



**University
of Victoria**

Graduate Studies

Notice of the Final Oral Examination
for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

of

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MA (University of Calgary, 2004)
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**“Tourism in an Andean Community:
Negotiating Inequality, Gender, and Change”**

Department of Anthropology

Wednesday, June 20, 2018
10:00 A.M.
Clearihue Building
Room B017

Supervisory Committee:

Dr. Margot Wilson, Department of Anthropology, University of Victoria (Supervisor)
Dr. Alexandrine Boudreault-Fournier, Department of Anthropology, UVic (Member)
Dr. Laura Parisi, Department of Gender Studies, UVic (Outside Member)

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Dr. Florence Babb, Department of Anthropology, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Chair of Oral Examination:

Dr. Darlene Clover, Department of Educational Psychology and Leadership Studies, UVic

Dr. Stephen Evans, Acting Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies

Abstract

Tourism is one of the largest industries worldwide. Alternatively described as beneficial development or a force of cultural destruction, its effects are complex and its benefits rarely distributed evenly. This dissertation provides a case study of tourism in Ollantaytambo, a rapidly growing travel destination located between Cusco and Machu Picchu in the Southern Peruvian Andes. Based on 10 months of ethnographic research, this work examines the experiences of local people, tourism brokers, and predominantly Western tourists, focusing on the ways in which gender roles and power relations are performed, negotiated, and challenged.

Local people generally welcome tourism for the work it provides. Small, flexible business opportunities prove to be particularly beneficial for women, as they provide access to paid work that can be combined with traditional gendered tasks, like childcare. Alongside acts of solidarity between hosts and visitors, interactions are affected by the material inequalities. Many tourists discursively sideline their own privilege by framing local people as taking advantage of them or, alternatively, as being spiritually advanced and content despite apparent material poverty. Trying to succeed in the tourism business, locals increasingly find themselves in competition with foreign residents; this, combined with the growing disparities of wealth within the community, has contributed to social tensions. These are expressed in both indirect, veiled ways and as open aggression, which includes the practice of rituals intended to cause harm to those who set themselves apart by their success.

Two specific dimensions of tourism, spirituality and romance, are also considered. In the Cusco area, a blend of global New Age tropes and Andean beliefs and practices are marketed to visitors. Drawing on these themes, many local men fashion identities in order to appeal to Western women and establish relationships with them. Both spiritual and romance tourism involve commodification and a selling-out to foreign demands; however, these arenas of tourism also afford local people opportunities to renegotiate and challenge their roles. By considering how power can shift in these encounters, this research adds to a more nuanced understanding of tourism development. While on the one hand tourism perpetuates and exacerbates structural global and gendered inequalities, it also provides distinct avenues in which these can be contested.

Last, this research contributes to visual methodology. For a photovoice project, local people took photos to illustrate their perspectives of tourism. In order to fit with the cultural context, the method was adjusted from a group-based to a one-on-one approach, demonstrating the flexibility and potential of photovoice as an ethnographic tool. In addition, the researcher's own pen and ink drawings illustrate this dissertation. Drawing after the completion of fieldwork facilitated the processing and condensation of information, and the resulting images reflect an understanding gained over time. The sketch-like nature of this artistic approach also serves to foreground the dynamic, subjective, and approximate nature of ethnographic knowledge.