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"I thought you were one of those modern girls from Mumbai": Gender, reflexivity, and encounters of Indian-ness in the field

Gupta, P.

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Pamila Gupta

Abstract

This paper is a reflection on my experiences of doing fieldwork in Goa, India (1999-2000) from my position as a 'halfie' anthropologist, born in India, and raised and educated in the United States. I discuss three 'significant fieldwork events' that shaped how I was perceived by 'others'(locals and tourists) in the field in order to both illuminate and complicate the gendered, racialized, and diasporic postcolonial politics of conducting anthropological research on the topics of tourism and religion. Further, I pose these encounters as dilemmas, not to be resolved but rather to be explored as impacting and complicating the fieldwork process as well as access to domains of knowledge. Thus, my point here is less one of elaboration on the details of these moments, but rather the utilization of them(as ethnographic data) to think through a set of larger issues concerning the nature of fieldwork, the writing of ethnography, and researching tourism. I both suggest the study of tourism as lending itself to more nuanced analyses and develop a theory of participation, one wherein the researcher adopts a stance of 'reflexive anthropologist' and 'reflective tourist' at the same time.

Keywords: Fieldwork, reflexivity, gender, race, Goa, India, autobiography, ethnography, tourism, diaspora

Introduction

'Ethnography requires a personal lens, its historicity made explicit'
(Okely & Calloway, 1992: xiii).

The following paper is a reflection on my experiences of doing fieldwork in Goa, India (1999-2000) from my position as a trained female anthropologist, of Hindu

Indian parentage, raised and educated in the United States, or what Kirin Narayan has termed a 'halfie' anthropologist, a person with a mixed identity that belongs to two cultures (Narayan quoted in Gefou-Madianou, 1998: 379). I take as my starting point three seminal ethnographic encounters, or what Van Maanen terms 'impressionist tales' (1988) from fieldwork that shaped how I was perceived by 'others' in the field in order to both illuminate and complicate the gendered and racialized postcolonial politics of conducting anthropological research on the topics of tourism and religion, and to think about the production of knowledge during the fieldwork process. The first encounter that I discuss involves a published article that was written by a well-known Goan journalist for the local newspaper, a man I had interviewed on numerous occasions in connection with my research. In this editorial, he mentioned my name, and posed the question: 'What is a North Indian Hindu girl doing, conducting research on Catholicism in Goa?' A second fieldwork encounter involves the Jesuit archival centre where I regularly conducted research on the history of travelers (including missionaries) in Portuguese India. Upon gaining affiliation to the institute, I had been informed of its standard policy that barred all researchers from taking photographs of documents older than one hundred years, imagine my surprise when I witnessed the rules being bent 'on this one special occasion,' according to the center's chief archivist, for a white male researcher visiting from the United States. A third and last encounter, one that is less directly tied to conducting research but part of the day to day interactions that comprise fieldwork, no less significant in my mind, involves a verbal exchange I had with one of the security guards at the apartment complex where I resided throughout my research stint in Goa, which spanned a period of fourteen months. As I was leaving at the end of my fieldwork to return to the US, I realized that he had never quite believed that I was American, something I had mentioned on numerous occasions in casual conversation, hence his statement and the title of my paper: "I thought you were one of those modern girls from Mumbai."

Interestingly, in two of the above cases, I was referred to as a 'girl', and in all three cases, my identity was tied to my racial and regional background (in India) over my national, diasporic, and academic location in the US. In other words, I was more easily perceived, or rather fit more neatly into the category of 'non-married modern Indian girl' over that of 'American female academic.'[1] Further, I pose these encounters as intriguing dilemmas, not to be resolved but rather to be explored as impacting and complicating the (gendered and racialized) fieldwork process. Thus, my point here is less one of elaboration on these three distinct ethnographic encounters, but rather the utilization of them to think through a set of larger issues concerning the nature of fieldwork including its autobiographical, gendered, racialized, and reflexive components, as well as the ways in which these 'perturbations' that one affects (and is affected by) in a community can potentially be treated as ethnographic 'data,' as Georges Devereux has suggested (1980). These moments, should be utilized to think and write productively about relatedness and sociality more generally, themes at the heart of anthropological analysis. In other words, I am interested in continuing or rather extending a conversation initiated by Clifford (1997) on what 'the field' is in relation to 'anthropology.'

