



COMMUNITARIAN TOURISM Hosts and Mediators in Peru

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Abstract: This study provides a long-term, ethnographic assessment of the development, management, and decline of communitarian tourism in the rural Peruvian indigenous community of Taquile Island, focusing on relations between hosts and outsider brokers/mediators. To date, relationships with outsider tour operators and guides have generally been acrimonious due to competition over control of transportation and the type of tourism outsiders have promoted. Nonetheless, Taquile's initiative was at first successful because of help from a hitherto unresearched group of individual foreigners. The study points to the need for further investigation of the potential impact of this type of broker/mediator, particularly *vis-à-vis* public-sector investment and development. **Keywords:** community, brokers, mediators, indigenous, development. © 2007 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.

Résumé: Tourisme communautaire: hôtes et médiateurs au Pérou. Cette étude présente une évaluation ethnographique à long terme du développement, gestion et déclin du tourisme communautaire dans la communauté indigène péruvienne rurale de l'île de Taquile, en particulier des relations entre hôtes et médiateurs/agents externes. Jusqu'à présent, les relations avec voyageurs et guides externes ont été généralement acrimonieuses dû à la compétition pour le contrôle des transports et au genre de tourisme promu par les gens de l'extérieur. Pourtant, l'initiative de l'île de Taquile a eu du succès au début grâce à l'aide d'un groupe de personnes externes qu'on n'avait pas étudié auparavant. L'étude montre le besoin de faire plus de recherches sur l'impact éventuel de ce genre d'agent/médiateur, surtout en ce qui concerne le développement et l'investissement du secteur public. **Mots-clés:** communauté, agents, médiateurs, indigène, développement. © 2007 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.

INTRODUCTION

Tourism is increasingly esteemed by governments and nongovernmental organizations for its potential to alleviate poverty, especially in developing countries (Apostolopoulos and Gayle 2002; Flores 2005; Graburn 1997; WTO 2001, 2002, 2005, 2006). In Bolivia, for example, 314 of 327 decentralized indigenous municipalities recently identified tourism as their number one development priority, ahead

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of the traditional productive activities of farming and ranching (Montes 2005).

This study examines an experience that several recently-developed Andean projects have attempted to replicate (Maldonado 2005). Taquile Island, a rural indigenous Peruvian community, is often considered a model for what has come to be called communitarian tourism in Latin America: that is, a locally developed, owned, and managed enterprise with community-wide distribution of benefits (Bardales 2004; Campbell 1999; Maldonado 2003, 2005, 2006). A long-term, ethnographic assessment (1976–2006) is used to describe tourism's explosive growth on Taquile, and how islanders developed, managed, and then lost control, giving particular emphasis to relations between hosts and outsider mediators. Local impacts widely appreciated by Taquileans have included increased income, skills, and social status. Observers concur that success was due to strong local structures, community-wide benefits distribution, favorable legislation, NGO assistance (one small but important grant), public and private partnerships, early publicity, and relations with "outsiders" (Drumm, Moore, Soles, Patterson, and Terborgh 2004; Gascón 2005; Levi 2003; Mitchell and Eagles 2001; Partridge and Uquillas with Johns 1996; Zorn 2004).

However, while these and studies elsewhere in the world analyze project set-up, development, and management, they tend to overlook the impact when circumstances and conditions change, as well as how tourism develops in the absence of private and public sector investment and training. Such analysis can only be achieved through the use of long-term and longitudinal studies which involve repeated return visits (sometimes over decades). While these methodologies are widely used throughout the social sciences, they remain relatively uncommon in studies, in part because only a handful of communitarian tourism initiatives have lasted more than a decade (Carlsen 1999; Getz 1994; Haley, Snaith, and Miller 2005; Harvey, Hunt, and Harris 1995; Kottak 2006; Lee, Kim, and Kang 2003; Meisch 2002; Tucker 2003; Van de Ven and Huber 1995). This type of research allows for the observation of "structural transformation [and] history" and illuminates "many aspects of local change that have more global causes and implications" (Kottak 2006:221–222). Without them, practitioners and academics alike cannot anticipate the factors that limit long-term benefits to low-income communities.

