, most often.

To explain the abundance of women active in NGO work, Ivana indexed traditional gender stereotypes of women as emotional, sympathetic, and sensitive to the problems of society, especially to children's problems. Her narrative include the often-heard "observation" that women are "more suited" for social work because of their "natures." At the same time, however, Ivana also recognized that this "sphere" was one of the only public spaces open to women in conditions of post-Soviet economic crisis, where women dominated the "army of the unemployed." She recognized that gender discrimination in hiring was partly to blame, and that "public work" was a "women's sphere" precisely because it was not very prestigious. Thus, Ivana made the following comments:

> Many women work in social organizations, and men either go without work or find themselves [work] that is considered more "masculine," in *serious* institutions, enterprises, and so on (my emphasis). Of the unemployed, there are more women. Those are mostly women who, in their time, received an engineering education, and when all of our enterprises in Ukraine closed down—and they are

still closed—the army of the unemployed was made up of precisely those women who had been engineers. Now I meet a lot of women who worked with me at a [state] enterprise at one time. Now they work at the bazaars. They were fairly highly qualified, economists and mechanical engineers, and so on. Therefore, women found themselves a way out of the situation, and they went into social work. It is sad...I don't want to say it is sad that they do social work, but that...the rights of women here are violated.

Like many of my consultants, Ivana recognized that unemployed women—especially engineers, whose careers had become "obsolete" in postsocialism, and especially middle-aged women, who faced sex discrimination in hiring—had only two viable options: to become "traders" at the bazaar or to go into "social work" in NGOs. Despite her flowery narratives about women being "suited" for work dealing with the "emotional sphere," Ivana saw that women's inequality on the job market was pushing them into the "third sector." It was precisely this inequality that international foundations (Counterpart International, Inc., the NIS-US Women's Consortium, and others) were targeting in Ukraine through programs designed to educate women in "leadership" and "business" and to support the women's movement.

Ivana welcomed such efforts, but did not embrace the aspects of these programs that she found too "aggressive" for the Ukrainian context. The following translated excerpt from an interview details Ivana's reactions to the seminars:

SP: When you went to those trainings, they were on gender, right?

Ivana: Yes, gender and women's leadership.

SP: Did they change how you think about relations between...

Ivana: The sexes?

SP: Yes. Or did they reinforce what you already thought?

Ivana: In principle...about me, right? It changed me a lot. At last I was able to talk about myself, about what I am proud of. What qualities in myself I can be proud of. I could talk about my accomplishments, or about what I am proud of in life in general. I took away many positive things for myself. I found my way in life; I was able to become a leader in some ways. I became convinced that I have the right to have my own opinion. I have the right to insist on my rights. I have the right to insist on my own positions. That was very important for me.

But I also saw that I changed something in those trainings [when I began to conduct them myself.] There were a lot of aggressive presentations that, for our mentality, are not characteristic. So now when I conduct the trainings, I conduct them a bit differently; I plan them a little bit differently.

Other conversations with Ivana revealed that, when conducting the "women in leadership" seminars herself, she "softened" the presentation of material on the cultural construction of gender roles. Indeed, my experiences in Kyiv showed that Ukrainian "trainers" tended to skimp on the "gender material" and focused more on issues of women's rights and leadership skills. At one "Women in Leadership" seminar I attended, Nina, the trainer, completely skipped over the section on "gender," and neither "gender" nor men's and women's "roles" were mentioned in the seminar.[8] Therefore, "imported" discourses on women, leadership, women's rights, and gender were localized by NGO trainers and activists, who adapted these narratives to local understandings of men and women's roles in social and political life. In other words, by drawing on elements of a feminist discourse, Ivana changed how she talked about the Ukrainian social order (i.e. she took up discussions of how women's and girls' rights were being violated). She did so, however, by talking about women's rights and women in leadership, rather than challenging notions of "traditional" gender roles.

A reluctance to adopt "gender theory," which proposes that gender roles are socially constructed, is, of course, not unique to Ukrainian or postsocialist women. Many women in the United States would also reject gender theory. Second wave feminism in the U.S., which began around 1965, was focused on "practical" problems of women's civil rights, the right to work, equal pay for equal work, and institutionalized misogyny (DuPlessis, Blau, and Snitow 1998:3-12). Many second wave feminists, academics included, have similar struggles as the Ukrainian women I knew in accepting new gender theory that challenges sex-role stereotypes. Ukrainian women's difficulties in accepting the notion of socially-constructed gender roles, I found, were compounded by the pervasiveness of contemporary Ukrainian nationalist discourses that assigned men and women very specific roles in the family and society.

Despite their reticence to adopt Western feminist discourses that would challenge traditional gender roles, Ivana and several other women in my study did indicate that they had found the seminars on "Women in Leadership" personally empowering (Ivana's narrative above illustrates this poignantly). Ivana told me that attending the seminars had boosted her self-image and strengthened her self-confidence. In this sense, the seminars had effectively "trained" Ivana to become a better leader. Ivana told me:

> I began to look differently at some problems—life positions and so on—after those seminars. For me it was one of those turning points in my life . . . I had many complexes (Rus. *byla zakompleksovannaia*) for a long time . . . and after those seminars I felt more confident, more literate professionally, in order to socialize with people on a certain level...Earlier I was unable to pick up the receiver and speak with a stranger. Now it is the easiest thing for me. In front of any rank of person, no matter who it is...I can speak on the same level as they and feel absolutely competent in those problems that I want to share or discuss and so on. That is proof that I have become adequately confident in myself . . .

Learning about "women's rights" and completing exercises designed to heighten self-esteem were the aspects of the seminars that Ivana had found most personally relevant and empowering. Ivana indicated that she had invited other women to get involved in the seminars, and that these women had also experienced positive personal "changes" as a result of their participation.

Ivana indicated that participating in women-focused civil society initiatives had helped her heal emotionally after a series of domestic difficulties. Her husband had treated her poorly, she said, but began to respect her when she learned leadership skills and gained self-confidence. Ivana thus connected the transformations she had experienced as a result of the seminars with the broader personal transformations she believed her social activism had engendered:

> I am glad, after all, that my life isn't gray; my days are not gray, rather they are full. Sometimes I have days that are planned down to the minute . . . I see that people around me, who surround me—they get charged with my enthusiasm . . . I'm very happy, truly, that I gained some confidence . . . Earlier I walked around like this, [with my head hunkered down], and now I walk with a raised head. That is, I can look people in the eyes. Earlier I couldn't look people in the eyes, because I thought that I was a freak (Rus. *urodka*), that I was . . . in short, I had a mass of complexes that I developed in childhood, and which my husband supported for a while. And now I know that I can do . . . things that not every third, fourth, or fifth [person can do]. So these are the things that have happened to me recently—good events, good changes, you could say.

In this narrative Ivana drew upon particular discourses through which she was able to remake her sense of personhood Through this self-transformation narrative Ivana was enacting her potential and realizing herself as an agent. Her comments underlined the sociality of personhood, especially her assertions that the people around her (those in her networks) got "charged with her enthusiasm." Her self-descriptions were indicative of the dialogical nature of personhood and also reflected the various discourses that are offered up to and appropriated by women NGO activists. Many of the women in my study related narratives similar to Ivana's. Almost all of my consultants mentioned a heightened sense of self-confidence and agency, and an improved self-image, as a result of their work.

Ivana's life history narratives, which link the various trajectories of "transition" in the postsocialist Ukrainian state with transitions in her own life, are indicative of the complex nature of women's subjectivities after state socialism. Her experiences as a woman civic activist cannot be boiled down to cohesive wholes that we might label as "empowering" or "disempowering." Time will tell, I think, whether or not women like Ivana, through the types of organizing efforts I have been describing, are able to make social and political spaces for themselves, or if they are limiting themselves to a place that has been assigned them. These issues must be studied ethnographically, using methods and theories that can capture the rich and diverse experiences of the wide spectrum of post-Soviet women.

Diversity in Experience: Lessons from Ukraine and Beyond

When assessing women's empowerment in civil society institutions, it is important not to lose sight of the fact that there is a range of social organizations led by women in post-Soviet societies. Certainly in Ukraine, social activists represent a broad swath of Ukrainian society. Some of my key consultants had been blue-collar workers, and they were "mothers of many children" located near the bottom of the socioeconomic ladder. Even though they were leaders of NGOs, such women, whose organizations represented marginalized groups such as large families, occupied positions relatively devoid of prestige. On the other end of the spectrum there were women who were well-known political figures with contacts and supporters in the upper echelons of the Ukrainian government and in the Ukrainian diaspora community. It is difficult to compare the experiences of these women, whose lives were so dissimilar.