Very briefly, I first examine the historicity of reflexivity suggesting that it was purposely rendered a gendered feminist practice during a specific historical period, before highlighting the inherent reflexive and gendered quality of ethnographic fieldwork. Specifically, I turn to my own fieldwork experience to suggest that the very nature of fieldwork is always already deeply gendered and reflexive precisely by the fact that certain encounters are not recorded on paper, that is, they are often purposely left out of fieldnotes because of their highly reflexive stance. Here I reflect, however briefly, on the significance of producing 'reflexive knowledge' (Hertz, 1997). Second, I highlight the autobiographical

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[1] Modern' meaning from a cosmopolitan city in India, specifically in this case Mumbai because that was the point of reference for this security guard, who was from Goa.

component of fieldwork, including one's choice of topic(tourism and religion in this case) to realize the potential of 'genuine reflexivity' (Bourdieu, 1992) and '(analytic) auto-ethnography' (Denzin, 1997, Anderson, 2006). Third, I explore the possibility of using gendered and reflexive fieldwork encounters less as a form of 'academic collateral' or self-indulgent 'therapy' (Mascia Lees et al.,1989) but rather to develop a theory of participation wherein these kinds of encounters are no longer marginalized, but are set up as central to the writing of ethnography, and which take into account the 'unexpected' as productive (Bell *et al*, 2003) and adopt a practice of 'participant objectivation' (Bourdieu, 2003). I conclude by showing the potential of tourism studies (Urbain, 1991, Morgan and Pritchard, 2005, Andrews, 2009) for enhancing theories of participation in anthropology. Throughout my discussion, I rely on my own personal fieldwork experiences, adopting a stance of 'reflexive researcher' and 'reflective tourist'(Morgan and Pritchard, 2005) to simultaneously augment and complicate the more generalized discussion I am putting forth concerning anthropology's ongoing investment in the study of tourism (Nash, 1981).

Fieldwork, historicity and the engendering of reflexivity

> Reflexivity is not narcissism, it is not apolitical, not self-adoration, nor can it be dismissed as a gendered practice (Okely, 1992:2).

As a graduate student in the US in the mid to late 1990's I distinctly remember the iconic image of Stephen Tyler taking fieldnotes on the cover of James Clifford's and George Marcus's co-edited book, entitled *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography* (1986)*.* This book was always a standard textbook requirement, generally included on a syllabus in the section titled 'Reflexive Anthropology.' At the time, I never thought much about the fact that it was an image of a man and not a woman on the cover of this seminal book. However, looking back, it is more than interesting, rather, it is illuminating for

suggesting the gendering of our anthropological genealogies. Specifically, the school of 'Reflexive Anthropology' as it was called then had been first under the purview of pioneering male anthropologist such as George Marcus, Michael Fischer, and James Clifford. However, by the time I was taking graduate seminars ten years after the apogee of the 'reflexive turn,' this school of thought had been marginalized, perhaps not only for the reason, as Caplan (Caplan et al., 1993) argues, that most men find autobiographical writing more difficult than women. By this time, it had also (conveniently?) become gendered female, largely under the purview of feminist anthropologists. As Strathern (1987) reminds us, the relationship between feminism and anthropology is an awkward one, filled with its own set of tensions. More than one graduate feminist seminar I took bemoaned the (gendered) narcissism of Ruth Behar's *Translated Woman: Crossing the Border with Esperanza's Story* (1993) despite its popularity and innovation as a reflexive ethnography. The more relevant point I am trying to make here is the fact that 'reflexivity' itself as an anthropological disciplinary practice has a distinctly gendered historicity, one that needs to be taken into account in order to fully understand that reflexivity was not always a gendered practice, it only increasingly became one in the mid-1990s as it waned in popularity within the larger (masculine) discipline of Anthropology. And it was during this same time that gendered ethnographies (increasingly written by feminist anthropologists) were harnessing reflexivity - an empowering tool - to set the (gendered) record straight. In other words, reflexive and gendered analyses were overlapping developments. Thus, the rendering of their historicities as complicit with one another was in some senses an easy oversight in the writing of the history of the discipline. Lastly, we must look more closely at how early exclusions in the history of anthropology—in this case gender and reflexivity—continue to have implications for later texts and the writing of ethnographies (Okely & Callaway, 1992: 14).