This study focuses on relationships between local community members and two distinct groups of non-tourist outsiders, who are frequently referred to in the literature as brokers or more recently as mediators. These are both those who sought to take control (tour operators and tour guides), and those who helped propel tourism by voluntarily assisting community members. This latter group—what Burns (1993:20) calls a "helping community" of brokers/mediators who here are called "ad hoc advocate mediators"—has to date gone largely unconsidered. The use of the phrase "ad hoc" emphasizes that these actors have no clear-cut institutional mandate to assist with tourism development.

The role of such mediators may be more vital than often assumed, for in a study of 170 Latin American communitarian tourism initiatives, Maldonado (2005) found that as many as 80% of projects were self-developed, without active participation by state or nongovernmental actors. This finding confirms studies that criticize the casting of locals as passive (Doron 2005; Werner 2003), and speaks to the creativity, invention, and active agency of local hosts in many contexts in mobilizing assistance from outsiders. More research is needed to examine the potential importance of *ad hoc* advocate mediators, particularly vis-à-vis public-sector investment and development. Zorn, during the course of her textile studies and long-term relationships with people on Taquile, is part of this group, and thus in examining her role, this study is situated within the tradition of applied or active anthropology (Bennett 1996; Chambers 1987), as well as anthropological reflexivity (Marcus ed. 1992; Wolf 1992), where the role of ethnographers forms part of the study (Burns 1993; Wolf 1992).

Within the anthropology of tourism, numerous studies beginning with the widely-cited volume edited by Valerie Smith (1977), have examined social actors as either “hosts” or “guests,” and this continues to be a key rubric of analysis (Zorn 2004). Critiques of analyzing these two categories alone have led to consideration of a third category of actors: those who serve as mediators between hosts and guests. Chambers describes their importance:

Tourism is a highly *mediated* activity. It is mediated by... government officials, tourism planners, advertising and marketing agencies, associated “hospitality” industries... travel agents and guides, travel writers and publishers, preservationists, and even by people who study tourism (2000:30, italics in original).

Mediators play structural roles similar to people described in the mid-20th century by sociologists as “marginal men” (Press 1969) and by anthropologists as “culture brokers” (Press 1969; E. Wolf 1956): those who mediate relations between groups of unequal social status. Marginal men or culture brokers are characterized as mediators between their *own* group and the world outside, even in complex societies (Press 1969; E. Wolf 1956). In an early use of this concept in tourism studies, Cohen (1985) describes tour operators as “culture brokers”, which Smith later defined as “the mediator between hosts and guests”, situated between “the demand and the supply sides of tourism” (Smith 2001:276–277). For example, anthropologists are cultural brokers, because they mediate between the cultures they study and the audiences who read their ethnographies. Today, the term broker is more commonly applied to people who fulfill this role (Peace 1998).

However, social-scientific research on mediators is still relatively undeveloped compared to the study of tourists and toured (Chambers 1985, 1987; Evans 1981; and Jennings and Weiler 2006). Werner sees mediators as agents of social change, describing them as “primary agents of tourism” (2003:145). Doron proposes studying cultural brokers such as the boatmen of Varanasi to highlight the “creative and innovative practices of the host group” that otherwise might be

“rendered invisible” (2005:157). Jennings and Weiler provide a table of “mediators and brokers associated with the tourist experience” that lists “formal” and “informal” mediators (2006:62), but the group of mediators under consideration here is not included, even within the broader definition they employ that includes “other tourists, tourist providers, governments, communities, and indigenous groups as well as other interested and related organizations, agencies, and service providers” (Jennings and Weiler 2006:57).