Their mandates as NGO leaders were also quite different. The multiple orientations of the groups in my study are highlighted when we consider the range of discourses that women took up in narrating their lives as women engaged in social justice struggles. The women's narratives articulated a range of concerns along the "feminine/feminist" continuum; that is, some of the women emphasized women's "natural" roles as mothers and care givers, while others spoke of women's liberation and women's rights. It is clear, therefore, that one must distinguish between types of "women's activism," since some groups advance women's causes directly, while others do not.

Significantly, the fact that women are active in NGOs does not necessarily mean that "women's causes" are being addressed (Delind and Ferguson 1999). Given this situation, it is tempting to compartmentalize "types" of women's activism by dividing groups into those with "feminine" concerns (such groups often have been called "motherist movements" in the scholarly literature (see J. Fisher 1989, 1993; Navarro 1989; Schirmer 1993a, 1993b)) and those with "feminist" concerns. However, I concur with Lynn Stephen (1997:29), who has studied women's groups in Latin America, who argues that "labeling [these women's groups] as either 'feminine' or 'feminist,' with corresponding 'private' and 'public' claims, makes little sense and does not capture the richness and complexity of the political ideologies and agendas they have developed." Ivana's narratives of activism and personhood presented above illustrate the futility of such an exercise.

Additionally, it has been pointed out that it is inaccurate to portray "motherhood" as part of the private/domestic sphere, since motherhood is "a prime site for state surveillance" (Hyatt 2000). In the United States, for example, this is accomplished via a system of state welfare benefit assistance that involves surveillance of poverty, abuse, and so on. Through the welfare system, motherhood and the "domestic sphere" become a site for regulation. Indeed, ". . . it is impossible to speak about motherhood without speaking of social systems of power and domination" (Orleck 1997:5). Therefore, in evaluating "maternalism" as a motivation for women's activism, we must not forget that throughout history and cross-culturally mother-

hood has been a "target for governmentality and state intervention" (Hyatt 2000). So-called "motherist" movements, therefore, are not as apolitical as they might seem (Ruddick 1997).

In her study of the CO-MADRES in El Salvador, or the Committee of Mothers and Relatives of the Political Prisoners, Disappeared, and Assassinated of El Salvador "Monseñor Romero," Stephen writes that, "If we want to understand how and why people act, we must carefully consider the synthetic results of people's own experience on their behavior. This prevents us from portraying women activists as flattened, uniform caricatures who fall on either one side or other of some universal feminist continuum" (1997:54). Stephen's study of this dynamic group shows how members' "understandings of their gendered position in the world did not emerge suddenly or in a uniform manner" (ibid.). She traces how women activists retained some of their original ideas about women and motherhood while adding to them ideas about women's rights and other discourses that were made available to them by a range of institutions. I would argue that the same was true for my consultants in Ukraine, who narrated their experiences with a range of discourses about their place in the world as women and as activists. Their narratives seemed contradictory at times. When we take into account the women's life histories, material conditions, and location in social networks, however, it is possible to examine how the women were negotiating a range of discourses and flows. Trying to squeeze their experiences and strategies into categories labeling them as "feminine" or "feminist," "empowering," or "disempowering" would only serve to impoverish them or to create coherence where it may not exist.

Women East and West: Confrontation and Cooperation

As I try to understand women's lives after socialism, I shy away from taking an evaluative stance, for fear of reproducing dichotomizing discourses based on notions of "The West and the Rest," discourses that have been criticized by feminist scholars in recent years. Specifically, I am referring to hegemonic discourses of "Western" feminism that fail to recognize "other" feminisms and that produce categories such as a monolithic "third world woman" (Mohanty 1991), "women of color" (Moraga and Anzaldúa 1983; Lugones and Spelman 1983), or "Chinese women" (Rofel 1994). While challenges to the hegemony of Western feminism(s) are not new, since the fall of the Iron Curtain these struggles have been played out in a new arena—Eastern Europe. Before socialism's collapse, contact between Western feminists and their Eastern European counterparts was sporadic, and occurred mostly at international conferences where western feminists expressed their views on patriarchy and inequality to a bewildered audience made up of self-proclaimed feminists from other parts of the world (Drakulić 1998). Eastern European feminists found that their concerns were quite different from those of the Westerners they were encountering.[9] Since state socialism's fall, Western feminists have been actively involved in trying to raise feminist consciousness in the region. In

many cases, well-intentioned Western feminists have discovered that their efforts to help their Eastern European "sisters" become feminists are unwelcome (Funk 1994). The result of some of these East-West encounters[10] has been the production and perpetuation of misunderstandings between Western feminists and women in Eastern Europe, as has been noted by Funk (1993, 1994), Gal (1997), Watson (1997a, 1997b), and others. As Gal (1997:30) has written:

> When the end of state socialism in 1989 provided the opportunity for increased contact between women of Eastern Europe, Western Europe and the United States, the result was a profound surprise and dismay by all participants at the expectations voiced from the 'other side(s).' As a participant in some of these interactions, I can report that Eastern European women often saw Western feminists as proselytizers: messianic, implicitly universalizing, and thus imperialistic. On the other hand, Eastern European women were often seen by Western feminists as disappointingly undeveloped politically; backward and ignorant in their rejection of Western feminism, and sometimes simply apolitical . . .

Precisely this kind of encounter is described at length by Slavenka Drakulić (1992) (a feminist), in her book *How We Survived Communism and Even Laughed.* Drakulić's concerns have been summed up well by Nanette Funk (1993:318), whom I quote:

> Slavenka Drakulić . . . recently wrote an essay about an American woman who had interviewed her and later wrote asking Drakulić to submit an article on women in Yugoslavia for an anthology . . . Drakulić laughed at the topics proposed in the letter, such as an 'analysis about women and democracy, the public sphere, civil society, modernization, etc. A kind of Critical Theory approach.' Drakulić was asked specifically about 'the kinds of interventions women have made in the public discourse, e.g., about abortion, women's control over their bodies, what sorts of influence women have had in the public discourse . . .' Drakulić regarded all these questions as inappropriate, reflecting the typical American misunderstanding of post-communist women. She was also annoyed at the American woman's ease and readiness to publish about post-communist women after she just 'spent several weeks in Berlin.' And she was critical, if at points grudgingly complimentary, about the American woman's persona, clothes, and hair, calling her 'surprisingly, [for an American feminist, presumably] dressed with style.'

This encounter is made all the more fascinating when Funk reveals that she was the American woman about whom Drakulić was writing in 1992. She uses Drakulić's criticisms and her own reactions as a starting point for seeking common ground between East and West that recognizes power differences between Western feminists and "post-communist" women in all their variety. (Drakulić (1993) did end up contributing an article to Funk and Mueller's edited volume *Gender Politics and Post-Communism* (1993), and she addressed many of Funk's questions in the piece.)

Encounters between Western feminists and Eastern European feminists have been fraught with tension, to be sure. But these encounters have also planted the

seeds for real dialogue between women who have different ideas about the mean-
ings of concepts such as "patriarchal society," "women's rights," "machismo," and
others that are key to much feminist thought (Drakulić 1998). In Russia, for ex-
ample, a feminist magazine called *You and We* was initiated by two American
feminists, Katrina van den Heuvel and Collette Shulman. Anastasia Posadskaya,
Director of the Moscow Center for Gender Studies, acknowledges that this maga-
zine, which she says has been widely distributed, has helped to "bridge the gap
between East and West" (Waters and Posadskaya 1995:372). In 1990, the Net-
work of East-West Women (NEWW) was founded by feminists in the United
States and the former Yugoslavia to facilitate international communication and to
serve as a resource network for exchanges between women concerned about women's
issues in Central and Eastern Europe. Today NEWW links over 2,000 women's
advocates in over forty countries.

Such efforts linking Western and Eastern European feminists have sought to
address the problems and misunderstandings inherent in the promotion of a "femi-
nist diaspora" that almost inevitably has its roots in the West, thanks to Western
feminists' greater access to money and feminist literature, and also their greater
experience organizing in a mass movement (Drakulić 1998). Ann Snitow (2001),
one of the founders of NEWW, consciously uses the term "feminist diaspora"
problematically to illustrate the tensions and failures involved in "suitcase diplo-
macy." She has thus defined "feminist diaspora" as "a big idea that travels around
and falls apart."

In my research, as a Western feminist it has not been my intention to portray
Ukrainian women as suffering from a "false consciousness" or to criticize them for
the positions they take concerning women's and men's roles in society. I have not
intentionally painted a picture of them as "unenlightened," and I hope I have not
given the impression that there exists a singular "Ukrainian woman's" voice. In-
stead, I have tried to show the complex ways that the women I knew negotiated
various discourses in order to give their lives meaning and to stake a place for
themselves in Ukrainian society and in a globalizing world. It is my hope that my
research will contribute to a dialogue on these issues among scholars and activists
interested in women's issues.