When I was initially conceptualizing this paper, I found that I didn't need to look at my fieldnotes for guidelines, instead I simply reflected on my fieldwork and remembered very easily the small incidences of fieldwork that had marked me during that remarkable experience. However, I want to move beyond viewing them solely as 'impressionist' tales to suggest rather, that they be considered 'significant field events' (Fortier, 1996) [2] with analytical worth. As Fortier (1996: 305) reminds us, 'emotional polarities of longing and anger, friendship and contempt, attraction and detachment' often colour our research experiences. These were small acts, typically occurrences written down as angry asides in the margins of my composition books, almost as diary entries, rather than being included in my fieldnotes. In other words, I myself had relegated what I considered at the time to be my somewhat emotional reactions to the sidelines, neither considering them to be central to the fieldwork process, nor including them in my final ethnography. For as anthropologist Okely points out 'While it is taken for granted [that] the fieldworker writes extensive and personal notes in the field about the others, it is not considered necessary to analyze and take notes about his or her relationship with them' (Okely & Callaway, 1992: 13). Thus, upon reflection, it is not surprising that I had, unwittingly perhaps, engendered my own personal or 'private' thoughts, deeming them largely insignificant, while what I considered more 'gender neutral' public information - such as a meeting with so and so, or notes from an interview - took center stage in my fieldnotes. Nor am I alone in doing this for as anthropologist Helen Callaway argues, there is a 'male-oriented default system' that is at the very heart of the fieldwork process(1992: 29). In other words, the act of fieldwork itself is gendered male, made evident in anthropology's very historicity, so as a female anthropologist trained in the discipline I was attuned to understand what activities were considered appropriate to masculinized fieldwork. Thus, my private (read: *gendered female*)

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[2] Fortier describes 'significant field events'(1996: 305) as those that are revelatory by raising issues that help the researcher move a step deeper in the field and in the production of knowledge.

thoughts were rendered just that and not considered part of the very (read: *gendered male*) ethnography I was trying to write. Instead, and perhaps there lies a gendered difficulty in being able to overcome this instinct, we need to learn to both recognize our emotional responses, and that they have consequences for our writing. However, it is also always more complicated since 'the split between public and private self has been contested as gender specific'(Okely, 1992: 12) In other words, the domains of private and public are very different for men and women, which in turn shapes what we include and exclude in our ethnographies. Nor can we escape these gendered and reflexive realities—they form our ethnographies even as as we may choose not to include their details in our final written texts.

Lastly, I want emphasize once again, that it is less the tangible details of the three incidences which shaped my fieldwork experience, but rather how they viscerally (or intangibly) marked me, both why they had such an impact on me despite their seeming triviality at the time, and what these comments did for my own sense of self worth and self consciousness. It is what Hertz refers to as 'what I know and how I know it' (1997: viii) that I am interested in delving into deeper. Moreover it is upon further reflection in the act of writing and researching this paper, that these encounters have also forced me to look more reflexively, and even perhaps more critically, at my own (gendered) actions: specifically, how I was representing myself as a female (American) academic during fieldwork?, how in fact by doing research in India on the chosen specific topic, was I in some sense (consciously or not) confronting my own biography?, in what ways did my gender impair my accessibility to resources and seriousness as a researcher, and concomitantly, how much did I rely on my own gender(and/or internalize it) during fieldwork for increased accessibility in certain arenas?, and finally, what do these past fieldwork encounters reveal about postcolonial Indian society, gender relations, and cultural representations of the Other on the part of both fieldworker and ethnographic subject? While these are questions that I ask

myself now in the act of reflection and writing, I believe that each anthropologist has his or her own set of questions, complications, reflections to deal with during fieldwork, and which are ultimately left up to the individual to decide what to do with them. Thus, since every ethnographer is a positioned subject' (Okely, 1992: 14), I want to take full advantage of this reality in order to develop 'reflexive knowledge' as the natural outcome of 'reflexive anthropology', according to Hertz, its importance lies in including '…statements that provide insight on the workings of the social world and insight on how that knowledge came into existence' through the fieldwork process (1997: viii). This becomes an even more potentially fruitful area of research if we take into account new epistemological researches and topical foci that consider all societies as objects of analysis (Hastrup in Gefou-Madianou, 1998), and from our locations as uniquely situated ethnographers, including my positionality as a diasporic Indian American anthropologist researching Western tourists and Catholic heritage tourism in India.

Autobiography, gender, and (auto)ethnography

Our past is present in us as a project (Fabian quoted in Cohen, 1992: 222).