This study draws on ethnographic fieldwork carried out over a 30-year period (1976–2006). As is common in ethnographic research, the longitudinal study was unplanned; thus, observation intervals were irregular, as was the intensity of observations. During initial fieldwork on traditional textile production in 1976, “backpacking” foreign hippie tourism to Taquile began, following publication of a notice praising the island in the 1976 edition of the English-language travel guide, the *South American Handbook*. Zorn documented this development, along with research on transformations in textiles for sale to the tourism market. Additional visits were made in 1983–84, 1986–89, 2002, 2005, and 2006; Zorn also worked as a translator/presenter for Taquilean groups at cultural events in the United States in 1991 and 1994, and maintained periodic contact through telephone calls, letters, and more recently, email. Farthing has visited the island briefly, and advised on attempts to establish communitarian tourism on the opposite side of Lake Titicaca in Bolivia.

Research methodology included ethnographic participant observation, apprenticeship in textile production, unstructured interviews with community representatives and authorities (using network-based “snowball” sampling), and semistructured and structured interviews. Unstructured interviews were conducted with tourists and tour agency operators and guides. In addition, community tourism records were examined for several periods during the 70s and 80s. Research was conducted in Quechua (the Inca language) and Spanish.

HOSTS, GUESTS AND MEDIATORS

The tiny island of Taquile (population 1,900 in 2005), located at 13,000 feet above sea level on Lake Titicaca, is best known for the suddenness and success of the tourism its indigenous community developed during the late 70s and 80s, without government or nongovernmental organization intervention (Gartner and Morton 2000; Gascón 2005; Healy and Zorn 1982–83; Mitchell and Reid 2001; Prochaska 1990; Zorn 2004). Taquileans are low-income peasant farmers, who grow potatoes, tubers, and other subsistence crops using rainfall agriculture on their intensively terraced island, and also fish from the lake. All islanders speak Quechua as their first language, and an increasing number also speak Spanish, though women in particular are likely to be monolingual Quechua speakers. Literacy (only in Spanish) remains limited, though it is growing. Until tourism began, Taquile was extremely isolated, reachable only by reed boat. Beginning

in the late 60s, the island became known to some textile scholars and collectors as a place to find some of the finest handweavings in Peru.

Similar to many other Andean peasant communities, Taquile is organized on the basis of the pre-Columbian *ayllu* (corporate kin-group) system, which regulates crop rotation and governs through a dual set of authorities, both “traditional” and those linked to the national government. Community decisionmaking is participative; service is voluntary and rotative. Though all Taquileans are peasants, social strata exist within the community. In the early 50s, Taquileans characterized these groups as “powerful,” “just enough” and “poor,” based on their access to land (Avalos de Matos 1951; Matos 1951).

Taquile is one of few communities in Peru today where all residents continue to create textiles and wear traditional dress on a daily basis. Cloth was the pre-eminent Andean cultural product for more than 3,000 years, and in this region, women create the most important textiles (Zorn and Quispe 2004). The sale of handmade textiles is an important secondary income-generating activity, and textiles are a commonly-sought tourist souvenir (Meisch 2002). Taquile appears as the essence of Indian Peru: Quechua-speaking potato farmers, wearing beautiful clothing, set high in the Andes mountains surrounded by a spectacular lake, with adobe brick homes, and few modern conveniences.

During the 20th century, Taquileans were conservative in many ways, but innovative in others. They retained many traditional cultural practices and were late to build wooden sailboats, but made alliances with outsiders that would prove key in attracting tourists. In the 30s, far in advance of other nearby peasant communities, one of the wealthier indigenous men, assisted financially by five other families, initiated a long court battle to purchase land from non-indigenous landowners (Matos 1951, 1986). After 20 years of harassment, and persecution, the Taquileans were successful, but community pressure forced the wealthier families to sell some of the acquired land to their poorer relatives (Matos 1986). Since they obtained title to the remaining land in 1970, the community has steadfastly resisted selling land to outsiders, or even allowing outsiders to rent or build.

When Taquileans have not been able to resolve conflicts with outsiders, they have attempted to “go to the top.” A modest success occurred in 1931, when then-president (and former political prisoner on Taquile) Luís Sánchez Cerro ended obligatory unpaid personal service to the island’s landowners—a form of peonage not abolished in the rest of Peru until 1968. This success illustrates how notionally “backward” Taquileans discovered mechanisms to effect changes far in advance of their more “acculturated” brethren.

