Environment and Planning D: Society and Space 2007, volume 25 pages 53 – 74

DOI:10.1068/d2504

Depth of fields: travel photography and spatializing modernities in northern Pakistan

Kathryn Besio
Department of Geography and Environmental Studies, University of Hawaii at Hilo, 200 West Kawili Street, Hilo, HI 96720, USA; e-mail: besio@hawaii.edu
Received 23 September 2004; in revised form 22 June 2005

Abstract. Western travelers move throughout the world—especially to places in 'the East'—believing themselves to be harbingers of modernity, spreading capitalism, socioeconomic development, Western culture, and other promises of modernization to places they assume are existing in states of pristine Otherness. In this paper I look at interactions between travelers and locals that reveal differing spatial imaginaries of 'modernity', and at how these reflect and produce different narratives of who is modern and where modernity exists. By using ethnographic material, I examine discursive and material interactions surrounding modernity through the examples of travelers' practices of photography, dress, and knowledge of Muslim women's veiling. In this paper I look to a located, gendered, and particular expression of an Islamic modernity, one that embraces improvements in quality of life that modern technologies of health care, agricultural production, and sanitation may bring, and which simultaneously embraces nonsecular ways of being in the world.

1 Introduction

One metaphor of contemporary Western travel is that of a contagious disease. Travelers move throughout the world—especially to places in 'the East'—as harbingers of modernity, spreading capitalism, socioeconomic development, Western culture and beliefs, and other promises of modernization to places previously uninfected, existing, of course, in states of pristine Otherness. Ignoring that many of these places are former colonies, subject to the manifold pernicious effects of imperialism and colonialism, some travelers interact naively with Others, passing on the infection. Increasingly, and in keeping with the illness metaphor, many travelers are wary of infecting Others with their modern ways. Travelers seek to minimize their impacts through practices that are culturally sensitive to the so-called traditional[(1)] cultures they visit. On the part of destinations, toured populations often seek containment of travelers, quarantining them in resorts and in other tourist-dominated[(2)] spaces to reduce contagion. In this metaphor of travel, hosts and guests take on quite another meaning, for both now harbor a parasite as they seek to understand themselves through the lens of tourism, one of the hallmark activities of modernity.

In this paper I examine travelers' prophylactic use of cultural sensitivity and a particular destination population's use of space in northern Pakistan. Specifically, I examine how their imagining of tourism spaces reflects and produces different narratives of who is 'modern'. Although modernity is ostensibly the disease carried by Western travelers, it is not endemic to them or to locations commonly called

[(1)] The term 'traditional' is problematic because it implies 'before modern', and, as Johannes Fabian suggests (1983), denies coevalness to those who are described as 'traditional'. Although I have omitted scare quotes around 'tradition' throughout this paper, they are nevertheless implied.

[(2)] I use both the terms 'tourist' and 'traveler' throughout the paper but give preference to 'traveler' and 'adventure traveler'. Many of those I interviewed self-identified as 'travelers'. Hence, although I use their term, I agree with Dean MacCannell that "we are all tourists" (1999, page 9). Presumably, the term 'traveler' is less degrading than that of 'tourist', which has come to be synonymous with shallow and vulgar behavior.

'the West'. However modernity is defined, it has been and continues to be a coconstruction of travelers and toured.

Modernity is a notoriously slippery term to define. Tamara Sonn (2001, page 216) notes that the terms 'modernity' and 'modernism' are often conflated, although they are intertwined epistemologically. That is, technological improvements in medicine, for example, which commonly reflect modern technologies (modernity), arose from philosophies of rationalism (modernism), which are embedded in notions of more supposedly advanced, secular societies (see also Mitchell, 2002). Sonn suggests that, for many Muslims, technological modernity is embraced whereas tenants of secular modernism are rejected in favor of a more globalized or contemporary Islam (see also Haddad and Esposito, 1998; Secor, forthcoming). This globalized community of Islam is necessarily diverse. As I will suggest in more detail below, there is a progressive, contemporary, and locally lived understanding of Islam which is based around a growing Islamic ecumene. Whatever construction of modernity is embraced or rejected it necessarily contains its self and its Other, each coconstructing what it is to be modern through subjects' spatial imaginations of where modernity exists and of how it is practised there.

An examination of modernities as diverse and non-Western centered may explain better the processes by which Others are displaced continually from modernity (see Fabian, 1983; Tsing, 1993). In this paper, I look to located, gendered, and particular expressions of Islamic modernities, ones that embrace improvements in quality of life that modern technologies of health care, agricultural production, and sanitation may bring, and which simultaneously embrace nonsecular ways of being in the world. I hope that a more located examination of modernities in the plural will add to narratives that Timothy Mitchell suggests "complicate, rather than simply reverse, the narrative logic of modernization" (2000, page 7). For instance, many Western travelers construct modernity as synonymous with and located within Europe and North America. They venture to places such as northern Pakistan to see a living past, which will soon be lost. As Mitchell (2000, page 1) states so well,

> "[modernity] continues to be commonly understood as a process begun and finished in Europe, from where it has been exported across ever-expanding regions of the non-West. The destiny of those regions has been to mimic, never quite successfully, the history already performed by the West. To become modern, it is still said, or today to become postmodern, is to act like the West."

This discursive construction of modernizing (or postmodern) Others fails to acknowledge that modernity has always-already been a hybrid product of colonial engagements[(3)], from which contemporary tourism has its legacy

To look more closely at the spatiality of coconstructed modernities, I examine travel prescriptions (not the medicinal kind) regarding photography and visitors' dress codes, particularly how travel photography and travelers' dress reflect, inform, and produce narratives of modern and not modern in Baltistan, a region in the Northern Areas of Pakistan. Western adventure travelers' practices inscribe modernity with a geography that centers it in and from the West, while their bodies are emplaced in Others' spaces. As I will suggest in much more detail below, Western travelers' and Baltis' definitions of modernity and tradition differ, although they necessarily inform one another. Narratives of conservative dress, especially travelers' notions about *hijab* (or veiling) as traditional, are central to the ways rural Balti women's bodies are

[(3)] Many postcolonial scholars have written about the hybrid nature of colonialism, and my use of the term draws upon Homi Bhabha's conceptualizations of hybridity, whereby the colonized tactically and strategically use the colonizer's tools, producing not a mimicry of the colonizer but a hybrid subjectivity (see Bhabha, 1984).

constructed as not modern. The terms *purdah*, 'hijab', and 'the veil' all refer to the many ways in which Muslim women practice modest dress and spatiality in deference to Islam. The terms are often used interchangeably, although Fadwa el Guindi (2000) suggests that the words connote different types of practices of spatial and bodily seclusion, the veil having particularly Orientalist connotations. The Arabic word 'hijab' is the term used most commonly for veiling and seclusion in Skardu, Baltistan's regional capital,[4] and is the term I use throughout this paper.