I still remember a conversation I had once with another Indian American female anthropologist who, similarly to me, had chosen India as her fieldsite. We were swapping fieldwork stories, when she made a comment that resonated with me. She said that if she had to do it all over again, she would have never done research in India as an 'Indian American' female. She told me how she was treated as representing the worst of both cultures, Indians largely viewing her alternately as a spoiled American whose parents had betrayed their homeland or as not an authentically American (i.e. 'pretending'). At the same time, she was neither given the status nor the benefits of being American (read 'white') in a

country that had a strong British postcolonial legacy. In other words, being 'Indian American' was not a category that was easily translatable in the context of doing fieldwork in postcolonial India. She told me how at the time she had no conception how much this representation of her followed her throughout fieldwork, and how much it shaped her encounters with individuals on a daily basis. In the end, she said, interestingly, it made her realize how *not Indian* she felt.[3] In this case, her 'significant field event' (Fortier, 1996) was very much tied up with her status as a 'halfie' anthropologist (Narayan quoted in Gefou-Madianou, 1998: 379). While Narayan's point is to suggest that the position of the 'halfie' is an increasingly common one, created out of an economic migration or due to the origins of the parents, I want to complicate it, arguing that this position of liminality is filled with unresolvable tensions (both for the anthropologist as well as how he/she is perceived by Others) that carry potential analytical weight.

I also started this section with this particular anecdote to suggest that I strongly believe that the topic one chooses to study as an anthropologist, particularly as this discipline involves a fieldwork component that, by its nature is a deeply personalized experience, is refracted through one's own biography. This 'autobiographical bias', if one wants to call it that, then shapes the types of encounters one has during the fieldwork process. In other words, fieldwork is a highly dialogic process that needs further elaboration and examination. Is it that we (as anthropologists) pick a location and topic for its seeming 'difference' from oneself? In my own case, I can make the argument, only upon reflection of course, that 'Goa' was the exotic south to my normalized upbringing as a diasporic North Indian, the topic of Catholicism to my normalized (and relatively non-existent) Hindu-ness, the topic of Western tourism because as

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[3] Her emphasis. It is interesting that the tension was more about her hybrid identity (as Indian American) and less having to do with her gender, although I do wonder how different an experience it is for Indian American males doing research in India.

anthropologists, we naively do not like to think of ourselves as tourists, thus 'tourism' as an object of study becomes a convenient marker between us (anthropologists) and them (tourists) which of course Crick(1995) has shown to be an increasingly untenable divide or obversely, do we pick a topic for its seeming 'sameness' to oneself? Once again, I rely on my own case for reflection. Did I choose to do fieldwork in India because of my own biography? Here I would resoundingly and self-consciously argue that yes, for me it was a way to get closer to a place that I had grown up with largely as a discursive creation by way of my parents. More specifically, as a diasporic Indian, I had created an imaginary India that perhaps in some way I did want to experience, understand, confront. As Crick (1995) reminds us, the extent of the 'semi'(autobiographical) in fieldwork is to be found in the blurred border that each scholar chooses to draw somewhere. In the end, perhaps it is a combination of both that are factors in our choice of place and topic—that is, distance and closeness, sameness and difference, which of course are already key analytics of anthropology. Thus, in some sense is not surprising that they end up shaping our professional choices, choices that in the case of anthropological fieldwork are deeply personal.

Another issue to be explored in conjunction with that of gendered reflexivity is the idea of domains of knowledge. If we conceptualize anthropology as simultaneously a 'field of knowledge' (a 'discipline') and as a 'field of action' (Scheper-Hughes, 1995: 420) then perhaps we can understand better the ways in which gender plays a role not only in the choice of topic but access to that same topic (Callaway, 1992:35). In other words, gender differences themselves create very different sets of social relations that in turn set up access to distinct domains of knowledge at various moments during the fieldwork process. Simply translated, men and women take up different topics based on their differential access to (gendered) individuals and circuits of information. Moreover, it is important to emphasize Ortner's point that cross-cultural fieldwork encounters are shaped and complicated not only by gendered *relations* and *categories*, but

also by the realization that distinct gender *politics* (between men and women of different cultural backgrounds) are at play during fieldwork (1996:184). With regard to the study of tourism, not only must we ask how much gender plays a role in choosing it as a topic of research, but also how one's gender shapes access to certain kinds of tourists as well as types of tourist industries. In addition, I would argue that tourism's appeal lies precisely in its blurred boundaries with anthropology. Thus, as a result, we must perhaps delve deeper to ask: how different in fact are anthropologists and tourists if we look at them in relation to gender, race, and class? And if there is a quality of sameness or difference amongst anthropologists and tourists, does this in fact enhance or hurt accessibility to one's research topic?