Despite poor communications (no electricity, phone, or telegraph) and difficulty of access, Taquileans never cut themselves off from the outside world. The island has an elementary school and despite the complexities of reconciling schooling with peasant agricultural life, they repeatedly petitioned for a high school, which was finally built in the 90s. In the early 50s, a new generation of young entrepreneurial men rose to community power by a non-traditional route, which

involved more extensive interaction with outsiders and learning Spanish (Matos 1986). These elite, who were cultural brokers in the classic anthropological sense, subsequently expanded their influence through tourism (Zorn 2004), a result paralleled in Otavalo, Ecuador (Colloredo-Mansfield 1999; Meisch 2002).

In 1968, then-US-Peace-Corps volunteer Kevin Healy was living nearby, and persuaded Taquileans to sell their textiles in a US-sponsored cooperative based in Cusco (Healy and Zorn 1982–1983, 1994). In the cash-poor Andes, this represented an unusual opportunity. Even today, older Taquileans recall that first sale as a stunning moment, when islanders realized they could earn money for something that the outside world despised due to prevailing national racism against Indians.

Although the Cusco cooperative collapsed in 1971, the experience propelled a handful of young Taquilean men to become textile merchants, selling their extended families' fabrics to foreign exporters, scholars, and tourists in Peruvian cities. Again, a small number of them brokered relationships between the community and the outside world, generating cash income that, albeit modest, was significant given previous alternatives (Zorn 2004). Women began to earn money for the first time, causing shifts in gender relations. These initial connections with the handicraft market, as well as experience interacting with foreigners, proved crucial when tourism got underway several years later. Furthermore, the cash was critical in providing Taquileans money for capital investments.

Taquile's isolated and poor inhabitants were not obvious candidates for success with young backpackers. However, when international tourism to Peru nearly tripled during the 70s, a few hardy foreigners braved the 12+ hour sailboat voyage to visit the island (Gascón 2005:51–52). From the beginning, the length of the trip required an overnight stay, and visitors were housed in the homes of government authorities or textile merchants. Within a year, Taquileans (mostly in existing sailboat cooperatives) pooled their textile savings and bought second- and third-hand truck engines. With motors, travel time dropped to three-and-a-half hours, and tourist traffic accelerated. In early 1978, with a modest grant from the US Inter-American Foundation, Taquileans formed motorboat cooperatives, as groups of 20 to 40 families ordered safer, larger, and more attractive vessels from local boatwrights. Eventually, the islanders displaced boat owners from the mainland city of Puno who had previously brought most of the tourists to the island, and successfully petitioned for a government-sanctioned monopoly. By 1982, the cooperative transport groups had expanded to 13, and nearly every family had at least one member in a boat group.

Taquileans created various community and family-based businesses, including a billeting system offering overnight stays in local homes, a crafts cooperative/store where all islanders could sell textiles, individual- and family-owned restaurants, and a rustic museum. With the exception of the grant, Taquileans, who had virtually no access to bank or personal loans, assumed all the associated costs and risks without assuming any debt. In 1978, 68 families were authorized to take in overnight foreign guests. By August 1982, the number had risen to 207, or

nearly every family on the island. Growth was rapid: community records show 5,300 foreign tourists visited Taquile between January-August 1982, and most stayed for two to three days.

To manage their new enterprise, Taquileans drew on long-standing practices of cooperation, some pre-conquest in origin. Tourism committee and subcommittees were in charge, with construction and maintenance the responsibility of traditional community-wide volunteer work parties. They learned to operate and then build boats, established and maintained lodging standards, encouraged islanders to sell crafts through the store rather than at home, and resolved conflicts over the disposition of increased income.