Western travelers' representations of nonmodern rural women contrast with urban Balti definitions, which differ from urban, down-country Pakistani definitions. The intersections between Western travelers' and Balti representations of veiled women trouble the modern – traditional dichotomy, pointing to modernities in the plural. Both Western travelers and urban-based Baltis construct rural women as nonmodern or as traditional. However, urban Balti representations of nonmodern rural women contrast with Western travelers' representations. In Baltistan rural women are not modern because they do *not* veil as assiduously as urban women or seclude themselves from public spaces. While rural women cover their heads and bodies and dress modestly in deference to Islam, they also work in public spaces such as agricultural fields. In Baltistan the more seclusionary forms of hijab are markers of modern Muslim practice, which then allow women to move into private, household, and women-only spaces. Such seclusionary forms of hijab may be especially appealing for rural women whose lives are characterized by strenuous outdoor agricultural work and who profess a desire to be 'better Muslims'. Spaces of seclusion offer Balti females opportunities for education and for women-only health care, both of which are modernizing trends for rural Balti women although not strictly speaking a definition of modernity. I hesitate to be definitive about what modernity means in Baltistan because definitions are heterogeneous. Instead, I see the analysis and examples in this paper as speaking about contestations over modernity in a particular place and historical context (see Spivak, 1988). Moreover, I hope that the empirical material below supports theorizing on the diversity of women's practices in Muslim societies (Abu-Lughod, 1998; Ahmed, 1999; Falah and Nagel, 2005; Gökariksel, forthcoming; Khan, 1998; Secor, 2002; forthcoming). Scholars of gender and Islam suggest that there is a wide range of ways in which women practice Islam and, indeed, within Pakistan and throughout the world women's practices of Islam are pluralistic and dynamic, responding to women's situated identities.

By using ethnographic material from Baltistan,[5] I examine discursive and material interactions surrounding conceptualizations of modernities. My ethnographic examples address negotiations around Western travelers' practices of photography and their knowledge of hijab. Mike Crang (1997, page 371) states that more scholarly attention to the practices of the 'tourist gaze' (Urry, 2002 [1989]) helps in "thinking

[4] El Guindi notes that hijab connotes sanctity and privacy and translates it as "cover, wrap, curtain, veil, screen, partition" (2000, page 157).

[5] I undertook ethnographic research in Baltistan between 1997 and 1998, using primarily participant observation, survey methods, and informal interviews with Western travelers, although the majority of my research is based upon participant-observation work in Askole village. My research was part of a larger project that examined the political economy of portering relations in the Northern Areas (see Besio and Butz, 2004; Butz and Besio, 2004; MacDonald and Butz, 1998). Historically, Baltistan's portering legacy is in the colonial labor conditions of forced labor, or *begar* (MacDonald, 1998). Today, males undertake portering work for Western mountaineering and trekking groups. Balti women do not porter, and my role in the portering research was to examine the day-to-day effects of portering on women's and girls' livelihoods, spatialities, and identities. I do not address the successes and pitfalls of my ethnographic project here, although I have addressed these in detail elsewhere (Besio, 2003).

through a multiply mediated world".[6] Although the word 'tourist' is nearly synonymous with 'modern' and 'photography', not all tourist photographers practice photography or produce the tourist gaze in the same ways. In response to travelers' situated photographic practices, I look at the ways in which Baltis, predominantly males in the urban center of Skardu and villagers in a rural village, express their understandings of modernity, which, again, center around women's bodies.

In the paper below, I organize my ethnographic examples geographically: from urban Skardu to a village in rural Baltistan. The urban example is contained in sections 2 and 3. I first describe Western guidebooks' and government of Pakistan (henceforth GOP) photography restrictions. Guidebooks written for Western travelers and GOP restrictions differ from one another, but both are couched within discourses of cultural sensitivity towards traditional women. In sections 2 and 3 I outline how travel guidebooks prescribe appropriate travel-photography behavior to travelers [for more on the history of guidebook prescriptions or 'hints' see Felix Driver (2001); see also Louis Turner and John Ash (1975)], although travelers gain information in a variety of ways.

A current favorite guidebook series amongst adventure travelers are the Lonely Planet Guides, which contain sections with advice on where to stay, what to see, as well as on concerns specific to travelers' health and social needs, along with information regarding their interactions with Others. In one such section in *Pakistan: A Travel Survival Kit* John King and Bradley Mayhew (1998) advise Western travelers on the wants and desires of Muslims regarding photography, advise them to dress 'conservatively' while in Pakistan, and to don locally made *shalwar kameez* (baggy pants and shirt), and recommend veiling to Western women. Lonely Planet guidebooks and Pakistanis advise travelers to dress modestly while in the country, suggesting to them an embodied participation in tourism will influence their knowledge of what is culturally appropriate behavior. Closely linked to the Lonely Planet's recommendations for appropriate behavior, GOP restrictions on photography suggest that tradition is embodied through dress, especially through the GOP construction of 'tribal women'.

In my second ethnographic example I follow travelers into a rural Balti village, describing how their knowledge of traditional women is practised on the ground. In section 4, I look at how a destination population produces rural women's spaces and responds to the possibility of travelers' presence. Western travelers and rural Balti women have few face-to-face interactions, yet the possibility of travelers being in village spaces—the possibility of contagion—produces new tourism-only spaces, which may alter women's and girls' geographies. Both male and female Western travelers' physical presence in the village and the possibility that they make take photographs contribute to local productions of tourist spaces that contain travelers and exclude women. Although Western women travelers may veil themselves while in villages, attempting to mitigate their impact upon village women, the possibility of travelers' presence helps to produce a modern geography of hijab whereby village women are 'pushed' into household private spaces.[7] Thus, Western women travelers' adoption of

[6] John Urry's revisions of his initial work *The Tourist Gaze* (2002 [1989]) begins to address embodied practices of the tourist gaze in addition to the visual. For more on tourists' embodied practices see Lynda Johnston (2001; 2005) and Soile Veijola and Eeva Jokinen (1994).

[7] Notions of where women can go in 'public' and 'private' village spaces are complicated by the presence of unrelated males. In a sense, all village males are known and related to village women, which makes all village spaces effectively private. That is, although females behave modestly in public spaces, these spaces are, in effect, private because there are no unrelated males present. Until very recently, there had not been a need for spaces that exclude village females until there was a more sustained presence of unknown males (and of females who are gendered male such as female travelers).

veiling—which they think of as respecting traditional women—helps to produce what is, ironically, a modern landscape for village women.

In concluding this paper, in section 5, I return to discussions regarding non-Western narratives of modernity vis-à-vis the examples I have provided. The ethnographic examples provide illustration of modernities that include not just an Islamic modernity but multiple modernities. Although modernity may appear to occur over stages and to emanate from a European center (Mitchell, 2000), perhaps its diverse spatial manifestations better illuminate modernities in the plural, which do not relocate 'the birth' of modernity in Western histories.

To follow Dipesh Chakrabarty (2000, page 82), such constructions of modernity fail to question "the relationship between diversity of life practices/life worlds and universalizing political philosophies that remain the global heritage or the Enlightenment." Such diversity may be seen in the ways that modernities are gendered and in the variety of ways in which women practise Islam. These diverse practices of Islam, as Nilufer Göle (2000) suggests in the Turkish context, exemplify not the apparent incompatibility of Islam and modernity but, as she states, an Islamist modernity that may

> "endow Muslims with a collective identity that works critically against both traditional subjugation and Muslim identity and monocivilizational impositions of Western modernity. As such, Islamism can be thought of as a critical introduction to Muslim agency into the modern arenas of social life" (page 93).

The ethnographic examples provided here elaborate on how different spatial imaginaries of modernity provide a specific context for thinking through not just a Muslim agency but agencies in the plural.

2 Ground rules unveiled

Prior to 2001, Baltistan (see figure 1), like much of Pakistan's Northern Areas, had a growing tourism industry, largely based around adventure travel (Mock and O'Neil, 1996a). Mountaineers and trekkers visited the Baltoro region to climb and trek in the Karakoram Mountains and across their glaciers. Each summer mostly non-Muslim travelers ventured through the towns and villages of this predominately Shi'a Muslim region. Travelers to Baltistan come predominantly from Europe, North America, Australasia, and Japan, although not exclusively so. I regret that any term used to describe them as a group overly homogenizes the diversity of travelers who visit the Northern Areas. I recognize that they have a range of motivations and interests and, as much as possible, draw attention to those amongst this diverse group of individuals.