Once again, I rely on my own fieldwork experiences to elaborate one such case. Thus, with regard to my study of tourism in Goa, it was inextricably linked to the topics of religion and colonialism for my subject was the expanding tourist economy surrounding a postcolonial Portuguese Catholic religious festival. In other words, the object of the 'tourist gaze' (Urry 1990) was not without a past, and it was this history combined with my own that I would argue directly shaped my fieldwork encounters, including my access to different domains of knowledge and people. Earlier I started this paper with a vignette regarding my restricted access to photograph sensitive materials at an archival center in Goa while a white American male was allowed permission under these same set of rules. I have since come to understand, perhaps only in reflection, a point made by Ortner's that gender not only emphasizes differences between men and women but also obscures other hierarchies and relations, and in this specific case, those between elite men and non-elite men (1996). In other words, it was the American's maleness (*and not only his whiteness*) that privileged him over me in the eyes of the male director of the Jesuit archival centre.

Interestingly, or surprisingly perhaps, I found that this same representation of me as a Hindu Indian was also consistent amongst the Western tourists and religious pilgrims I interviewed. In other words, in the perception of me as 'Indian, but not Goan' by both locals and tourists alike, I felt that it actually made 'tourism' and 'religion' as the objects of my study more difficult. It put me in a distinct position where my 'American-ness' was completely elided and where racial commonsense took over, wherein my embodied race (regardless of my culture) was perceived purely on the basis of my skin colour and physical features (Hancock, 2005). There is no doubt in my mind that it put me in a more distanced and difficult positionality (at the intersection of race, culture, and identity) in relation to the individuals I wanted to interview. Perhaps my positionality was one of too much difference, in that I was a non-tourist (replace with 'non-white') studying tourism and a non-Catholic (replace with 'Hindu') studying Catholicism in an area where it was once the religion of the colonial oppressor and now the minority religion against a Hindu majority. Upon reflection, it is my first impressionist fieldwork tale that I started this paper with that now comes to mind for when the Goan Catholic journalist raised concerns over my North Indian Hindu status with regard to my interest in studying Catholicism, he was reinforcing this same point.

Even as we then attempt to move beyond essentialized race categories that originate in physiology or biology in our day to day lives, fieldwork shows both that racial classifications continue to be made on the spot and are about embodiment(by both us and them), and how much further we need to change our racialized mindsets as we travel. At the time, of course, I was barely making sense of all of these representations that were in play and shaping my fieldwork encounters. Neither did I have any sense prior to conducting fieldwork in Goa that history (both my own and that of the place under analysis) would play such a defining role in shaping my domains of access to Western tourists and Catholic pilgrims. It is in the writing of this paper, that I can perhaps more fully embrace a

'genuinely reflexive' (Bourdieu, 1992) stance towards my subject that I can critically assess or make sense of some of these complex fieldwork experiences and how they shaped the knowledge I produced in critical ways. It is also a form of 'autoethnography' that I am advocating for, one that is

> …a turning of the ethnographic gaze inward on the self while maintaining the outward gaze of ethnography, looking at the larger experience wherein self experience occur' (Denzin, 1997: 227).

Finally, I am advocating for a form of 'analytic autoethnography' for other halfies like myself, it is a form of engaged dialogue

> …that fully acknowledges and utilizes subjective experience as an instrinsic part of research [and] …offers distinctly grounded opportunities to pursue the connections between biography and social structure (Anderson, 2006: 385-390).

Thus, I would argue that it is all of these 'intangible factors' which comprise fieldwork that tell us so much, not only about the nature of fieldwork, but also about the role of gender and race (and class) in the act of forming representations (both by us and them of each other), and in complicating the distinctions between sameness and difference. These factors also reinforce the importance of being reflexive, and thus open to the unexpected, both in the field and during the write-up phase, and lest we not forget, these 'significant field events' (Fortier, 1996) tell us about the object of analysis itself. It is also important to take heed of Ortner's reflective point, that people(including anthropologists) have different relations with their culture at different times in their lives so what affects them at one stage, may not concern them later(1996). Hers is an exceedingly relevant argument for reflexive writing in general. These are all points that contribute to developing a theory of participation, one that is not only poised as a set of reflexive concerns, but rather should be incorporated into our written ethnographies.