This “ethnotouristic community” (Grünwald 2006:7) included important relationships with *ad hoc* advocate mediators who over the course of several decades voluntarily assisted community members by brokering relationships with outsiders of higher social status. They provided advice, expertise in grant-writing and information about tourists, as well as advocacy in the face of government bureaucracy and conflicts with tour operators. The majority were students (of anthropology primarily), and were, almost without exception, foreigners, and this characteristic reveals an ethnic dimension to mediation that to date has received little attention in the literature.

In addition, they had no local family or business links, but community members frequently cemented ties with them through the well-known institution of *compadrazgo*, or godparenthood (also known as spiritual or ritual kinship), in which a relationship is formalized between the child’s parents and new “co-parents.” This institution can link either social equals or people of different social groups (Mintz and Wolf 1950). Although the practice is based on Catholic baptism, almost without exception in Taquile the ceremony was performed at home during the pre-conquest ritual of first *rutuchiy* (haircutting), which native Andeans have adapted into a variant of godparenthood. This facilitated *compadrazgo*’s use in circumstances where there is no resident priest or where the godparent is not Catholic, both obvious advantages in situations involving foreigners.

During the 70s, key *ad hoc* advocate mediators such as Belgian priest Padre “Pepe” Loits and Peace Corps volunteer Kevin Healy, and key Taquileans, particularly Francisco “Pancho” Huatta, “persuaded (Taquile) residents of tourism’s economic advantages” (Mitchell and Reid 2001:123). Padre Loits, who was in the Catholic church parish in nearby Capachica, was one of the few non-Taquileans to regularly visit the island, where he performed marriages and other rites. Francisco Huatta was one of the first textile sellers, developing long-term contacts with buyers in several Peruvian cities, and later serving as a community leader in tourism projects. Zorn, like many other anthropologists who become advocates for the people they study (Bennett 1996; Burns 1993), helped the community write the Inter-American Foundation grant application and assisted the community in mediating relations with banks in Puno, Peruvian educational authorities, and museums in the United States. She became a godparent of one of Huatta’s children.

Other *ad hoc* advocate mediators included a German expatriate textile scholar and exporter (Gertrudis de Solari) who was the first person to buy textiles in quantity; an English importer (Moh Fini) who sponsored the first trip abroad of a Taquilean (Fini 1985); a French ethnomusicologist, a German anthropology student studying in the United States (Prochaska 1990), and a Japanese doctor who lived on the island for a year. According to Taquileans, only two were Peruvians (one an anthropologist and the other a tourism authority). This preponderance of non-Peruvians is explained, according to islanders, by the intense racism they suffer from non-indigenous people in highly exclusionary Peruvian society.

While growth was propelled by “outsiders,” it has, in significant ways, been built on Taquile’s strong communal spirit and tradition of participation and management of resources. Community participation was key right from the beginning, although nearly half the islanders cannot remember the initial plan’s formulation in the 70s. Mitchell and Reid found that “Taquileans have a very high level of individual involvement in tourism service administration (79% of respondents) and community tourism meetings (96%)” (2001:125), though the authors noted that participation sometimes meant simple attendance rather than active engagement. Despite ongoing factional and generational conflicts, the skill of islanders in uniting as a community was central to their successes (MacDonald and Jolliffe 2003; Mitchell and Reid 2001; Nyaupane, Morais, Dowler 2005; Zorn 2004). Since the early 80s, outsiders have aggressively tried to benefit from tourism to Taquile, initially by attempting to buy community land and build hotels. Such offers were tempting to many poor families, but the community successfully presented a united front, and individuals who considered selling land were threatened with losing community membership, which would invalidate any sales, since only members can hold title.

Tourism to Peru declined steeply from 1981–1995 due to the widespread fear generated during the country’s undeclared civil war (Poole and Rénique 1992). Nonetheless, by the late 80s, as the overall economy worsened, even a largely diminished tourism became an increasingly important source of income. In this context, outsider tour operators became increasingly aware that the main draw along the Andean “*gringo* trail” was the islands in Lake Titicaca, and especially Taquile (Gartner and Morton 2000). Increasingly, local and national tourism brochures began to prominently feature Taquilean weavers and dancers.