Notes

1. In 1999 the estimated earned income for men was $4,576, while women only
earned an estimated $2,488 (United Nations Development Programme 2001)

2. In the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, a high percentage of women in posi-
tions of political power were artificially created through quotas, and women deputies
constituted 50% local Soviets (Councils) and 30% of the republican Supreme Soviet. Free
elections after independence in 1994 returned only 17 women deputies of the 405 elected
to the Supreme Council (Verkhovna Rada), just 4% of the total. This number almost
doubled in the 1998 elections, when 32 women (or 7.8% of the total) were elected to
parliament. In the March 2002 parliamentary elections the percentage of women deputies

elected declined to 5.1%, or 23 of 450 deputies. Additionally, very few women elected to political office occupy positions of real political power.

4. 3. I have also conducted medical anthropological research in Ukraine, focusing on the effects of Chernobyl (Phillips 2001), folk healing in rural areas (Phillips 2004, Phillips and Miller 2004), and the Ukrainian disability rights movement (Phillips 2002).

4. Both Ukrainian and Russian are spoken in Ukraine. Interviews with Ivana were conducted in Russian and Ukrainian. The terms transliterated here came from conversations we conducted in Russian.

5. As a trainer, Ivana led seminars for other NGO activists in Ukraine. Seminar topics included grant writing, working with volunteers, public relations, and so on.

6. Ivana's monthly salary was 150 UAH, or 120 UAH after taxes. This amounted to less that $30.

7. All translations from the Russian and the Ukrainian are my own.

8. This seminar was facilitated by the NIS-US Women's Consortium, an international coalition of groups whose goal has been to increase the participation of women in "democracy building" by providing instructional and technical assistance to women's groups and by enhancing the leadership skills of women.

9. Drakulić (1998), a Croatian writer from Zagreb, describes how, at an international conference called "Comrade Woman" in Belgrade in 1978, she saw her "first live feminist." Some of the "lessons" provided for Yugoslav women by Western feminists, as described by Drakulić, focused on the evils of high-heeled shoes and make-up, issues that the Yugoslav women did not see as pressing problems.

10. As Bunzl has shown, East-West border crossings after socialism (mostly from West to East) engender neocolonial subjectivities for "Easterners" in a variety of contexts. Bunzl's work explores how same-sex tourism by Austrians in Prague exemplifies "larger processes of subjectification that construct distinctly Western sexualities in constitutive opposition to the East's embodied Otherness" (2000:90). Like the metaphors used by western feminists to describe East European women as "backwards" and apolitical, the neocolonial metaphors Bunzl examines are products of unequal power relations between East and West.

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Contradiction, Cultural Tourism, Development and Social Structure in Nepal

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Tourism is such a complex topic that sociologists Chris Rojek and John Urry (1997, 1) claim that "it is hardly useful as a notion of social science." Nonetheless, it is the subject of volumes of research and commentary. To consider tourism as development and its impact on host communities, anthropologist Dennison Nash (1996) advocates a standardized approach to the study of tourism instead of the more prevalent case studies. Despite Nash's assertion to the contrary, the case study approach prevalent in anthropology is well-suited for this pursuit if it is modified to include methods that can be applied across situations. By using a multiple methods strategy of "triangulation," each case study can focus on a similar range of phenomena, but allow for the particulars of each to come into play as a way of understanding locally derived situations. Thus, the purpose of this paper is to suggest a testable model of the effects of development-related, cultural tourism on local social structures in Nepal and elsewhere. This essay attempts to sort out some of the more salient, patterned features of social interaction from the messiness of the total social reality in which they exist, or to deal with what Rojek and Urry (1997, 3) have termed Modernity 1, "rules to live by" and Modernity 2, the, "'disorderliness' of life." Order and disorder coexist. Although we are more accustomed to analyzing the former, the latter is equally important. The hard-to-pin-down aspects of everyday life viewed as contradictory or paradoxical bits of social reality are also inherent in tourism and must be skillfully manipulated by hosts to create consistent images of authentic, idyllic communities to attract tourists. Carefully orchestrated havens of culture, viewed in the foreground by the tourist, have background activities hidden and obscured from the tourist that contain these cultural conundrums upon which cultural tourism programs are sustained, at least in Nepal.

Research and Methods

Tourism has been investigated through a variety of methods reflecting to some degree the disciplinary affiliations of the people conducting the research. Anthropology, for example has employed the case study to a large extent, which Nash (1996) argues lacks the rigor necessary to facilitate building theory that applies more generally. The case study approach has been the fulcrum upon which studies

of hosts have been commonly conducted, in inquiries that attend to such issues as how hosts commodify culture for tourist consumption (Greenwood 1977, 1989, Parezo 1983), the infrastructural developments necessary to support tourism (Harrel-Bond 1978) and their negative impacts on the environment (Sharma 2000), the sustainability of tourism (Rogers and Atkinson 1998, Raj 2003), and the relationship between hosts and the anthropologist (Folmar 2003), to name a few.

Furthermore, methods have failed to address fully the impact of tourism on social and cultural issues, especially those not modified for consumption. Lanfant (1980) argues that while economic issues lend themselves appropriately to standardized, quantitative methodologies, sociocultural realities are better revealed by qualitative inquiry and obscured or minimized by quantitative data collection. There is a reductionistic tendency to quantitative methodologies that tempts the researcher to adhere to economic models, but they can prove to be a valuable adjunct to in-depth qualitative methods. For example, detailed, quantitative data collection and analysis reveals a level of social complexity heretofore not described for the Damai caste of the tourist village of Sirubari. Quantitative data alone, however, do not suffice to portray such a situation completely, nor do they replace the level of understanding achieved through careful use of a variety of qualitative data gathering techniques. Rudi Hartmann (1988) and Nash (1996), like a host of anthropologists before them, advocate for the use of multiple methods.

Questions of replicability and generalizability are germane to the comparative approach to the study of tourism (Nash 1996, Pearce, D. 1992), with both theoretical and applied implications. The case study approach, because of its focus on unique local situations, has not been concerned with such issues. However, an opportunity to use a modification of this approach across different situations presents itself in Nepal. The "model" tourism program of the village of Sirubari is now being replicated in several other areas (Kathmandu Post 2001) where hypotheses generated in this paper can be tested. These new village tourism sites exhibit sufficient ethnic similarity to suppose that the basic methodology used in Sirubari can be employed with some modification to other local contexts in a way that combines elements of case study with more standardized research designs.

This approach should help to satisfy Stronza's (2001) call for more in-depth treatments of host communities and the active role they play in the tourist-host dyad, which treat host communities as socially diverse. One way this goal might be achieved is to employ a methodology similar to that used by anthropologist George Gmelch (2003), who profiles people working in jobs related to island tourism. For Nepal, any method should include a focus on the lower classes of communities that host tourists, in a way parallel to how anthropologist Mary Cameron (1998) presents the lives of women and Dalits (low-caste Hindus) in rural Nepal. Especially because of its relevance to development issues, the anthropology of Nepal would benefit from a finer-grained treatment of Dalits that clearly distinguishes among the jats (castes or ethnic groups) highlighting the needs and potentials of each and their contributions to and benefits from tourism.

In this case, a more detailed understanding of Dalits' contributions to tourism will illuminate the need for heeding the contradictions inherent in tourism, whose connection to development further exaggerates these paradoxes. I will attempt to show that tourism as development ironically promotes the stagnation of villages as traditional communities in order to become modern. The paradoxical conduct of the tourist, who operates from inside an environmental bubble, further complicates this situation as do other internal paradoxes, too numerous to list exhaustively here. Tourism in Nepal relates to wider social and political concerns in complex ways, for example by supporting a national rhetoric of equalization of the jats by "uplifting" Dalits and "empowering women," meanwhile giving control of tourism to established elites whose own purposes are ill-served by uplifting the powerless.