Since 2001 group trekking in Pakistan has dropped off, although, after the 2004 celebration of the 50th anniversary of the first ascent of K2, mountaineering and tourism may again be on the upswing.[8] In previous years, after landing in Islamabad, many of the Baltoro-bound expeditions and groups traveled to Skardu, and then journeyed through a number of Baltistan's rural villages on their way to or returning from the Baltoro glacier below the summit of K2. The yearly summer influx of travelers brings to Baltistan's communities opportunities to earn cash, as men engage in work related to adventure travel (see MacDonald and Butz, 1998). Mountaineering

[8] The first people to summit K2 were an Italian team, led by Ardito Desio in 1954. A number of Italian expeditions are planned to celebrate the 50th anniversary, with over 500 Italian mountaineers and media persons expected to visit the K2 base camp in July 2004 (Guido Pigliasco, personal communication, 2004). To give some idea of the number of porters this event could employ, the porter : client ratio can be as high as 12 : 1 for mountaineering expeditions.

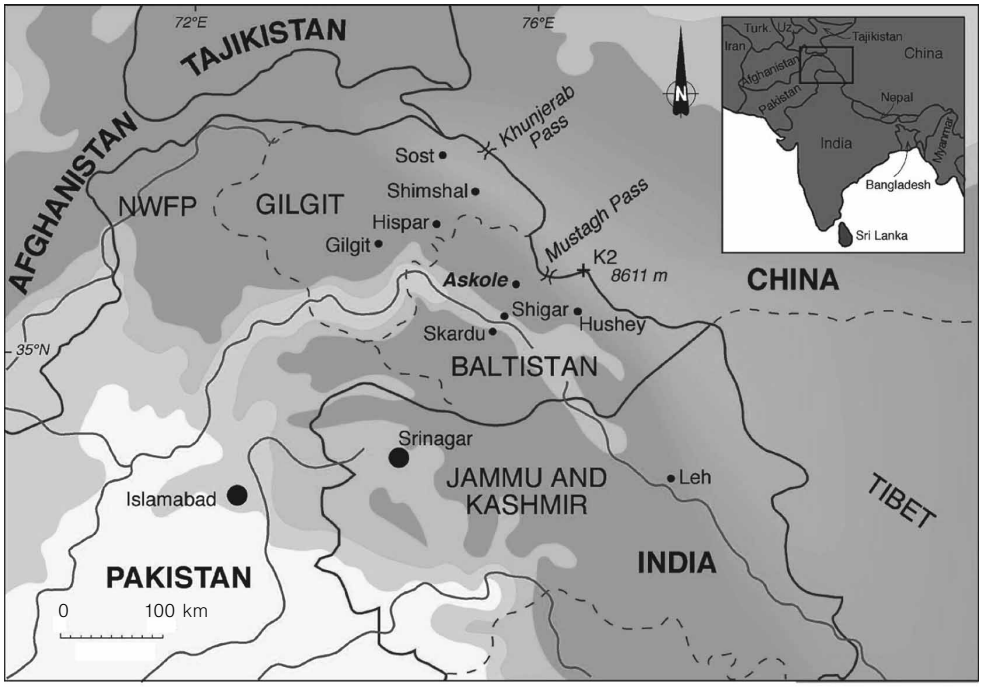

Figure 1. Map of Northern Areas, Pakistan.

expeditions and trekking groups employ guides, cooks, drivers, and thousands of porters, and create work for hoteliers, restaurant workers, cleaners, etc.

Yet, for many Baltis, the economic benefits of tourism coexist uneasily with Muslim practices, with one of the most-cited concerns being travelers' presence in public spaces frequented by Muslim women. One way that these concerns are addressed is through guidebook restrictions and GOP rules and regulations for trekkers. In an attempt to mitigate potentially problematic interactions, guidebooks provide specific guidelines and recommendations to travelers on where they should go—that is, to maintain sexually segregated spaces—and how travelers should dress in conducting their interactions with Pakistanis. Travelers to Baltistan have many sources of information regarding their behavior: word of mouth, Pakistani down-country guides,[9] and travelers' lore are three important sources.

For the purposes of my analysis I focus on Lonely Planet guidebooks and GOP restrictions. Both of these sources provide guidelines for travelers, although GOP regulations are, as I will suggest, more embedded in national and regional discourses of ethnic differentiation, which may be outside the ken of travelers. I turn to, first, Lonely Planet guidebooks because of their ubiquity, and, second, to GOP regulations because these underlie Lonely Planet's prescriptions.

Lonely Planet guidebooks are commonplace among Northern Area travelers. In my questionnaire survey of these travelers ($N = 71$), nearly 46% of those who responded carried a Lonely Planet guidebook, either the country guide or a guide to trekking in the Karakoram. A nearly equal number of respondents (42%) carried no

[9] In the hierarchy of trekking labor, guides oversee assistant guides, cooks, and porters. Sometimes guides come from down-country locations, such as Lahore or Islamabad. They also come from other parts of the Northern Areas (see figure 1). However, there are very few if any Balti guides. Tourists have perhaps their most sustained interactions with guides and, as such, nonlocal knowledge about Baltis is often the source of travelers' knowledge.

guidebook at all, probably because they were on guided tours. For those travelers who carried a guidebook, Lonely Planet guides were an overwhelming favorite: 79% carried Lonely Planet guides. Additionally, nearly all of those I surveyed carried a camera (97%), once again reasserting the importance of photography to travel and to travelers (Crang, 1997; Sontag, 1978).

Lonely Planet guidebooks recognize that Muslim males and females have differing responses to tourist photography, and steer tourists on a conservative course of respecting difference. In their book *Pakistan: A Travel Survival Kit* King and Mayhew state in the section "Facts for the visitor—photography and video":

> "Prohibited subjects are military sites, airports, bridges and above all, women. To Muslims, especially in rural areas, it's an insult to photograph any woman older than a child without permission, and if a husband or brother is nearby, it's risky too. This is true even if you're shooting a mountain and a woman happens to be in a field in the foreground, and even if she's too far away to be recognized" (1998, page 74).

Like the country guidebook, the authors of Lonely Planet guide to *Trekking in the Karakoram and Hindu Kush* state, "when photographing, respect local residents' dignity and right to privacy … photographing women is considered improper" (Mock and O'Neil, 1996b, page 61).[10] Guidebook authors' suggestions for photography follow from concerns that travelers behave modestly, encouraging cultural respect for the values of Others when in their country. Rather than err on the side of permissiveness, guidebook authors further encourage travelers to be careful photographers, respecting the norms of Pakistanis. Encouragement of respectful behavior among Western travelers is desirable and the safest course. Many travelers heed the advice, stating in informal interviews and on my survey that they regretted that they could not take photographs of people freely, especially women, and noting that they were aware that photography of women could offend some Muslims because of beliefs regarding the production of images.[11]

For their part, the GOP requires permitted mountaineers and trekkers to attend a briefing prior to their excursion and it is there that the GOP outlines appropriate behavior. The briefing is required because K2 is in territory still under dispute between India and Pakistan and is in what is considered a restricted zone. At the briefing in Islamabad at the Ministry of Sports and Tourism, clerks inform trekkers and mountaineers of the rules and regulations for travel in the Karakoram contained in *Trekking Rules and Regulations* (GOP, 1996). Trekking and mountaineering guidelines include information ranging from import and export rules for mountaineering equipment, provision of gear, food and pay requirements for liaison officers, guides, and porters, and the rules for photography.

[10] John Mock and Kimberley O'Neil also discourage photography for payment, suggesting that cash incentives encourage people to overcome their reluctance to photography and to violate their own cultural and religious beliefs. Guidebooks for other parts of the Himalaya, such as Nepal, do not discourage photography of women in the same manner nor does an older guidebook for the Karakoram—see Stephen Bezruchka (1991) for Nepal and Hugh Swift (1982) for Pakistan.