The principal threat to community control of tourism stemmed from efforts to control access. Control of transportation is not only key to direct and indirect economic benefits but also to the management of tourists (numbers of tourists, length of stay, and who accompanies tourists). Conflicts with tour operators remain a daily feature of life on Taquile, and show little sign of abating. Non-community tour operators first largely ignored Taquile’s government-sanctioned transportation monopoly; subsequently they successfully pressured to have it revoked. By the mid-80s, Puno elites working in the Ministry of Tourism and the Peruvian Coast Guard collaborated with private boat

owners and tour agencies to undercut Taquile's collectively-owned boats (Healy and Zorn 1994:146). These private tour agencies and guides sought tourists physically, at the Puno dock and in trains, airports, and hotels—and eventually virtually, through the Internet, outmaneuvering Taquileans who had no access to these venues.

Thus began what Taquileans call their *lucha* (fight). With remarkable unanimity, they emphasize that outside agencies (with one or two exceptions) made no efforts to develop equitable partnerships and recall repeated acrimonious confrontations, marked by frequent and demeaning racist insults. Spanish-speaking men spent enormous amounts of time, energy, and money seeking help in this struggle from nongovernmental organizations and private institutions (including the Catholic Church in Puno), Peruvian national agencies (especially the Ministry of Industry and Tourism), and tourists themselves. Particularly in the early years, *ad hoc* advocate mediators helped male islanders prepare and present numerous documents to Peruvian courts. With help from a Catholic Church lawyer, Taquileans pursued the formidable paperwork necessary for Peruvian legal recognition as a *comunidad campesina reconocida* (peasant community) in 1989, which they believed would give them the right to control transportation. However, private tour operators successfully countered that these rights are superseded by national laws.

Taquileans were particularly rankled by tour operators' frequent refusal to pay docking fees since the islanders expended enormous effort to build the stone docks. They eventually obtained a decree authorizing docking and small entry fees, but enforcement has proven problematic. In 2005, Taquileans were permitted to charge the fees upon arrival, though this has caused irritation among some tourists who believed they had paid "everything" when buying tours. Echoing debates worldwide, in Taquile there have been community disagreements over whether this money, which in 2005 totaled approximately US\$40,000, should be used for general community development, or specifically for tourism infrastructure. In the 90s, some adopted an "if you can't beat 'em, join 'em" strategy. This provided very limited benefits to certain individuals and their families, though at the expense of the community as a whole. None of the private arrangements made to rent out and operate collectively or family-owned boats lasted long. Taquileans claim they were either not paid at all, or were paid far less than agreed, or were paid so little that they could not cover the cost of gasoline.

As Peru stabilized in the late 90's, tourism increased in importance once again. By 2001, of the 83,000 annual tourists to Puno, nearly half or 40,000 went to Taquile: an astonishing number given the rustic remoteness of the island. But only one tenth spent the night (Gartner and Morton 2000). Mass day tourism provides significantly less income to local hosts, and provides a diminished experience compared to overnight stays, since during the latter, hosts and guests have much longer interactions.

Taquileans appealed again directly to the top in 2000, sending a male delegation to Peru's capital, Lima. Taquile's symbolic and economic importance was demonstrated when they were granted a visit

by Elena Contorno, a high-ranking advisor to then-President Fujimori (Contorno and Tamayo 2000). Her report demonstrates some sympathy towards the Taquileans, but firmly points out that under the current neoliberal economic model, the state was only willing to remind tour agencies of their responsibilities, and not compel them to pay local fees (Zorn 2005). This policy continues today.