Tourist, Host and Tourism

Definitions of tourist and tourism suggest an artificial separation of the tourist from the place she visits. Amanda Stronza (2001), an anthropologist, notes a similar tendency for scholars to focus either on the tourist or the host, but not the two simultaneously. Valene Smith's (1977, 2) definition of a tourist as "a temporarily leisured person who voluntarily visits a place away from home for the purpose of experiencing a change," pays little attention to hosts or their communities, but it continues to be widely accepted as a starting point for discussions of tourist-related phenomena in anthropology (Gmelch 2004, Graburn 2004). Most treatments of tourism add other dimensions to this definition. For example, to Nelson Graburn (1983), a pioneer of anthropological theory in tourism, tourism is a variety of a larger category of social behavior, specifically a kind of ritual. Nash (1984) prefers to treat tourism more generally, "as a form of leisure involving travel," (1984, 504), which he claims engenders more potential for comparative research. As terse as Nash's definition is, it brings up questions of whether its components are necessary or sufficient to capture the phenomenon of tourism. If a tourist is by necessity at leisure, then what anthropologists do, for example, would seem to be distinct, although Stronza (2001) points out that there are strong similarities between the two. Hosts notice these similarities too. Such was the case in the village of Sirubari, Nepal (Folmar 2003, Folmar and Edwards 2002) where I continually encountered situations reminding me that I was very much a tourist in their eyes. Distinguishing work from leisure by the amount of effort each requires is also problematical, since many tourists exert far more effort in pursuing their "leisure" than they do their work (Gmelch 2004).

Whether and how travel is part of the definition of tourism is not clearer. How far one has to travel in order to be a tourist is unspecified. Presumably, by staying at home, a person excludes himself from the ranks of tourists, even if he visits a tourist site, but how far beyond his threshold he must venture is not stipulated. Nor is the necessary length of time he is gone from home clearly linked to the definition (Rojek and Urry 1997). Travel is nonetheless at least implicit in

most definitions of tourism, although how tourism is related to other forms of travel is also a thorny issue. Graburn (1983, 2004), for example, asserts that modern tourism grew out of earlier, more serious travels, such as pilgrimages, and although distinct, is akin to them in ways related to the structure of ritual (Turner and Turner 1978). Jagdish Kaur, an Indian anthropologist, (1985) has inverted this observation, claiming that pilgrimage is not just a kind of tourism in the Indian Himalayas, but a *new* kind of tourism!

Just as different motivations separate pilgrims from tourists, they also separate tourists from hosts, and although they are central to the definition of what a tourist is, hosts' motivations are rarely entertained in discussions of the topic. The inclusion of hosts' motivations would by necessity complete the description of what tourism is, since tourists and hosts do opposite, but complementary things—hosts stay at home and work for the tourists who travel to see them. Tourism in most contexts is a social interface involving tourist and host, the former motivated by leisurely pursuits, the latter economic and social concerns. Although interactions between tourist and host are often reduced analytically to economic exchanges, they also entail important cultural, social, religious, political and other interchanges.

If any degree of clarity emerges from debates over what tourism is, it is that many things can be called tourism and several authors have offered typologies of tourism or of tourists. Tourists are categorized according to many criteria, including temporality, that is whether they are "modern" leisure-travelers (post-World War II) or not (Smith 1977); destination, for example, international or domestic (Lanfant 1980); on whether they travel in groups or alone (MacLellan, Dieke and Thapa 2000); the varieties of experiences they seek (Smith 1977, Cohen 1979); or the motivations that spur them to tour (Pearce, P. 1992). Two of Smith's (1977) types are ethnic and cultural tourism, which, because of their focus on culture, in the present (ethnic) and the (past) are of particular interest in this paper and are also included in anthropologist Ken Teague's (1997) fourfold typology of tourism in Nepal. Because tourists can be motivated by many things (Pearce, P. 1992), motivation-based categories are not mutually exclusive. Savvy hosts recognize that eco- and cultural tourists may, for example, be spurred on by separate but overlapping agendas and therefore package the two together in various places in Nepal, such as ACAP, the Annapurna Conservation Area Project (MacLellan, Dieke and Thapa 2000). Visitors to ACAP, motivated by ecological concerns or adventure also engage in the culture of one ethnic group, the Gurungs. If similarly motivated tourists prefer, they can experience Sherpa culture by visiting Khumbu. Although it is useful in some research to categorize tourists' motivations by the stage of personal fulfillment of the tourist (Pearce, P. 1992), in this case it is more relevant to focus on tourists' expectations of understanding or immersing themselves in other cultures.

Two other typologies of tourists, folk taxonomies generated by tourists and by hosts are of particular interest in this paper. Interestingly, tourists are reluctant to use the term, tourist, for themselves but willing to apply it to others, viewing their

fellows as somehow inferior if they do not tap deeply enough into "authentic" experiences in their journeys. They reserve other terms for visitors who rise above base levels of cultural involvement. Thus one person classifies himself as a traveler while identifying others as tourists or trippers (Waterhouse 1989). A person's sense of touristic identity is also shaped by the degree to which she feels a bond with the hosts and moral distance from other tourists, with whom she would be ashamed to associate because of tourists' ironic propensity to ruin the authenticity they seek (Frow 1991).

How hosts categorize tourists is still another matter, but one that has received surprisingly little attention by anthropologists (Evans-Pritchard 1989). For example, the "touristic shame" described above, might be used to create categories of tourists by tourists, but for hosts, it can put tourists in league with strange bedfellows, even terrorists (Phipps 2004), who also denounce the impact of tourists on their own culture. Just as they might lump tourists with terrorists, hosts may also distinguish tourists from one another using criteria quite different from the ones used by tourists. Anthropologist George Gmelch (2003) provides an example of this from Barbados where beach vendors claim that Canadian women stereotypically seek much more romance and sex than other women do. In Ghanduk, Nepal, foreigners are also stereotyped by nationality, but in this case by how fervently they bargain for lower prices. In Sirubari yet another distinction is made between foreigner and national, respectively called *bideshi* (foreign) and *swadeshi* (local, Folmar 2003). These two types of tourists differ in a number of ways, including motivation, familiarity with local culture, impact on the village, and levels of service provided. Distinctions among bideshis are less important; they can all be lumped together, regardless of why they are there, how they came or how long they will stay. Indeed, this was so in my case. Despite my deep interest in local knowledge and a far longer stay than the typical tourist, my visit was nonetheless orchestrated to adhere to the bideshi tourist model used locally (Folmar 2003). Somewhat ironically, being put in that position also enabled me to appreciate the motivations of tourist and hosts in a way that revealed their similarities and differences and the paradoxes inherent in their motivations.

"If our lives are dominated by a search for happiness, then perhaps few activities reveal as much about the dynamics of this quest—in all its ardour and paradoxes—than our travels," (de Botton, 2002; 9). Among essayist Alaine de Botton's paradoxes is that our anticipation of travel rarely lives up to the reality. Instead, the unique, uplifting experiences we seek vie with mundane procedural necessities, such as arranging for transportation or coordinating a time to engage in a specific activity, which may consume more of the clock than the central purpose of the trip (Hartmann 1988). Oddly, failed expectations tend to matter little, because in processing our experiences, we construct narratives that bring experience in line with our preconceived expectations about them. One mechanism for doing this is creating memories about the travel, which for some of us involves the artistic inclusion of things not obvious to all.[1] Conversely, most of us minimize or

erase the boring, paradoxical and inconvenient moments that stymie expectations in favor of cohesive journal entries that attempt to make sense of our travels. We, as tourists, construct narratives of our travels that match our original motivations: to search for happiness, view a "must see" sight, experience authenticity (MacCannell 2004), undergo personal transformations (Graburn 1977, 2004), step out of the ordinary (Jafari 1987), sample cultural differences that bring to life idyllic pasts (Smith 1977), or indulge in the romantic or sensual aspects of the human condition (Gmelch 2003).

It is a well-documented oxymoron that the tourist endeavors to avoid the authentic experience he seeks. He minimizes experience in actual cross-cultural encounters so that he insulates himself from the exploring too deeply the authentic culture he so avidly pursues (Groupe Huit 1976). The ironic attempt to experience the authentic, but not too deeply, is sometimes referred to as an "environmental bubble," (Cohen 1977). These bubbles allow tourists to *perceive* that they experience authentic culture, when, in fact, they merely witness some approximation of it. From within protective membranes tourists sift out the unappealing aspects of authenticity and embrace the appealing ones. Visitors to Nepal revile those "authentic" aspects of local culture that require them to practice traditional toileting behavior, for example, which brings the tourist into direct contact with his own excreta. For personal narratives to be comfortable, "modern" toilets must become transformed into traditional culture or at least an excusable intrusion of the modern into timeless traditional space. Toilets are excused because they insulate the tourist from the unsavory aspects of a tradition that is supposed to embody only the nobler expressions of life. Thus modern toilets make up a part of the bubble and serve to confirm the tourist "in his prejudices and ...left alone in a milieu as similar as possible to his own background," (de Kadt 1979, 52).