[11] There is debate over whether photography is forbidden for Muslims. The production of images of the prophet is forbidden. However, photographic images of individuals are not identical to graven images, and there are many Muslims who allow their photographs to be taken. It is nevertheless courtesy for tourists to request consent for photography in any destination, but especially when taking photographs that may result in interactions between unknown males and Pakistani women. I return to this issue more below.

The rules for photography are complete with instructions for enforcement. This responsibility falls on guides and liaison officers during the course of an expedition or trek. GOP guidelines (1996) state the rules of photography as follows:

"A Party shall not photograph the following objects during its stay in Pakistan:

a) Any Army, Navy, or Air Force installation;

b) Any equipment of Armed Force's [sic] such as ships/establishments, guns, tanks, vehicles, aircrafts and arms, etc;

c) Any Pakistani aerodromes or its connected buildings and installations;

d) Any tribal lady/ladies and finally;

e) Any other notified prohibited area/place."

Military installations and "other notified prohibited area/place[s]" are numerous in Pakistan, and signs notify travelers when and where photography is restricted: sites range from small army encampments to bridges over the Indus River. GOP photography guidelines regarding women are more specific than those in the Lonely Planet guidebooks, although they are very similar in that women are singled out: they are not to be photographed. My concerns with GOP photography restrictions (and later with guidebook dress prescriptions) for travelers are not to suggest that they are 'right or wrong'. The intended goodwill of the restrictions may, though, elide important information for travelers. Although the advice may be warranted, one drawback is that it does not adequately contextualize different norms and behaviors among citizens of a diverse nation, or does it contextualize those norms as discourses that construct some Pakistani subjects as more modern than others. The construction of nonmodern subjects in the GOP regulations differs from that in the Lonely Planet guides, which implicitly although perhaps not explicitly construct non-Western people—in my example, Pakistanis—as not modern. In the GOP photography restrictions, multiple modernities surface, each constructed around a different nonmodern Other.

The GOP guideline restrictions for photographing 'tribal' women—nonmodern women—are not the same as 'no photography of women' in the Lonely Planet guides. Understanding the specificity of the GOP guidelines involves unpacking the terms of photography in Pakistan, and, especially, understanding of who is or are "tribal lady/ladies". The GOP's prohibition on photography of tribal women, in all likelihood, intends to protect women living in Pakistan's tribal areas, especially those in the North West Frontier Province (NWFP) and Swat. In Pakistan the designation of tribal refers most generally to anyone who is ethnically Pathan, although it extends to other regions.[12] Women in the tribal areas of NWFP and Swat, when in public, wear a *burkha*, an all-body covering veil. In all likelihood, they and their families would be uncomfortable with photography. Indeed, in 2005 the NWFP passed an act that prohibits the use of photographs of women. The GOP restriction on photography of tribal women is logical given this context.

Like the suggestions of the Lonely Planet guidebook, the GOP's prohibition of the photography of tribal women is the safest advice to travelers who frequently offend Pakistanis with immodest dress and behavior. However, the restriction may confuse travelers given that images of other women, such as the women of Kailash, who are not Muslim appear in numerous tourism advertisements, postcards, and other promotional materials for Pakistan. 'Tribal' is not defined well for many travelers, and coupled with Western guidebook prescriptions that state "photography of women is considered improper" it becomes a prohibition on photography of *all* women. From both sources,

[12] The Federally Administered Tribal Areas refers to tribal areas adjacent to the districts of Peshawar, Kohat, Bannu, Dera Ismail Khan, and the Agencies of Bajaur, Orakzai, Mohmand, and Khyber (http://www.pakistani.org/pakistan/constitution/part12.ch3.html).

I read that photography of all Pakistani women is discouraged, although photographs of some women are more discouraged than those of others.

In focusing travelers' representational concerns towards Pakistani women and specifically tribal women, GOP trekking regulations and Lonely Planet guidebook authors access, perhaps inadvertently, discourses that use veils and burkhas as texts of tradition, embodied by women. Cassandra Balchin (2004), drawing from the work of Nira Yuval-Davis (1997) states that, "in all cultures, women are the pivotal territories, markers and reproducers of the narratives of nations and other collectivities. In the case of Muslim societies this has had two identifiable outcomes." The outcomes Balchin refers to are, first, that states such as Iran politicize women's identity around issues such as dress and family law (see also Shehadeh, 2003), and, second, the perception that Islam persistently oppresses women by making them dress modestly. Each of these outcomes is important to my analysis of photography and narratives of modernity and tradition.

Lata Mani (1989) and Chakrabarty (2000) offer further insights into discursive practices that equate 'woman' with tradition in their work on *sati* (widow immolation) in colonial India. Like those discourses that Balchin cites, Mani argues that, in discourses of sati, women are represented as more tied to the home than men, a location that implicitly implies tradition. Women as the keepers of the home then become the locus of tradition. Symbolically, they come to embody those traditional values. Mani states, "women become emblematic of tradition, and the reworking of tradition is largely conducted through debating the rights and status of women in society" (1989, page 90). Chakrabarty's analysis of sati takes this symbolic production of 'women as tradition' in a slightly different direction. He suggests that those who document traditional women and their oppression—in this instance colonial administrators, the "white men who saved brown women from brown men" (Spivak, 1988)—positioned themselves as modern subjects because they were able to give witness to the suffering of sati. Chakrabarty states that it was not just the marking of widows' bodies that made them traditional—that is, their white saris, shaved heads, and circumscribed spatiality. The distinction between traditional and modern was in the witnesses's "capacity to notice and document suffering (even if it be one's own suffering) from the position of a generalized and necessarily disembodied observer" that marked the modern self (2000, page 51). For travel photographers the ability to document 'traditional' women (or not document women as the case may be) is part of the process of producing modernity. An important point that comes through Chakrabarty's analysis of documenting modernity is that modernity is a *coproduction*, in that it can be produced only with, albeit unequally, an Other.

In Baltistan guidebooks and government regulations frame travelers' perceptions of rural Balti women as equivalent to tribal women, according to a logic in which there is easy slippage between 'tribal' and 'traditional' veiled women. GOP restrictions of tribal mean something quite specific. However, as the GOP restrictions are seamlessly woven into guidebook restrictions, travelers' perceptions of the restriction on women's photography becomes more about veiling designating those who are traditional.

My reading of tribal as equivalent to traditional suggests a need for a closer examination of representations of Islam and of the diversity of Muslim modernities. The sorts of representations that depict Islam as a traditional religion fail to account for the variety of Muslim practices amongst different bodies—men, women, children—and in different places, contexts, and history. Victoria Bernal calls this form of Orientalism 'Islamic determinism' or "the misapprehension of Islam, as well as the failure to place Islamic cultures adequately within historical contexts" (1994, page 37). Photography guidelines that homogenize diverse practices of veiling among Pakistani women, and then

use women as the site of this supposedly static tradition, are forms of Islamic determinism, thus widening the spatial gulf of modernity. Photography guidelines bring veiling as not modern to the foreground, but it is in guidebook prescriptions for dress that visitors begin to reckon with an embodied understanding of what is modern and not modern in Pakistan.