By 2005, the overwhelming majority of tourists traveled to Taquile on outsiders' boats and by the estimates of Juan Quispe, of the Tourism and Culture Committee, 95% stayed only for the day. This means that they barely have time to eat lunch in one of Taquile's growing number of family-owned restaurants, browse rapidly in the large community crafts store, and rest for a moment on the stone benches that line the plaza. Taquileans report that these tourists overwhelmingly preferred to stay in a group, rather than disburse to individual homes. Thus, the 30 families located in the island's central sector hosted the majority (Mitchell and Reid 2001). These experiences contrast markedly with the few tourists who arrive in boats captained and crewed by Taquileans, the majority of whom lodge and eat with local families. The latter are far more likely to experience the type of person-to-person interactions that many cultural or ethnic tourists seek. Though there is the danger of romanticizing such short-term interactions, interviews with numerous islanders showed that in these contexts Taquileans perceive themselves, and are far more likely to be treated, as active agents, rather than passive subjects. In late 2005, several Puno-based tour operators acquired new, faster boats. These vessels make the trip in half the usual time including a brief visit to Taquile as part of a multi-island tour. Alejandro Huatta, one of Taquile's master boat builders, estimates that such boats cost approximately \$27,000, an impossible investment for the islanders.

Taquileans still struggle to compete, despite the challenges from those with deeper pockets and equally important today, access to the Internet. During the late 90s, they—again on their own initiative and with their own funds—built a tour agency office in Puno on land they acquired decades ago to lodge boat crews overnight. Various factors have limited operations, including the lack of a computer and difficulties finding regular volunteer, rotative staffing, since Taquileans have other pressing obligations, primarily as subsistence farmers in one of the world's most challenging environments. By 2005, Taquileans had refurbished and enlarged their communal handicraft shop, and opened a second large shop in the plaza, and a small shop on the main path to the dock, in an effort to stimulate the sale of what has become an overproduction of textiles. Literate Spanish-speaking Taquileans are especially busy in governance, with many demands on their time and talents. Even though they use the Internet on a regular basis, the island's lack of electricity makes it nearly impossible to run a successful travel business.

A Danish NGO consortium (comprised of Ibis, Axis, and the Danish International Human Settlement Service or DIB) initiated an integrated medium-term project from 2005 to 2008. Taquileans spoke particularly enthusiastically of the weekly tour guide training on the island itself pro-

vided by Peruvian bilingual (Spanish and Quechua) anthropology and tourism professors from the National University of the Altiplano in Puno. However, such an initiative is undermined by the increasing professionalization required by the Peruvian government. A university degree or its equivalent (four years) is needed for a license as a guide, whereas the consortium project consists of only one year of training.

Danish initiatives to fund a Tourist Information Office on the island and a Taquilean outlet in Puno have been stymied, though a ticket booth was operating at the Puno dock by 2006. Like other outside nongovernmental organizations and institutions, the consortium understandably prefers working with community members who hold office for several years, but as is so often the case, accommodating an NGO in this way creates or exacerbates political tensions between traditional rotative authorities (who serve one-year turns) and elected officials on the Tourism and Culture Committee (who may serve for more than a year).

In November 2005, Taquile and its textile arts were named by UNESCO as one of 43 new Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritages of Humanity, providing a "moral recognition" that may assist Taquileans in pressing their claims for a greater share of the market (UNESCO Press 2005). Additionally, in June 2006, Taquileans learned that \$80,000 would be available to Peru's *Instituto Nacional de Cultura* (National Institute of Culture) for preserving their textiles. As has occurred for other UNESCO-designated sites, it is highly probable that outsiders will develop high-end tours to Taquile.

CONCLUSION

In 1983, Taquile's tourism model stood in sharp contrast to the experiences of other Third-World communities where positive benefits were trickle-down at best and frequently diminished by outside control, erosion of cultural integrity, and disruption of traditional lifeways (Li 2006). In part, this was due to good fortune, as isolation functioned as an advantage: Taquileans' continued practice of traditional arts and customs combined with their remoteness to attract backpacking tourists, while their distance from the mainland kept outsiders at arms' length. Their island status and strong communal organizations afforded them considerable control over what transpired in their community (Healy and Zorn 1982–1983:8).