Along similar lines, sociologist Martin Opperman (1993) draws our attention to the informal spaces and contexts of tourism. Informal moments often represent more spontaneous and perhaps more "genuine" (less orchestrated) encounters between tourist and host where each has the opportunity to form a subtler picture of the other. Often, since these encounters have not been planned, they reveal aspects of culture inconsistent with tourists' preconceptions and cause tourists to retreat into their environmental bubbles safe from the potential nastiness that unstructured experiences confront them with. There they have opportunities to sanitize the experience, muting or erasing those that contradict their idyllic expectations. Meanwhile, hosts orchestrate in the background what the tourist will experience in the foreground.

Tourism and Development

Novelist Shashi Tharoor's (1993, 17) observation that, "India is not an underdeveloped country but a highly developed one in an advanced state of decay," challenges conventional notions of the term, "development." Development grew

out of a post-World-War-II observation that the economic circumstances of the
Third World were comparatively dire by First World standards and that in order to
narrow the gap development must take place (Rapley 2002). By the 1980s, devel-
opment discourse came to include the idea of social and cultural development, in
good measure owing to the contributions of South Asian scholars interested in
dependency theory. Unfortunately for development experts, culture poses the prob-
lem making "progress" harder to achieve and predict (Rapley 2002); what works in
one place may simply not work in another. Culture's tendency to particularize
situations not surprisingly should also contradict sociologist Marie-Francois
Lanfant's (1980) assertion that international tourism introduces a universal "model"
of social structure to the Third World. International tourism brings with it a tech-
nostructure that elaborates existing social structure with two new elites emerging:
"a new techno-bureaucratic social class [and] a newly emerging propertied social
class . . . facilitated by tourism," (Lanfant 1980, 41). This new form of social
structure is supposed to exist across contexts, replicated wherever international
tourism intrudes on indigenous peoples. A counter-argument posits that local so-
cial structures will become less differentiated because the equitable distribution of
income will foster greater social equality (Stronza 2001).

The debate over whether social structure will become less or more elaborate
has important ramifications for how development efforts play out at local levels.
The evidence, I believe, supports the increased differentiation of local social struc-
tures, which can occur at several different levels. Development can, for instance,
create ethnic divisions in the tourism industry or elaborate the social structures
within ethnic groups. An example of the former effect can be seen in mountain-
eering, especially in the Khumbu regions of Nepal, where it has become almost the
exclusive purview of Sherpas. Their control over mountaineering can be traced to
their historical monopoly over trade granted to them in the early nineteenth cen-
tury (Stevens 1993) which was replaced wholesale by tourism by the mid 1970s
(Furer-Heimendorf 1975). So closely identified with mountaineering are the
Sherpas that many Westerners confuse their ethnicity with an occupation and the
term Sherpa now has both referents. Gurungs and other ethnic groups contest the
Sherpa's control over high altitude tourism, although not very effectively. Gurungs
have had more success carving out the niche of ecotourism/village tourism in the
Western foothills, near Pokhara, where they dominate tourism in the Kaski,
Lamjung and Syangja districts. Thus a level of ethnic-based differentiation of tour-
ism has begun to develop in Nepal. Within local situations, there is also the potential
either to confirm existing social hierarchy or to elaborate it. Such is the case in
Sirubari, a Gurung-dominated village where participation in the Village Tourism
Project (VTP) has created a hierarchy within the tourism industry based on whether
a family can host bideshis, swadeshis, or no one at all (Folmar 2003).

Tourism can also reinforce existing structures. A common observation, for
example, is that in mountain communities, the roles of women tend not to be
expanded as a result of tourism, but their traditional roles tend to be extended into

touristic activities (Godde, Price and Zimmerman 2000), as is the case in Helembu (Lama 2000) as well as in Sirubari and Ghandruk, Nepal. Such an extension though does not necessarily indicate that women become more empowered. In Sirubari, for example, the roles of the Gurung and the Damai women's committees have been elevated, but, as Lama (2000) observed in other parts of Nepal, women's input into decision making is still severely limited.

The amount of development introduced into host cultures affects how dependent on tourist cultures hosts become (Erisman 1983). Cultural dependency results from a negative valuation of hosts' own cultures in comparison to those of the tourist, a situation that characterizes Nepal. The Nepali term for development, *bikash*, has become a powerful symbol, conferring higher status to those who can claim it. It also marks the inferiority of Nepalese vis-à-vis bideshis, who are nearly always seen as more developed (Bista 1991). In much the same way, anthropologist Akhil Gupta (1998) has noted that development is used by farmers in India to identify their internally- and externally-recognized social status. However, Gupta notes there are cross-currents in assessments of the value of developed versus traditional. Simply put, in both India and Nepal, developed things have advantages of efficiency, but traditional things have advantages of morality.

Whether tourism fosters or requires development is at the core of what we mean by the phrase tourism as development (Nash 1996). In Gambia, tourism required training a labor force, development of sewerage systems and electricity and other things that can also benefit the local population (Harrel-Bond 1978). On the other hand development can result from tourist activities, like when it helps to create new jobs in tourism or perhaps in newly introduced health, commercial or educational institutions. Instructive examples of such situations are common in Nepal. Tourism resulted in the well-known introduction of western-style primary schools and of mountaineering schools for Sherpas in the wake of the conquest of Mount Everest (Fisher 1990, 2004). A more complex relationship than simple the cause and effect of tourism and development exists in Sirubari. The building of a green (environmentally and culturally friendly) road was instigated not by tourism itself, but fostered by it. The route the road takes around Sirubari reflects how political power is concentrated as well as symbolic aspects of the VTP, such as its identification with only one *jat* (caste or ethnic group), the Gurung. This identification depends on the active exclusion of another jat, the Damai, Dalit musicians who are key to the program. Damais are made invisible to tourists partially by the location of the road, which passes between Damai and Gurung (the ethnic group in charge of the VTP) hamlets that make up Sirubari. Furthermore, the continuous maintenance of the road benefits from tourism income and is expected to affect tourist traffic in potentially ambivalent ways. Although the number of tourists may increase, they may stay for shorter periods of time. There are yet other social concerns about the road, such as how it consumes the entire landholding (minus the *jaga*) or the land upon which the house is built, of Dalit farmers who lack the clout to prevent appropriation of their farmland.

Stronza (2001) decries the overly simplistic view fostered by an emphasis on the negative impact of tourism on host communities. Of course, hosts suffer the undesirable commodification of culture (Babcock xx, Parezo xx, Greenwood 1989), stress on local ecosystems (e.g., Sharma 2000) and economic dependency on the more powerful West, to name just a few of the problems associated with tourism. The converse however also happens. Philip McKean (1976), an anthropologist, has documented positive counter currents in how tourism affects host communities, such as the rejuvenation of certain aspects of "tradition" that result from tourists' interests in them and the development of new occupations that are related to tourism. Close ethnographic investigation reveals that there is a subtle combination of both positives and negatives. The impact of tourism among the Sherpa of Nepal is again illustrative. A number of anthropologists, most prominently Vincanne Adams (1992), James Fisher (1990, 2004) and Stanley Stevens (1993) examine a multitude of effects, from which it must be concluded that tourism's impact is mixed and depends on the particular context in which it is found.

The economic issues involved in tourism are many and cannot be ignored, but are too numerous to deal with exhaustively here. To the degree that the economy represents a part of culture rather than an entity separate from it, two economic factors in particular enter into a careful treatment of how tourism affects social structure: the retention of funds by local communities and their equitable distribution therein. Both of these aspects bear on what are considered to be the most likely of the social effects of tourism, how they affect internal social structure and the degree of dependency low status groups have on high status ones.

On larger scales of inquiry there is interest in how powerful economic centers marginalize peripheral, dependent communities. Sociologists Helen Lewis and Edward Knipe (1978) argue that the weight of development in Appalachia was born on the backs of locals who were "colonized" by powerful outsiders. Ironically when insiders also took advantage of the system, rather than being more understanding toward their community members, they were more ruthless. A similar situation prevails in the development of Pokhara, Nepal where there was a progressive concentration of power and wealth in the city and the sapping of resources and wealth from surrounding hill communities (Seddon, Cameron and Blaikie 2001). Distribution of income within tourism communities plays out much the same scenario on a smaller scale. Local elites control tourism and less powerful groups become marginalized by it. H. Michael Erisman (1983), a tourism anthropologist, argues that the development of centers and peripheries is part of the process of tourism development. The only way to counteract such tendencies is to promote local control and equitable distribution of income, both of which have been tagged as necessary components for sustaining tourism as a development industry (Zeppel 1998).