3 Veils flapping

For Western travelers, veiling becomes a marker of tradition. For Western women travelers, veiling is also a means of distinguishing themselves as modern from the supposedly oppressed Others. The term 'traditional women', through the construction of tribal women in photography restrictions, becomes a gloss for those women who practice veiling. These women contrast with modern women, such as Western tourists, and, perhaps in the discursive frame of the GOP regulations, with modern Pakistani women in urban places such as Karachi, Islamabad, and Lahore, who may veil more selectively, infrequently, or not at all. Yet, for many Western travelers, the nuances of Pakistani women's veiling practices are not common knowledge, although they have some sense of difference based on urban–rural distinctions if travelers have spent much time in Karachi, Islamabad, or any of Pakistan's urban centers.[13]

However, in Baltistan, women practice hijab most carefully in the regional capital of Skardu. Relative to rural Balti women, hijab-keeping Skardu women are examples of modern Shi'a women. Skardu women spend much of their time in family-only spaces and women-only spaces, and infrequently visit the 'new' bazaar to buy cloth or other essentials, except in the late-afternoon hours, when they are accompanied by male household members. As in other towns in northern Pakistan, when Skardu women travel without male escorts in public they do so mainly along the back lanes in residential areas and venture to shops just for women (Gratz, 1998). There are very few 'ladies shops' in Skardu, and none that I know of in the new bazaar.[14] Women in Skardu have a reputation for practicing hijab more strictly than in other towns of the Northern Areas and more strictly than in rural Baltistan.

In contrast, rural Balti women do not practice hijab in quite the same manner as those in Skardu. This is not for lack of modesty but because the demands of agricultural work make seclusion difficult, and it is generally not an option. Farida Azhar-Hewitt's (1999, page 149) research on women in Hushey valley notes that poorer women who engage in outdoor subsistence activities cannot practice seclusion because it would be too difficult to do all the required agricultural and animal husbandry tasks; nor can they do field work while wearing a *chador,* a large body-covering scarf worn by Skardu women. This is equally so in other valleys of Baltistan, such as the Braldu and Basha valleys. Rural Balti women who do not practice hijab because of household subsistence needs do practice modest behavior, although it takes a different form than strict seclusion. Their modesty is more permissive, and, by Skardu standards, these village women are considered *jangli* or unsophisticated, 'not quite Muslim', and certainly not modern. This perception is not only because of rural women's lack

[13] One reviewer pointed out that British travelers probably have more experiences with and understandings of Muslim women than do US or Japanese tourists. Therefore, they may have a better understanding of the differences in Islamic dress. I thank one of the anonymous reviewers for this perceptive comment and for the reminder that not all Western travelers come with the same baggage.

[14] For example, in Gilgit, most women shop at the women's bazaar. One exception is Ismaili women in Gilgit, who may frequent public spaces, as they have yet another interpretation of modesty.

of veiling, but also because some rural women still dress in hand-embroidered shirts and pants and wear Balti hats. Their dress marks them as traditional women, a perception shared by both women and men in Skardu and throughout the Northern Areas. For Skardu men and women, rural Balti women's veiling and dress are important markers of what is not modern.

Rural Balti women are marked as nonmodern because of their lack of the body-and-head-covering chador. In Baltistan's outer valleys women still wear Balti *nathings* or hats,[15] but over their hats they wear a *dakhon*—a large scarf, not quite as large as a chador worn by women in Skardu. Askole women wear the scarf in deference to modesty, and the hat for warmth and decoration. Askole women will wear their scarves over their hats whenever they are in public spaces in the company of males who are not in their family lineage. This means that, whenever they walk through the main paths of the village on their way to the fields, they retain their modesty by wrapping their scarves around their heads, effectively covering their hair and hats. When they reach their work destination they often take off their scarves, although they rarely take off their hats. In the warm summer months, removing the scarf cools them as well as making moving around while weeding and collecting fodder easier. If a male passes by while a woman is working in the fields, she will put her scarf over her hat and head. If the male is someone she knows, but is not a family member, she will often shake hands with him, covering her hand with her scarf. These are just two ways in which women maintain their modesty in respect of Islamic practice, although they are not strictly purdah or hijab. Village women's dress is but one reason they are not 'good' Muslims; they are considered dirty because they are unclean. Cleanliness and prayer go hand-in-hand: if women prayed more frequently they would cleanse themselves more often in their preprayer ablutions.

Whether and how a woman practises hijab are determined not solely by the economic necessity of agricultural work but also by the degree of Islamization in a community. In the context of Baltistan, Islamization is a process by which people learn about and adhere to standards of contemporary Muslim practices, encouraged by Iranian and Skardu clerics. These standards include encouraging rural women to cover themselves more carefully and to pray more frequently. Rural villages closer to Skardu have had more contact with contemporary Islam than have villages farther from the regional center. Moreover, village women who have not had a religious education have a more flexible view of Islam than do the men in their village or women in Skardu. For example, while Askole villagers may celebrate *Eid*, *Ramadan*, and other Muslim religious holidays and practice the precepts of Islam, they also live in houses decorated with Buddhist swastikas. Some women in Balti villages seem to have little difficulty reconciling the apparent inconsistencies between what is old and new. They see themselves as Muslims, although they do not necessarily commit to daily prayer and ablutions or wear chadors instead of their hat and scarf.[16] For example, men in Askole state that women in the village are more traditional, whereas they believe their religious practices are modern.

[15] The hats range from plain bowl-like hats in Hushey to very ornate, decorative ones in Braldu and Basha. Nathings are sometimes made of wool, although often they are made from whatever scrap material can be found. Hats are decorated with embroidery, buttons, and zippers. The overall weight of the hats with decoration makes them very warm and heavy. Since this research was completed in 1998, Balti nathings in Askole are fast being replaced with dakhon.

[16] In rural villages women remember when singing and dancing were more common; only in the last forty years have they given up these practices to become 'better' Muslims as they have been taught by visiting mullahs.

The process of Islamization[17]—a process that many Baltis consider a modernizing trend—continues today. In Baltistan much of the Islamic influence comes not from down-country Pakistani Sunni Muslims but from Iran. Skardu has more mosques, schools, and visiting Iranian mullahs than the villages, which receive infrequent visits from itinerant clergy. The poor-quality roads to the distant corners of Baltistan make travel uncomfortable enough that mullahs are most active in Skardu, where they have ample political and community support. Often mullahs are emissaries from Iran who bring with them funding for much desired schools, *madrassas* (religious schools) and mosques. Baltistan often comes up short in receiving development dollars from the nation's coffers, and Iranian nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) fulfill a local need. These Iranian NGOs, like trekking agencies and other NGOs, are agents of development and social changes, although with a focus directed towards producing modern Muslims by building schools and dispensaries. Baltistan is located in territory under dispute by Pakistan and India. As such, aside from military developments such as roads and airstrips, the region receives little in the way of government development rupees. Thus, the specific processes of a modernized Islam in Baltistan need to be contextualized by the region's colonial and postcolonial history.

The earnings from trekking and mountaineering work have given many more Balti men the opportunity to make the *hajj* or the trip to Mecca, fulfilling their religious duty to make this important pilgrimage. *Hajis* contribute to Islamization or modernization in villages because they are more likely to interact with Iranian NGOs and visiting Iranian clerics, bringing back to villages the values and ideals of modern Islam. Clerics and hajis use women as the site of tradition in much the same ways that the GOP photography guidelines use women. But, unlike the GOP, hajis and clerics suggest that traditional women become more modern and adopt veiling.

3.1 Localizing *hijab*

In spite of the fact that adventure-travel earnings enable men to make the hajj, Baltistan tourism development and Islam have an uneasy relationship at times. In 1996 signs began appearing throughout Skardu town center requesting that travelers respect hijab (figure 2). These signs appeared to be an effort towards disseminating information to 'outsiders' to, when in Skardu, do as locals do: dress modestly in deference to Islam. Like the guidebook advice, cultural sensitivity supposedly drives this civic project of tourist information. By late summer of 1998 additional signs were posted in town and by the airport, in both Urdu and English. The Urdu translation differs from the English one, and it does not direct its comments to 'dear sisters'. It reads: "Purdah is our culture. Respect our culture so that it preserves your respect."[18] In Skardu a small antitourism sentiment was beginning to gain a voice, which used hijab and women's bodies as the site of offense.