Becoming a 'reflexive researcher' and 'reflective tourist'

> There are decisions to be made in the field, within relationships, and in the
> final text (Callaway, 1992: 24).

In this last section, I develop a theory of participation wherein the anthropologist adopts a stance of 'reflexive researcher' and 'reflective tourist'(Morgan and Pritchard, 2005: 31), suggesting its potential for transforming the way in which we think critically about fieldwork, including our own positionality within it, as well as how we incorporate these deeply analytical encounters into our final ethnographies, empowering the discipline of anthropology in the process. I end this section by suggesting that certain traits from the study of tourism lend themselves to writing more reflexive and reflective ethnographies that I am advocating for.

Firstly, I argue that we need to revitalize the use of reflexivity in our fieldwork encounters, thus realizing the power of reflexivity as an ethnographic tool, and for both research and writing. As I have shown, reflexivity can neither be relegated to the domain of women, extreme narcissism, nor seen simply as a passing phase in the history of the discipline. It also cannot be labeled 'comfortably neutral' (Okely, 1992: 24) or mere 'decorative flourish'(Anderson, 2006: 385). Instead, as Okely argues, '…in its fullest sense, reflexivity forces us to think through the consequences of our relations with others, whether it be conditions of reciprocity, asymmetry, or potential exploitation' (1992: 24). We need to first recognize and then harness what reflexivity does in fact do, instead of focusing on its negative aspects. Moreover, as feminist anthropologists, we should take full advantage of the stronger relationships that, as women, we tend to develop in the field and use them to our advantage in delving into differing social worlds (Stacey, 1988). We next need to move beyond insider/outsider distinctions to

realize that we always occupy multiple subject positions in the field, which if we can open ourselves to the daily misunderstandings, (failed) expectations, and unexpected occurrences that take place, they leave us in a space of deeper relationships and thus, deeper understanding (Bell et al., 2003). As Marilyn Strathern reminds us, '…one is never *just* a man or woman' (quoted in Calloway, 1992: 34). Reflexivity also reveals much about power relations, and the insidious ways in which they operate during fieldwork. We must realize a more 'unified theory' of race, class, gender (Sacks, 1989), as well as that of religion, age, and status, and power. A reflexive approach makes us much more aware of our own complicity, during the act of fieldwork itself, in perpetuating these same power relations. However, they can also shift in surprisingly subtle ways during fieldwork if we are perhaps more attentive to them. Lastly, I want to suggest that a reflexive approach(and one that takes into account our emotions) is a more *ethical* kind of fieldwork (Nussbawm, 2001), which of course makes anthropology a better discipline.

Secondly, we need to rethink anthropology's finely tuned methodology of participant observation, and move towards developing a theory of 'participant objectivation,' following Bourdieu(2003). He writes:

> I mean the objectivation of the subject of objectivation, of the analyzing subject - in short, of the researcher herself…Participant objectivation undertakes to explore not the 'lived experience' of the knowing subject but the social conditions of possibility - and therefore the effects and limits - of that experience, and more precisely, of the act of objectivation itself (Bourdieu, 2003: 282).

Thus, we need to think about the social 'conditions of possibility' that make specific ethnographic experiences, such as my own, take place. This requires a subtle shift from locating positionality to looking at culture in terms of the kinds of

subjectivities it produces, that is, how is it that I came to conduct fieldwork in Goa, India on the topics of tourism and religion in the late 1990's as a person occupying multiple subject positions all at once, as a female American graduate student, as a diasporic Indian, etc? I argue that this allows one to write not only reflexively but also serves as a window onto the culture of American academia, as well as Indian culture and society, including its complex postcolonial relationship to its expanding diasporas. Even as there is much work to be done in this area, I want to suggest its potential: the critical analysis of social relationships during fieldwork has the power to reveal much about representations, subjectivities, and the role of history in shaping present day ethnographic encounters. As a result, I am also more able to reconcile both the rewards and difficulties of doing anthropological research in India given my complicated 'not quite insider/outsider' halfie status.