How sustainability relates to tourism is another complex issue. A term first used in relation to the environment, sustainability refers to development that, "meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future gen-

erations to meet their own needs" (WCED 1987, 43) by conserving shared resources rather than depleting them for individual ends (Hardin 1968). This teach-a-man-to-fish approach, now the hallmark of development, advocates that projects should carry on using resources generated from within the culture rather than being supported from without. Since the 1970s, the ethic of preserving the environment has been linked to cultural preservation. Although considered laudable because it emphasizes the maintenance of existing traditions this interpretation of sustainability also promotes an image of peasant cultures as static. While economic "progress" is desirable, "culture" change is not. This stance is controversial in that it involves a paradox; becoming modern can only occur by somehow clinging to a past that needs to be changed.

Ideas of sustainability have now been inserted into the language of tourism, e.g., the sustainability of tourism is examined in a volume edited by geographers, C. Michael Hall and Alan A. Lew (1998). In that volume, Simon Milne (1998) argues that sustaining tourism may be even more problematic than sustaining the environment or culture because of the many aspects of economy and society that tourism touches, all of which would have to be sustainable for tourism to be so. Nonetheless sustainability remains not only part of the rhetoric of tourism, but figures into its planning and implementation and is, in fact, a cornerstone upon which ecotourism and 'village tourism' in Nepal are based. Efforts to sustain these initiatives also depend on regulating the flow of tourists and getting them to buy into the behaviors, not just the philosophy that preserves the environment. Attitudes of tourists (Pobacik and Butalla 1998) and hosts (Gurung and De Coursey 2000) must be compatible with environmental and cultural conservation in order for tourism to be sustainable. Ecotourism principles underpin tourism in areas like ACAP in Nepal and influences the design of village tourism in areas like Sirubari, where litter control, organic farming, building a green road and other techniques are employed in efforts to minimize the impact of tourists on the local environment. To the extent that the host community meets the needs of the tourists, tourism is difficult to sustain, but to the extent that tourists meet the needs of the community, there is potential for sustainability.

Tourism and Social Structure

The relative lack of theory on tourism noted by Nash (1996) may be more accurately described as a lack of unified theory. One of the many factors retarding theoretical development is tourism's low status as a subject of inquiry (e.g., Crick 1989, Nash and Smith 1991, Lanfant 1993) although that situation has improved recently. Anthropologist Sharon Gmelch (2004), for example, amply demonstrates the worthiness of tourism as a topic of academic interest, particularly for anthropologists, for whom the intersection of cultures, which is facilitated by tourism, is of central interest. The tourist thus becomes an emissary for economic advancement and cultural change; "an agent for the dissemination of an economic and

cultural model," (Lanfant 1980, 36) areas of deep concern to anthropology. Nash (1996) further attributes the theoretical sluggishness in tourism research to the case study approach to fieldwork, which focuses on highly particular, contextual aspects of each situation to the detriment of seeking of generalizable principles that apply across contexts. Generalizable theory also has the potential to guide applied efforts to design culturally, economically and environmentally responsive tourism programs as is frequently called for by our colleagues who work in tourism related occupations.[2]

Principally because of its economic importance, tourism is one of the most researched of modern social phenomena. Earlier tourism studies focus on macro-level processes, particularly the sweeping economic and social changes that are believed to be inevitable as a result of massive numbers of wealthy Westerners visiting poorer Third-World countries. Indeed, tourism represents a significant portion of the world's economy, particularly in Third World nations where the world's leisure classes find inexpensive opportunities to engage in a rich variety of leisure experiences. Not only does tourism represent a major vehicle for the foreign exchange of economic resources, but because of its magnitude, tourism deals with "an all-embracing social phenomenon characterized by the introduction of new systems of relationships in all sectors of activity, bringing about structural changes at all levels of social life," (Lanfant 1980, 36).

In a similar vein, John Forster (1964), one of the first sociologists to study tourism, predicts that mass tourism alters the standard of living and the life style of local communities, with the secularization of their cultural performances, increased cash, and new occupations, being among the most important. Cultural consequences amount to three basic changes that:

> (1) are brought about by the intrusion of an external, usually superordinate so-ciocultural system into a weaker, receiving culture; (2) are generally destructive to the indigenous traditions; and (3) are leading to a homogenization of cultures, in which ethnic and local identity is subsumed under the aegis of a technocratic bureaucracy, postindustrial economy, and jet-age life-style (McKean 1976, 239).

Lanfant concurs with Forster on the first two points, but departs with him on the third. Tourism fosters the emergence of a technostructure, made up of the "techno-bureaucratic social class" and the "newly emerging propertied social class" described above (1980, 39). This elaborated social structure is also at odds with the oft-stated development goal of equitable distribution of income, which would be compatible with Forster's prediction of an equalization of social structure. These positions rest on opposing premises, for Forster a heterogeneous society that becomes more egalitarian, for Lanfant a homogeneous one that becomes more differentiated. The assumed homogeneity of host cultures (Stronza 2001) has been an issue in the anthropology of tourism for quite some time because it ignores internal divisions that predate the introduction of tourism. Malcolm Crick (1989),

a tourism anthropologist, proposes an intermediate position, which is borne out in this paper; that tourism is developed via pre-existing structures, which I argue are hierarchical in nature and become more differentiated as a result of tourism.

A pivotal mechanism by which tourism affects host communities' social structures is the interactive process that occurs at the micro-level, when tourists meet hosts. Focusing on the tourist, Graburn (1977, 1983, 2004) and his student, Jafar Jafari (1987) liken the experience to a rite of passage (van Gennep 1960), in which tourists move in and out of a liminal state (Turner 1974; Turner and Turner 1978) and experience a kind of communitas with fellow travelers. Tourists' quests for transformative experiences help shape how they interface with hosts. These concerns dovetail with the pursuit of the exotic, the chance to experience "authentic" cultures from the past that paradoxically exist in the present. How deeply tourists *perceive* that they experience the authentic is more important than the experience itself. Perception of authenticity is shaped by processing the experience within environmental bubbles, where experiences are transformed into memories compatible with world views that reject the contradictions that actually exist in host communities.

On the other side of this equation is the host community, which consists of the people whose culture the tourists come to see. Anything but stereotypically passive, hosts construct authentic experiences for tourists beginning with the creation of the tourist site itself. Sites undergo ritual-like transitions (MacCannell 2004) parallel to those that tourist experience. They become sacralized, standing in for "ultimate values" thus compelling tourists to see or even revere them. Places become sacred in a four-phase process, first being named, then framed and symbolically elevated, next mechanically reproduced and finally socially reproduced. Sacralization is related to the cultural construction of the authentic, the stronger the image of tradition, the more deeply sacred it becomes. The process hinges on hosts' manipulating reality so that modern features or less desirable aspects of the past recede into the background or are transformed into desirable characteristics of these time-capsule ways of life. Tourists are complicit in the ease to which hosts find this achievable. Although the former seek out knowledge of the cultures they visit, they do not want their images of tradition challenged or their pursuit of leisure to be inconvenienced by the learning process (Erisman 1983).

Foreground and background features must be kept somewhat separate in order to achieve an image of authenticity. The social transformations posited by Forster and Lanfant, for example, are antithetical to tourists' deeply-felt, personal views of the egalitarianism of past, primitive communities which they believe to exist in the Third World. And so the tendencies to create new elites or even the existence of hierarchical social structures in traditional reality are pushed into the background, out of the view of the tourist. Examples of this are replete in the Sirubari VTP where Damais constitute one of the most visible aspects of the tourist's experience. They are, however, made invisible by the careful use of many techniques. They are excluded from advertisements, no mention is made of them in

the village tours, they are not identified as a political minority when they play for hosts and their hamlet is beyond the tourists' view, situated beyond the road, past a sign that inaccurately marks the village border. Since tourists are made (agreeably) unaware of the Damais' existence, the social and economic inequalities fostered by the VTP also become invisible. Yet, behind the scenes, old ways of doing business are magnified and tradition ironically becomes a heavier yoke of servitude than it would be in the absence of tourism.

Village Tourism in Nepal

Tourism has been a cornerstone of the Nepalese economy since shortly after the kingdom opened its borders to the West in 1951. A key event that spurred a near-immediate explosion in tourism was the summiting of Mount Everest by Sir Edmund Hillary in 1953. Mountaineers and trekkers began flocking to Nepal and tourists interested in exotic culture began discovering Kathmandu Valley and its rich cultural and religious history. Records on tourism indicate that the number of tourists visiting Nepal reached 493,000 by 1999 (Central Bureau of Statistics 2001). Promoting tourism remains high on the development agenda of His Majesty's Government.

 Nepal's increasing dependence on tourism is integral to its development strategy (Sharma 2000). The importance of tourism to the Nepalese economy would be difficult to overestimate; it represents the major source of foreign currency, accounting for as much as one third of its export income in 1999 (Ministry of Finance 2002) and is a major source of foreign exchange (Rogers and Atchison 1998), second only to foreign aid. Nepal is of course most famous for being home to the Himalayas, so mountaineering and trekking have been the foundations of the tourist industry in Nepal since it opened its borders to the West. Over time, Nepal's tourism industry has diversified to keep it a growth industry. Of the many new initiatives, village tourism, the subject of the following case study, is one upon which many hopes are attached.