In the English version the signs use hijab—that is, women's modest behavior—as a focal point, asking female travelers to respect women's dress codes, although the majority of adventure travelers in Baltistan are male. It is also important to note that the signs are in Urdu and directed at Punjabi tourists as well as at English-reading tourists. Punjabi women visit Baltistan in growing numbers each year.[19] In the English translation the signs clearly target females as their main audience. The subtle difference in the translation calls attention once again to the multiple discourses of modernity in

[17] See the work of Nancy Cook (2001), Ayesha Jalal (1991), Deniz Kandiyoti (1991), and Shahnaz Rouse (1988) for discussion on women and Islamization in Pakistan and other Muslim nations.

[18] Thank you to Nasir Gazdar for this translation.

[19] The visited–visitor relations between Northern Area tourism operators and Punjabi tourists are perhaps as uneasy as those between Baltis and European and North American travelers.

Figure 2. Photograph from Skardu Bazaar (source: author, 1998).

the Northern Areas: namely, urban Pakistanis are told to conform to local codes of dress, those that are perceived as modern in Baltistan.

The request for travelers to dress modestly, like the prohibition on photography of women, is couched in terms of protecting women and making women's modesty the site of respect and protection. These requests seem to produce a form of Islamic belief and practice, and a particular kind of modern space of hijab, which is not that of Western or Punjabi tourists but that of contemporary Skardu, whereby women are in private spaces. As noted earlier, Balti women who would be offended by immodest dress or behaviors of tourists rarely visit the main bazaar, and those who did roam the main bazaar unattended by a male escort would be suspect by their very presence in public spaces. Their modesty is not really of concern to pro-Islamic voices. A foreign visitor may not realize that it is not Balti women but *men* who are offended by immodest dress, although I suspect Punjabi travelers are aware of the message.

Hijab is represented as the site where women become the keepers of tradition. Western travelers who have been told that they should not take pictures of women, especially tribal women or 'traditional village women', and that they should dress conservatively out of respect for cultural norms come to understand that they should be especially careful about their own dress. Some travelers worry about their clothing, especially in villages, because they believe that rural women are more traditional than

urban women. Western travelers, many of whom say that they are aware that Skardu is 'fundamentalist', still seem to equate Skardu with other urban places such as Islamabad or Karachi, and hence view it as more modern and less bound to what they perceive are traditional notions such as hijab.

An irony develops from travelers' urban–rural construction of hijab in Baltistan. From my survey the effect is that travelers do not wear as modest clothing in Skardu as they do when in the villages.[20] The obvious irony is that village women do not practice hijab as strictly as urban women for the reasons mentioned above. Moreover, perhaps because of their more flexible views on religion, some Balti village women do not care about the way travelers dress while passing through their villages. Western female travelers are not urban Pakistani women; nor are they Muslims. They are something else; what they are, rural women find it hard to say, though it is probably *sahibs* (Besio, 2003). One Askole woman said, "what do we care how *Angrezi*[21] dress? They don't stay here, it's their way, it's ugly but I don't care what they look like." Other Askole women I spoke with were not as charitable, preferring that female travelers wear a head covering. Yet, the important point to my argument is that travelers' perceptions of traditional women produce an inverted geography of hijab in which it is more permissible for them to go about Skardu unveiled, and where rural women practice hijab more strictly because they are traditional.

Travelers' flip-flopped or reversed geography of hijab in Baltistan is produced through interactions between travelers, their understandings of government regulations, and a variety of men, including down-country Pakistani guides, and Skardu and Iranian mullahs. Restrictions such as those regarding the photography of women reinforce notions of Other women as traditional and of travelers and urban dwellers as more modern. However, in rural Baltistan hijab is a relatively recent introduction, and for many women it signifies being a modern Muslim woman. It is also important to point out that hijab has a long history as a marker of class, whereby only wealthier women practice seclusion (Esposito, 2002, page 96). Paradoxically, travelers end up producing a geography of hijab that sees convergence between pro-Islamic discourses and Orientalist ones. Likewise, travelers who veil in the villages because they think that village women are more traditional and do not wish to offend them produce a *desired* discursive geography of hijab that those in Skardu would like to see: namely, one in which village women wear veils and stay in their homes rather than venturing into village spaces, thus producing what seems to be a more middle-class urban identity in rural Baltistan.

It would be stretching the point to suggest that travelers' discursive geography of hijab determines the characteristics of public spaces in Balti villages. In general, travelers do not stay in Skardu for more than a couple days. For most visitors to Baltistan the main sights/sites are the mountains: their ultimate goals are to see the Karakoram peaks and glaciers. To get there, they must venture through Balti villages, bringing with them their knowledge of photography restrictions and their perceptions of traditional women. Villagers are concerned about females' interactions with outsiders, especially those that would bring them in contact with unknown and unrelated males. In order to separate women from these masculine subjects, new spaces of tourism, such as fenced-in campgrounds, are being developed in rural villages across Baltistan. In the example below I describe how

[20] In my survey of travelers, I asked women if they covered their heads in public. Of the twenty-one women who answered, 23% never covered their heads and 52% did so only infrequently. One in four women said she covered her head in public.

[21] 'Angrezi' is the generic local term for Western travelers. Its origin is in colonial rule when many Westerners were British or 'the English' and 'Angreez'. Baltis have had significant interactions with other Europeans, especially Italian mountaineers.

Askole village's campground is simultaneously a place for travelers and a space that 'pushes' village women from public spaces, excluding them from places they may have previously entered. Thus, the creation of tourism-only spaces becomes another means of promoting hijab and modernization.

4 Thinly veiled containment

There are few village spaces where Western camera-carrying trekkers and mountaineers and Askole villagers spend time together. They may come into face-to-face contact in predictable places: the village campground and the main paths through the village and in the fields. Most trekking and mountaineering groups camp below the village proper in a large staging area called the *Cho-ha* or the 'ruler's land' (figure 3). Although this land is village land it is out of range for interactions for many Askole villagers, except for men and boys who seek out interactions with Western travelers. The ruler's land separates Askole from Korphe, the village on the north-facing slope of the valley, across the swinging bridge. The ruler's land is not on most people's daily activity paths, especially those of women and girls. On infrequent occasions, women and girls accompanied by household males make the walk across the bridge to visit family on the other side of the river. Yet even on days when there are no trekkers, climbers, mountaineers, or unfamiliar down-country men there, females avoid this land because of the Pakistani military personnel posted there year round.

Figure 3. The Cho-ha or staging grounds below the village of Askole (source: author, 1997).