Thirdly, I want to revitalize a point made much earlier by feminist anthropologists writing in the 1970's and 1980s, and which resonates with many of the contemporary anthropological dilemmas outlined here. I want to suggest that somewhere along the way, many anthropologists, even while recognizing 'gender' as an extremely useful category of analysis, seem to have lost the crucial point that it also has the ability to tell us much about the society under study, as Marilyn Strathern has demonstrated for the case of Melanesia. Not only is gender a '…primary organizing principle' in society, but it reaches beyond relations between men and women to 'structure the whole of social relations and events' (Strathern quoted in Calloway, 1992: 34). Thus, a more reflexive stance towards one's own gender on the part of the fieldworker is a prerequisite for revealing the full potential of a gendered analysis. As Callaway argues

> …the close analysis of gendered selves alerts us as well to the submerged operations of gender in other societies and how its rules and negotiations reveal patterns of social organization'(Calloway, 1992: 44).

In other words, gender serves as an entry point for getting at the very heart of anthropology: social organization. In my own case study, such attention to gender (both my own and how it shapes Indian society) helps me to realize how much colonialism and tourism are both discourses about gender, which in turn, has consequences for the ways in which I conceptualize and write about them.

Lastly, I argue not only that the study of tourism can potentially be strengthened by adopting some of the above gendered and reflexive tools outlined in this essay, but also, by the nature of its subject matter—tourists and tourism—, lends itself to more nuanced and complex ethnographic writings. More generally, Morgan and Pritchard remind us that tourist studies are

> …largely concerned with considerations of being, meanings, and identities, and is a key contemporary process by which the complex and variegated relationships of people to places are recognized, ascribed, and scripted' (2005: 29).

In other words, the concerns of tourism research are at the heart of the anthropological endeavor. Moreover, the fact that within tourism studies, the positionality of the researcher tends to be 'awkward and insecure' (Simoni and McCabe, 2008: 174) in relation to tourist spaces as well as the fact that tourists themselves are an '…itinerant community that shifts its makeup on a daily basis'(Andrews, 2009: 169), suggests both a complex fieldwork space as well as the setting up of complex relations between ethnographers, locals, and tourists. If we realize then that the 'conditions of possibility' (Bourdieu, 2003) are even more deeply layered in tourist settings, then perhaps we can better understand the ways in which tourism operates as a '…system of presencing and performance' (Franklin and Crang quoted in Morgan and Pritchard, 2005: 45) in a particular historical contact zone, as well as our own complicities within it. Moreover, we must also take into account the 'paradoxical contempt' (Urbain, 1993: 90) that tourists often have for themselves, which in turn adds another layer of

complication to accessing tourists for interviews and conversations. Here I think it is helpful to understand our own positionalities as always inherently multi-dimensional, as spanning the divide between anthropology and tourism, following Morgan and Pritchard, anthropologists studying tourism should view themselves as simultaneously 'reflexive researchers' and '…reflective (or self-conscious) tourists'(2005: 31). Adopting such a stance will allow us to see the ways in which gender operates - not only in relation to the fieldworker but as well in relation to tourists, and the tourist space itself, which is simultaneously a global and local phenomenon. As Hazel Andrews's reflexive research in Spain suggests, her gendered difficulties in accessing tourists in Magaluf on the island Mallorca says much, not only about herself, but as well about how gendered identities and spaces emerge in practice (2009: 167). She illuminates how notions of masculinity are at the centre of British charter tourism at the same time that they intersect with deeply structured Spanish gender hierarchies and relations, creating a complex gendered tourist space in the process. Thus, we must take full cognizance of the fact that tourism is not going away, rather as Franklin reminds us (2003: 2) it is a 'central component of modern social identity formation and engagement' and is 'infused into the everyday.' Moreover, we must realize that some of us (and here I would include both tourists and anthropologists) '…use the project of travel to attest to different versions of our identity narratives' (Morgan and Pritchard, 2005: 40). Thus, I would conclude by suggesting that as anthropologists increasingly become more transnational (including 'halfie' ethnographers), develop new topics, encounter novel fieldwork sites, confront multiple representations(of self and other), and grapple with unexpected issues 'in the field,' we need to continue to revisit our gendered historicities, at the same time that we forge new anthropological agendas that take into account the increasing complexities, communications, and cosmopolitanisms that mark tourism, but from a nuanced position of 'reflexive researcher' and 'reflective tourist.' In the end, that I was perceived as a 'modern girl from Mumbai' only suggests so much more.

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Pamila Gupta is Research Fellow at the Wits Institute for Social and Economic Research at the University of Witwatersrand.