 The village of Sirubari is the pioneer of village tourism in Nepal. Although it is considered a Gurung village, Sirubari actually contains a populace of numerous jats, which also have internal subdivisions. Gurungs make up the majority of the population and reside in two hamlets. They speak a Tibeto-Burman language of their own as well as Nepali, practice Buddhism and run their own family farms that are, for the most part, self sufficient. Gurung men from Sirubari have a long history of serving in foreign armies from which older generations receive substantial pensions. Gurungs also run the VTP described below.

 Living a brief walk along the main footpath from the Gurung hamlets are members of three Dalit (or low-caste) jats, who speak Nepali. Dalits are practicing Hindus and are subdivided according to social status and a mix of service occupations they perform. Damais are ranked as the lowest in status of these jats locally and have traditionally supplied the occupations of musician/dancer, tailor and

town crier to serve mainly upper castes and local ethnic groups. They perform other occupations that are less closely identified with specific jats, such as agricultural labor or porter, just as do Kamis and Sarkis, who enjoy somewhat higher status. Kamis are closely identified with being ironsmiths and shamans, Sarkis as cobblers. Neither of these jats performs services that could be tapped as visibly as the music the Damai perform. The Damai provide the data on the contribution of Dalits to tourism for the following discussion.

Sirubari's tourism program was the brainchild of an ex-Gurkha Army Major and an Australian businessman, who modified Australia's farmstead tourism into what is now known as village tourism. Its sacralization follows in textbook fashion the process anthropologist Dean MacCannell (2004) describes for "must-see" tourist attractions. From its inception as a new spot on the 1998 Visit Nepal marketing campaign, the tourism program in Sirubari has been touted as a "model" because it offered a "high quality" program consistent with the development goals of His Majesty's Government (Dhungana 2000). In 2001, Sirubari's fame grew to an international scale when the VTP won the prestigious Gold Medal Award of the Pacific Area Travel Association. The VTP has been the subject of cursory evaluations by native development experts Prakash Raj (2003) and Pitamber Sharma (2000). Results of these studies have now been widely reported, thus adding to the prestige of the VTP, but, although there are many laudable aspects of this project, a number of the conclusions reached by Raj and Sharma cannot be supported. Nonetheless, the Sirubari VTP is visited by village leaders interested in replicating village tourism in numbers that exceed visits by foreigners. As many as 100 such tourism organizers from eight Village Development Committees visited Sirubari en masse (Kathmandu Post 2001); the Gurung village of Ghalegaun of Lamjung District has now launched a replica program, and hoteliers from other villages have been trained in Sirubari. Sirubari's story of success has exceeded all expectations, and is held up as an example of tourism as development, of successful reforestation, and of conserving biodiversity.

Despite preconceptions that tourism in Sirubari was organized formally to pursue economic development, residents of the village present a picture that ties its initiation into social goals. Sirubari is home also to a demographic anomaly created by the past military service of the majority of the Gurung men who lived there. While serving mainly in the Indian and British armies, most men now over the age of 40 prospered economically while they raised their children in Kathmandu and in cities in India and other parts of Asia. Those children, now grown, no longer consider Sirubari home in the same way their parents did. They also have the financial resources to live in cities that more closely resemble the ones in which they spent their childhoods. The flight of young men and their families from Sirubari has left a social vacuum. Many residents now consider Sirubari to be *ramailo chaina*, or not pleasant, because there are so few young children. Tourism organizers confirm this notion when they point out that tourism is a "side business," from which they do not expect to earn much. Brochures attempt to turn the situation into a

marketing advantage by highlighting the pleasantness of the village, which is cre-
ated in good measure by the quiet of having so few young children there.

Nor has tourism been the pretext for other economic or infrastructural devel-
opment, except for those related to public health. Education, communication and
transportation in the area have all witnessed notable or even dramatic change in
recent decades. Education represents the earliest of these, with the construction or
improvement of primary and secondary schools in Sirubari and other nearby vil-
lages. Significantly, the primary school in Sirubari is located in the bazaar, which
shapes the daily routine of the adjacent Dalit hamlets more than it does the Gurung
hamlets. Because of its location, the Sirubari primary school thus serves Dalit
children almost exclusively. Nearly all Gurung children attend school in other
nearby villages. The tourism program does not appear to have affected education
in any significant way.

The introduction of electricity and communication has also been indepen-
dent of tourism. Even though the tourism program would have promoted the
penetration of power lines and communications towers, there was enough of a
groundswell of need and support for electricity and telephone to be introduced
independently. The distribution of electricity conforms to caste status, as would be
expected. Nearly all Gurung houses have electricity with multiple outlets into which
they connect cooking appliances, radios and televisions. Dalit households are an-
other matter. Owing to their poverty, only half the Damai households have electricity
and few have more than one outlet. The telephone has not yet proliferated in
Sirubari, even among the wealthier Gurungs. At present, the nearest working phone
is 20 minutes away.

Another significant development project is the construction of a road from
Naudanda up through Sirubari and other hill villages in that region. In 2001, the
road bed reached Sirubari, but was not navigable yet. By the following summer,
my assistant and I were able to reach Sirubari via a jolting jeep ride. The next year
witnessed increasing levels of traffic as the still-unpaved road drew more traffic,
including large busses. Tourism organizers were ambivalent about the benefit of
the road to tourism in Sirubari. When I asked if it would not convey more people
to the village, organizers agreed but worried that fewer tourists would stay over-
night because of the ease of returning to Pokhara.

The VTP is more closely connected to health than these other developments.
When the tourism initiative began in the mid 1990s, organizers attempted to
improve general hygiene, the availability of potable water and of toileting facili-
ties. They recognized that tourist flow would be directly related to comfort and
health concerns related to infectious diseases. Organizers promoted hand washing
after toileting and before preparing food in order to decrease infection among
villagers and tourists alike. They put similar emphasis on water filtration, mainte-
nance of the piped water system and proliferation of "modern" toilets.

As noted above, the overt goals of the program are economic, even though
informally they compete with other, social goals. The main economic benefit of

tourism is to offset the costs of acquiring the material goods necessary to host tourists. Many of these items are considered desirable and would be difficult to afford without tourism income. At the lower end of the economic spectrum, some people do hope that tourism will increase their overall income. Collectively, income from the tourism program is used to fund the activities of at least three committees, the Tourism Development and Management Committee (TDMC) and the *ama samitis* (women's committees) of the Gurung and Damai hamlets. The TDMC and the ama samiti of Gurung Gaun use income from tourism mainly to support the activities of the program itself, for example to pay for costs associated with its operation. The Damai ama samiti receives occasional donations, which support tourism and community needs.

Income from tourism derives from two sources of tourists, the lucrative bideshi, or foreign, tourists and the less profitable swadeshi, or Nepali tourists. Bideshi tourists arrive in small to large groups, via arrangements with a trekking company and the Village Tourism Office (VTO). Thus, the proportion of expenditures staying in Sirubari depends on whether one considers the income of the trekking agency and the VTO. Although estimates range from about $40 U.S. to $130 U.S., my experience suggests that a typical bideshi pays roughly $45/day. When all expenses are accounted, clearly less than 50% of tourism expenditures are retained by Sirubari. The TDMC estimates that only about $8 of the $45 or 18% represents village-retained income.

In order to become a host, a household must invest considerably to improve the guest room and furnish it, to acquire appropriate dining furnishings, a water filtration tank and, most costly of all, to construct a separate building as a toilet/bathroom. These two-room structures are stone and cement and have indoor plumbing and a septic tank, which is either brought in as a unit or constructed separately of stone and cement. Raj's (2003) estimate of an initial cash outlay of Rs. 22,400 per guest bed is quite reasonable. It must be kept in mind, however, that households equip themselves to host two (or more) guests, thus doubling the costs to 44,800 per household. Locals reported that the approximate cost of building a toilet/bathroom was Rs. 40,000 or more and bearing the other costs ran between Rs. 5,000 and 10,000.[3]

Making these purchases and improvements does not guarantee that a family can host bideshi tourists initially, however. Household members also undergo training in hygiene and cooking for tourists and, if they do not adhere to standards, the TDMC only permits them to host swadeshis or no one at all. Thus there is a three-tiered system of participation as host family, bideshi-hosting, swadeshi-hosting and non-participating. Control over the level of participation rests firmly with the TDMC, effectively making it a powerful body governing a new layer of social hierarchy brought in by tourism.