The village campground is another place where trekkers and mountaineers may spend their first night out of Skardu (figure 4). A few small groups of trekkers may stay for a night in the campground adjacent to the police check post and in the village. The village campground is not suitable for large groups and receives fewer overnight stays, although it does have ample shade and running water not found in the camping space below the village. The village campground sits on the edge of the nucleated settlement of houses, behind a wall separating campers from villagers, primarily women and girls. Males come into the campground at will, as they do in the Cho-ha. On behalf of their mothers and sisters some boys attempt to sell Balti hats, embroidered vests, or small

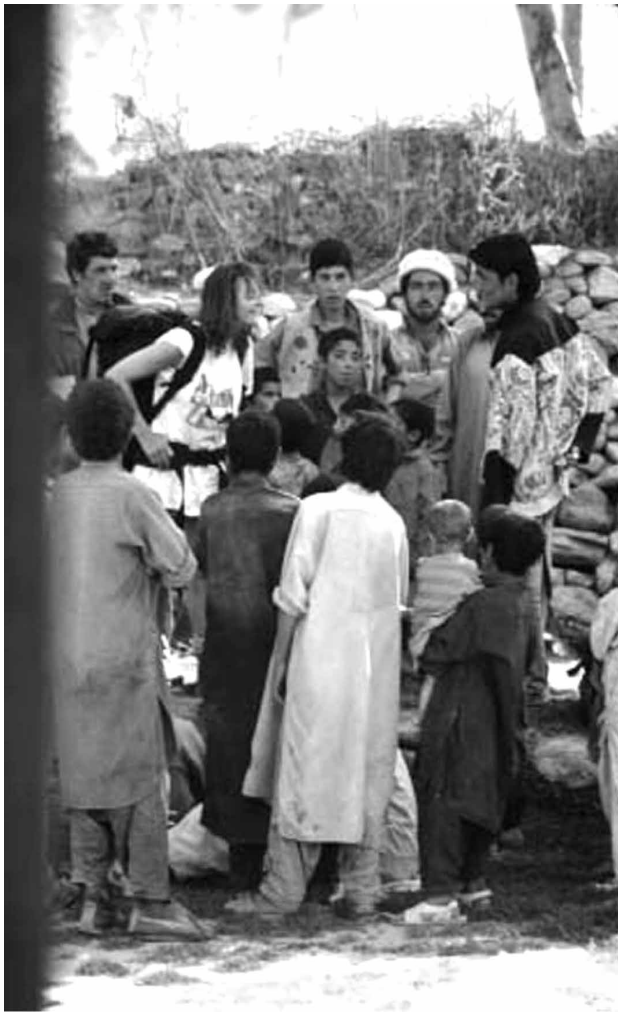

Figure 4. Askole campground (source: author, 1997).

embroidered good-luck charms (*tabiz*) to passing travelers. Askole men sometimes spend all day in the campground, talking to the policeman, washing at the piped-in water, or socializing in the shade. The village campground and the ruler's land are spaces primarily devoted to trekking services, exclusive of local women and girls.

The face-to-face interactions between travelers and villagers occur almost exclusively in public spaces. Many of these places are those that have been developed specifically to accommodate outsiders and are those where women and girls rarely go or are discouraged from entering. There is some interaction between travelers and villagers at the village shops, or perhaps by the steps of the *mattam sara*, the Shi'a house of mourning, where men sit and discuss daily events. These public spaces, although not exclusively male, are predominantly and effectively so, although young children of both sexes may congregate with their male relatives in the village center. The only other public spaces where travelers and women and girls may interact are in the wheat fields between the village and its outskirts. The main path from the Cho-ha and the nearest village runs though the wheat fields of Askole.

In the early summer month of June, women and girls head to the fields in the early mornings and late evenings to gather fodder for the sheep, goats, and yak. Girls and women try to collect fodder in the cooler hours of the day. Travelers passing through first thing in the morning would cross though the fields, intersecting briefly with those working there. Men generally do not weed, although they may be irrigating the fields according to the watering schedule of the village.[22] Those men who are not away portering in the summer months or doing other field work are often either watching trekkers at the police check post, or sitting on the steps of the mattam sara in the morning sun. Thus, trekkers may find themselves close to the women in the fields without any males present who may be inclined to enforce restrictions on the photography of women. The fields are one of the few places where trekkers and women come into contact.[23]

Guides, liaison officers, local policemen, and Askole males cannot follow every trekker along village paths to ensure that he or she abides by photographic restrictions, and nor is this among their primary concerns. Men working for the trekking groups or expeditions are concerned with keeping the group moving, buying last-minute provisions, hiring a couple of extra porters, or any number of things. The walk through the fields allows opportunities for a traveler – photographer armed with a telephoto lens to take a quick snapshot. Photographers must be fast, but it is possible for them to take photographs of women and girls. Although many of the trekkers and climbers claim that it is 'nearly impossible' to photograph women, many still try. Sometimes they photograph from a passing jeep down the valley or at other times while walking through the fields of Askole, or from behind a hedge. Perhaps finally seeing women in public is an inducement to break the rules. Many trekkers state that they had not seen nor expected to see any women, and they were excited to 'actually see' Pakistani women. Trekkers' perceptions of Askole women run contrary to their expectations that all women in Pakistan are heavily veiled, or invisible, and shut away in their homes. In my interviews travelers often express surprise that traditional village women are out working. The photograph becomes evidence of 'real' local women, as well as being evidence of what travelers believe is an apparently unusual occurrence.

The village locations where photography may be attempted both limit and allow it. That is, it is unlikely that many photographs of women will be taken in the Cho-ha or in the village campground; nor will there be photographs of women taken in the village proper. Women often watch from the rooftops in the village as trekkers pass through the village, while the males of the village watch from the village paths. In these spaces there is little need for guides or others to police trekkers, because, even if there were an opportunity for photography, the space is one with built-in surveillance. However, because the fields are on the outskirts of the village and primarily gendered female in the early morning hours, these spaces pose a problem for enforcement and surveillance.

The fields are public spaces, widely shared by everyone, although during many hours of the day they are predominantly women's and girls' public spaces. In addition to working in the fields, they laugh and joke there, talk privately with their friends and female family, or maybe forage for wild mustard greens, peas, or other edible foods. Women also dress more casually while doing field work. In all, the fields are simultaneously a place of work and an almost playful space. The fields, lacking

[22] See Kenneth MacDonald (1994) for a complete description of transhumance and irrigation practices in Askole.

[23] In another Balti village, Hushey, there was a rumor that, as a result of contact between trekkers and village women, local pastures were moved to keep interactions to a minimum. Those with whom I spoke in Hushey said that pastures had not been moved, although they actively discouraged younger women from interacting with male trekkers. I was told by one older woman that female trekkers were no problem; women would enjoy meeting them.

surveillance, are a place where rules may be broken. Trekkers passing through the fields may attempt photography, often without success. Women and girls *are* often looking when travelers – photographers pass through. They may run for the cover of the grass to avoid having their picture taken or they may make motions to the trekker to put away his or her camera. They may start throwing stones if the trekkers do not comply. Although it may appear as complicity with the regulations, and has similar effects, the reasons why they disallow photography may be different from those enforcing the restriction.

According to some Askole women a reason for not having a picture taken is simple vanity, tied to norms of modesty. They prefer to be photographed looking 'beautiful', and that includes wearing their hats and scarves. In Askole, Braldu hats are revered as objects of great beauty. Women spend many hours making hats and discussing the relative attractiveness and merits of each. Women may enjoy their hats, but they do not feel fully adorned without both scarf and hat. When women take off their scarf, they are left with just a hat on: that is, looking ugly *and* dressed immodestly. If a woman has the chance to put her scarf over her hat in the appropriate manner, and is allowed to pose for the picture, she then looks beautiful again. Moreover, in posing for a photograph, nearly all women and girls will cast down their eyes in a gesture of modesty. This pose captures their devoutness. Candid images seized while women are at work do not capture their beauty. Although some women are aware of the government regulations that prohibit photography of tribal women, for other women photography restrictions have little to do with their decisions. It is a personal decision based upon notions of modesty and vanity.

Many older women state that photography is against their religious beliefs. They do not want strange men looking at their image. Many women when they have their photograph taken request that it be returned to their possession, but especially not to their fathers, brothers, uncles, or any other family males. Other women may see the image but not men, although it is unclear whether this is because of concerns over punishment or because a strange or unrelated male has a copy of their image.[24] This would be a very difficult concept for a Balti-speaking woman to make clear to a non-Balti-speaking traveler. Some women and many girls enjoy interacting with trekkers and anyone with a camera. They are aware that local men frown upon photography, but pursue it nevertheless, perhaps for reasons of self-expression that may be construed as acts of everyday resistance (Besio and Butz, 2004).