In several important ways, tourism supported rather than undercut traditional lifestyles (Flores and Quispe 1994). Weaving flourished, reinforcing traditional skills and values, though at the same time the overall quality of textiles offered for sale in the cooperative has declined. Since textile production can be performed intermittently among other tasks, crafts production can raise the value of otherwise marginal time and childhood training. Tourism and the sale of textiles made it possible for Taquileans to earn cash primarily while staying at home, a rare accomplishment in the impoverished Andes. While this income increased social stratification, it also allowed most islanders to improve their lives (Zorn 2004). However, the increased volume

of tourists and reduced profit per tourist have exacerbated the “leakage” of profits away from the community, and this seems likely to continue (Pattullo 1996).

Given the overall poverty in the region, tourism has turned the island into a modest economic pole for non-islanders. By the end of 2005, a small weekly market was set up that attracts people from the nearby Capachica peninsula. Several non-Taquilean merchants sell food or jewelry to tourists. In 2005, Zorn observed something exceptional in a peasant community: the employment of a Lima relative in a Taquilean’s restaurant, inverting the traditional pattern of migration from countryside to city.

As changed circumstances have concentrated the benefits of tourism into fewer hands, communal institutions appear to be declining, as more wealthy Taquileans say they are “too busy” to attend assemblies, serve rotative turns, and otherwise participate in community activities (Quispe, Huatta, and Machaca 2005), a finding echoed by Kottak (2006). This decline is especially critical since Taquile’s ability to act collectively was central to their impressive social gains. Mitchell and Reid note “a trend towards individualism, consumerism, and globalization” (2001:134). They add that this has impacted communal ownership as well: in 2001, only four boats were cooperative (130) as most were owned by nuclear families. However, this result is not universal, and in some parts of Latin America traditions of cooperation maintain their strength despite increased wealth and modernization (Cohen 1999; Meisch 2002).

Paradoxically, tourism has served to make indigenous identity more salient to Taquileans themselves. The constant tourist gaze made the islanders more aware of their indigeneity as a positive attribute, and they express pride that their cultural traditions are so noteworthy. Tourism has increased Taquileans’ social status in the region, and provided income that generally improved their lives and reduced the need to migrate for work. This increased wealth ironically has meant they can afford to build cement houses with tin roofs, buy machine-spun, commercially dyed yarns for their textiles, operate modern motorboats, and educate their children to speak Spanish, all of which undermine their perceived authenticity as indigenous. For example, the increasing value given to speaking Spanish, and at least a few words in other languages, forces locals to walk a fine line between the needs for communication and the tourist expectations of encountering an exotic unilingual “Other.” In order for Taquileans to compete in tourism, they must (as many desire) become more “modern” through acquiring skills such as operating computers and motorized boats and marketing, and the need for such skills is intensifying an ongoing internal debate about social transformation. For example, the demand for trained tourist personnel likely will require adjustments to traditional forms of unpaid rotative services.

By 2005, the islanders found themselves only able to compete in the form of niche tourism, notably educational and alternative tourism, in coordination with outside institutions and alternative tour companies, most of which are European. This has introduced yet another group of

tourism mediators: these with strong institutional affiliations. With their participation, it is possible that any future role for *ad hoc* advocate mediators on Taquile will prove unnecessary, although as the island's experience shows, institutions bring with them not only resources, but also agendas that can conflict with established norms.

Alliances with *ad hoc* advocate mediators undoubtedly facilitated Taquileans' retaining control over tourism as long as they did. Because they were principally foreigners, the mediators enabled the islanders to exercise their agency in the face of a hostile surrounding environment—by jumping local barriers to develop transnational relationships, much in the way that Keck and Sikkink (1998) describe some social movements in the global south have done. However, when tourism changed, and different skills and greater commitments of time and money were required, the very *ad hoc* nature of these relationships meant that they were inadequate for the task. The advantages and disadvantages of *ad hoc* mediators versus institutional mediators as perceived by hosts such as Taquileans play an important role in determining the shape that communitarian tourism takes. Their changing role over time, rooted in the shifts in tourism on the island, highlight how crucial longitudinal studies can be in fully understanding the potential and limitations of communitarian tourism. ■

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