Whether a Gurung family hosts guests or not, its members may also perform music and/or dance for guests or provide *malla*, garlands of flowers, or other artifacts like the knit, black *topis* (caps) presented to tourists when they depart. Neither

making garlands nor knitting topis represents appreciable income, but singing and/or dancing is remunerated, although quite meagerly. The main musical performances are the welcoming procession and the infrequent parting recession. Damai musician groups conduct these performances and individual performers receive only Rs. 20 per tour group, regardless of whether there is also a recessional performance.

Tourism organizers provided data not only on the costs necessary to become hosts and income from tourists, but also on tourist flow. Net profits to date have yet to be realized by host families. Under the most optimistic of scenarios, an average family might have had a net income of approximately Rs. 25,000 after the first 7 years of the tourism project, if only 20 households have shared in hosting the bideshi tourists. Assuming none of these visits involved additional expense, a household still must earn from Rs. 20,000 to 25,000 in order to profit from hosting tourists.

In the case of the Damai musicians, participation in the tourism project involves only an investment in traditional Nepali clothing and the time it takes to conduct their performances. They net an income of about Rs. 20 per tourist group resulting in a total income of approximately Rs. 800 in the peak year. This "profit" is so meager that Damais see no advantage in investing or saving it. They prefer to buy a glass or two (at the most) of *rakshi*, millet wine made locally.

Tourism in Nepal and in Sirubari is often tied symbolically to the promotion of political and social equality and the elimination of caste. Conversations with TDMC members and others in the Gurung community were often peppered with "one blood" symbolism and discussions of "uplifting" the Dalits so that they can enjoy economic and social status "equal" to other jats. As we have seen, an unstated, social goal of the VTP includes the infusion of high-status, modern tourists into Sirubari as a way of compensating for the flight of young people. Tourists create an opportunity for social interaction and with them come expectations that good government is based on political equality which is incompatible with the caste system.

Running directly counter to the overt efforts to bring a measure of equality to the social structure of Nepal, however, tourism promotes social hierarchy in two ways. Tourism, because of its promotion of tradition, also encourages the stagnation of the jats as hierarchically organized social components. Traditional hierarchy is buttressed by the manner in which services are arranged, using time-honored relations of production consistent with the focus on "tradition." The *bali ghar bista* system of economic service provision is predicated on arrangements between families of one jat performing services for other jats as part of long-standing obligations. Dalits perform service in return for reciprocal service or payment in kind or cash. Damais traditionally played auspicious music, tailored clothes and spread official town news, for which families would pay them set amounts of grain and/or other agricultural products seasonally. Critical to this process is the *obligation* to perform such services with very little recourse, because they had too little power to

resist or to renegotiate effectively. Consequently, increases in services do not necessarily result in like increases in compensation. Promoters of tourism call on this system of inter-jat obligations to solicit participation by Damais as musicians, thus acting as an effective counterweight to the impetus for change toward greater social equality.

Moreover, the way that the TDMC structures participation by Gurungs as host families simultaneously substitutes for a level of social hierarchy absent in Gurung Gaun and, as a result, further elaborates the social structure of the Gurung community. Traditionally, Gurung social structure was characterized by clan affiliation in which there was a basic division between the *char jat* (four clans) and the *sora jat* (sixteen clans), with the former group enjoying the higher status. Sirubari, unlike most Gurung villages, is populated entirely of char jat clans, leaving a social vacuum at the bottom of the hierarchy. Social stratification is now being encouraged, however, by the introduction of the three-tiered system of participation in hosting tourists at the bideshi, swadeshi and non-participating levels.

Tourism in Sirubari embodies many of the social, symbolic and political contradictions that accompany jat-based hierarchy in a modernizing social context. The contradictions of cultural tourism as an agent of development are readily apparent. The central two paradoxes in tourism in Sirubari concern 1) social reality and 2) the process of tourism as development. The first exists when the rhetoric of equality further solidifies hierarchy by providing a narrative that holds out the false promise of social advancement of Dalits, and is tied to participating (in an unspecified future) in the actual hosting of tourists. Rather than attempting to resolve the social situation in favor of either hierarchy or equality, the two co-exist. Their contradiction is recognized, but accepted as necessary aspects of living in society. Therefore, there is potential for movement toward either hierarchy or equality, with a simultaneous moral justification for the reverse course of action.

This complex, dynamic social backdrop is the context in which the contradiction between development and tradition also exists. There are countless ways in which the people who work with tourists in Sirubari manipulate culture and tradition to present a consistent, non-contradictory image of Sirubari as culturally homogeneous, prosperous yet primitive, pristine yet progressive. Sirubari is promoted as a seamless cultural entity, a Gurung village that welcomes the tourist who can enjoy cultural programming and indulge momentarily in the lives of the villagers. No mention is made of the fact that Dalit, not Gurung musicians perform the music and dance at the welcoming ceremony, the moment which has perhaps the most impact on the tourist. Nor are tourists told that Dalits, living in their own hamlets, comprise an indispensable, though invisible (to the tourist) part of village life and indeed of the whole social fabric of Nepal. By making Dalits and their undesirable social position invisible, hosts are able to construct a consistent image of Sirubari as a remnant of a romantic past that is compatible with the preconceptions that tourists want left in tact. Perhaps the tourist is unwittingly or somewhat consciously complicit in the creation of this image because of her dis-

taste for the notion that hierarchy and equality can coexist. This was brought home to me in a presentation I wrote for a recent professional meeting. A learned colleague demanded that I drop the term equality from my description of the situation I elaborate in this paper, because equality contradicted the caste system! I argue that it is because of that very mindset, that equality and hierarchy cannot persist simultaneously, that tourism programs can comfortably contain both, by carefully crafting images that encourage tourists and others to believe that such social contradictions indeed do not exist.

To some extent, all tourism programs that offer traditional culture as their main attraction must deal with this conundrum successfully. Tourists are drawn to such attractions because of the portrait that is painted of tradition, a portrait that is somewhat false, like a façade that hides the engine of development which this false depiction fuels. In Sirubari, they do it so adeptly that other villages seek to replicate their success through mimicking this program. Almost from the time of its inception, developers at all levels began to consider copying the Sirubari experience. One evaluation asks rhetorically, "Do we need more Sirubari type of village tourism for sustainability (sic)?" (Raj 2003, 5). At least four similar projects have been planned, with the one in Ghalegaun in Lamjung District already under operation.

This situation presents another opportunity beyond the effort to capitalize on what is seen, both correctly and incorrectly, as a development success. It creates a situation in which it is possible to test the hypotheses suggested in this paper in replicable case studies. Three hypotheses regarding the effects of tourism on social structure come readily to mind: 1) cultural programming will portray host villages in symbolically consistent ways, minimizing cultural heterogeneity and social hierarchy; 2) Tourism management practices will use the existing hierarchical arrangement of jats to provide entertainment for tourists and will thus strengthen rather than weaken differences between them; and 3) Within the jat that manages tourism there will be a further elaboration of social structure reflecting degrees of participation.

Conclusion

The VTP in Sirubari is one example of several types of tourism upon which Nepal hinges hopes for economic development and social change, as other developing nations also do. This paper focuses on social outcomes of one kind of tourism program and attempts to offer a way to predict how tourism affects social structure across different situations without sacrificing an understanding of the unique social contexts of each situation. I contend that if we are to clarify how tourism and development affect the social structure of Nepalese villages, it is necessary to focus on the internal diversity of tourism villages, especially Dalits, with each jat recognized as a unique cultural entity. According to Teague (1997, 175), "the occupational monopoly exercised by groups within a caste system often has a limiting effect on

responses to social change." Yet, like the 'traditional' metalworkers he worked with, Damais in Sirubari respond to the shifting winds of economic and social change. Because of factors inherent in the jat system of Nepal, there is potential for social change, either toward further social division or leveling of caste differences. The direction these social changes take depends on many things, some of which are related to tourism. Two of these are how tourism projects are conceived and implemented and whether they deal with the concerns of diverse internal interest groups, including Dalits. In order to predict better how tourism affects the social dynamic of host communities it will also be necessary to attempt to untangle how hosts symbolize and manipulate the dualism of things traditional yet modern.

Notes

1. See Duncan and Gregory's (1999) interesting collection of writings about documenting travel.
2. At a panel on tourism at the meetings of the Society for Applied Anthropology in Dallas, Texas in 2004, Thoric Cedarstrom of Counterpart, a Washington-based NGO, challenged the speakers to devise theory that facilitates efforts to develop tourism that responds to the needs of host communities in the Developing World.
3. In 2002/3, the exchange rate was approximately Rs. 75/$1.

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