Interaction with trekkers, whether over photography or anything else, is not common for rural women such as those in Askole village. There are limited venues for interaction, although upon the request of a male household member women may meet travelers in their homes. It is in the fields where unsolicited interactions are most likely to occur. Women and girls are not afraid of trekkers in the way that they fear, for example, Pakistani military personnel or the local police. When photographic interactions do occur, often there is a playfulness about them, a sense that a women or girl is breaking rules and getting away with it.[25]

[24] I photographed a bride and groom at the request of the father of the groom. When I returned the photograph to the family a year later, they modified the image so that it could be tacked up on the wall in their house. The bride's face was scratched off the photographer, a small round paper opening appearing where her face had been.

[25] Girls are not subject to the prohibitions on photography. In Askole, girls, beginning around twelve years old, often assume adult behaviors and turn away from the camera. Rarely would a teenaged girl approach a trekker for a photograph, although she may indulge a photographer for fun. Perhaps, just as likely, she may scold the photographer. Girls are cautious about photography. In any case, they are excluded usually because they cannot go to the Cho-ha or enter the campground like their brothers.

Whether it is in Skardu or rural villages, tourist photography restrictions serve to notify travelers about their behavior. Travelers may or may not adhere to the restrictions and it is the possibility of travelers' presence that produces new modern tourism spaces in the village, which effectively control tourist photography. However, more than controlling photography, tourism spaces alter women's and girl's village geographies, producing spaces that exclude them, such as campgrounds. Travelers are largely unaware of the intricacies of discourses of hijab. Often male and female travelers fall into the category of unknown masculine subjects, and their bodily presence in rural villages is temporary and circumscribed by the spaces of tourism. Few Askole people would assume that trekkers and climbers would have the necessary and sophisticated knowledge of hijab to behave with appropriate modesty or that their cameras will remain in their backpacks. Thus, the easiest solution with trekkers and mountaineers is to keep them secluded and away from village females.

5 Conclusion

To see modernity as a contagious disease whereby an infection takes over an uninfected body posits a well-worn dualism with modernity at the center and tradition at the periphery, inevitably locating Western history and experiences of modernity at the center (see Chakrabarty, 2000; Mitchell, 2000; Tsing, 1993). In Baltistan there appears to be a non-Western, Islamic modernity at play, which on the surface may appear to be a reaction to Western excess, perhaps most vividly illustrated in Western travelers' (potential) display of flesh or in the presence of down-country Pakistani tourists, guides, and military personnel in what were once villager-only spaces. Certainly, travelers' presences and the increase of a modernizing Islam may 'push' rural women towards changing the spatial movements in their everyday spaces, towards adopting more seclusionary forms of hijab. But also female spatiality and the definition of public space change with the presence of down-country Pakistani military and police personnel, whose physical presence has increased in Baltistan as Pakistan and India continue to negotiate their claims over the region. The colonial production of modern space in Baltistan is always-already present, even at the most microscale, the body. Villagers' responses are not to mimic or become more like travelers (or even like down-country Pakistanis) with whom they come into contact, but to assert that there are narratives of modernity that may exist parallel to those of these modern subjects. In Baltistan to be modern is to be a 'better' Shi'a Muslim, and women and girls adopt hijab because of increasing Islamization that is Shi'a not Sunni led in this region of Pakistan. Some may read Islamization as merely a reaction to the perceived degeneracy of modernity, what is sometimes referred to as 'westoxification'. Yet, such a reading is incomplete and overlooks the specific postindependence and postcolonial history of Baltistan in the daily lives of people in places such as Askole.

In Baltistan, narratives of tradition continue to be symbolized in and through women's bodies, especially in how rural women dress and in the spaces they occupy. As representations of tradition, rural women's bodies continue to be marked as not modern for purposes largely not their own, although many may self-identify as traditional. Yet that self-definition is quite different from tourists' representations and from Pakistani governmental representations that deny them a space in modernity. For rural women, improved agricultural methods such as threshers, tractors, and hijab would enable them to forego some of their subsistence agricultural work. They might gain greater access to health care and, possibly, pursue same-sex education. In this localized discursive framework of modernity, veiling and women-only spaces are liberatory and progressive, although not public and secular.

I have used tourist photography as the focal point for my analysis because it highlights the complexity of discourses of multiple modernities and the spatiality of modernities. I have not been able to address the many differences amongst Baltis, although I have suggested the ways in which people gloss as nonmodern Balti Shi'a pro-Islamic voices *and* rural Balti women, for example, which produce constructions of modernity that generate alternative conceptualizations of Islamic modernities. The modernity that some Baltis produce may not conform to that of Westernized urban, mobile, capitalist, and media-based secular societies. Certainly, in Skardu there is a modernity that is Islamic whereby Muslim agency is infused into a range of activities for locals and visitors.

The interactions between travelers, pro-Islamic males, and village women illustrate negotiation over multiple modernities by groups of people often ontologically separated as modern and traditional. That is, Western tourists are modern because they come from European and North American countries, whereas Baltis are traditional because they reside outside of the West. One obvious flaw in such an Orientalist geography of modernity is that it disallows modernity to anyone non-Western, such as Pakistanis. However, as I have suggested, within Pakistan, Baltis, especially Balti women and so-called tribal women, are constructed as nonmodern foils. As Mitchell and Lila Abu-Lughod (1993) suggest, a narrative of modernity which pivots around the West and the rest fails to acknowledge the ways modernity is constantly in negotiation and *coconstructed* not only vis-à-vis the West but within non-Western places. A mono-civilizational model of modernity overlooks *diverse* discourses of modernity and a diversity of life ways (Chakrabarty, 2000).

Throughout this paper I have tried to suggest that not only is modernity multiple and varied, it is rife with ironies. As I have suggested, Western travelers, in an effort to respect what they consider traditional women's culture, conform to dress codes and behaviors in some places and not in others. My analysis suggests that travelers' culturally sensitive practices, which although being framed by Orientalist discourses regarding supposedly traditional people and being Western centered, are, indeed, practices desired by local Baltis. However, the desirability of cultural sensitivity has unintended and ironic consequences. One final example illustrates this. Not all Western women travelers conform to guidebook recommendations for covering their heads, either in Skardu or in villages (see figure 4). Indeed, some of the women travelers I spoke with said they could not bring themselves to veil because it was tantamount in their minds to endorsing hijab, which they saw as a repressive practice. They drew upon discourses that characterize Islam as immutably oppressive to women. Yet, the travelers who do not veil—in effect, those who think they are most progressive—are those who are the most traditional in this context. As a consequence of this, the corollary applies. Western travelers who veil may be the most modern: their practices contribute to the production of Muslim spaces and to an Islamic modernity, in Baltistan anyway.

Acknowledgements. First, my greatest thanks to the people of Askole village for their questions and insights on the ways of the Angrezi. Second, the research described in this paper was funded by the Social Science Research Council (NMERTA Predissertation Fellowship), National Science Foundation (SBR-9712017), and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council. Thank you to Betty-Ann Kamp and Max Oulton at the University of Waikato, New Zealand, for their cartographic assistance. I also thank Gerry Pratt and those who reviewed this piece for their very helpful and supportive comments. Finally, appreciation to Paul Berkowitz, David Butz, Nancy Cook, Ken MacDonald, and the participants of the Women, Religion and Space Sessions at the AAG 2004 meeting for their valuable comments on earlier drafts.

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