



0160-7383(94)00083-2

# SEXUAL AND NATIONAL BOUNDARIES IN TOURISM

**Julie Scott**

University of Kent at Canterbury, UK

**Abstract:** This article examines the roles of Turkish Cypriot and migrant women in tourism employment. While the participation of Turkish Cypriot women in the tourism labor force has increased in recent years, migrant women are employed primarily in those occupations that are considered "unsuitable" for local women. It is argued that the division of female labor, particularly between migrant and local workers, highlights women's dual role as social actors and symbols of identity. A case study of a group of Rumanian croupiers examines how local ideologies of gender and sexuality operate in, and are in turn influenced by, the incorporation of migrant female workers into the workplace and the neighborhood where they live. **Keywords:** Northern Cyprus, migrant workers, borders/boundary, identity, gender, sexuality.

**Résumé:** Limites nationales et sexuelles. Cet article examine les rôles des femmes turque-chypriotes et migrantes dans les emplois touristiques. La participation des femmes turque-chypriotes dans la main-d'oeuvre touristique est devenue plus importante au cours des années. Cependant, on trouve surtout des migrantes dans les emplois considérés "non convenables" pour les femmes locales. La division du travail entre les travailleuses locales et migrantes souligne le double rôle des femmes comme actrices sociales et symboles d'identité. On examine comment fonctionnent les idéologies locales concernant les femmes et la sexualité dans l'étude d'un groupe de croupières roumaines. Ces idéologies sont alors influencées par l'incorporation des travailleuses migrantes dans le lieu de travail et dans le quartier résidentiel où elles habitent. **Mots-clés:** Chypre du Nord, main-d'oeuvre migrante, frontières/limites, identité, sexe, sexualité.

## INTRODUCTION

A major preoccupation of anthropological and sociological literature on tourism is the question of identity. On the one hand, a distinct "cultural identity" is a marketable resource for a tourism destination competing with other destinations. On the other hand, many criticisms of the effects of tourism have centered on loss of identity and cultural homogenization of touristic areas as a result of the presence of large numbers of tourists, and the social and economic transformations accompanying tourism development. Allied to the question of identity is the issue of "authenticity." As Urbanowicz writes of the effects of tourism in Tonga: "I . . . am certain that Tongans will survive; however, will they still be Tongans? Or will they become yet another example of a people who have been forced to abandon their traditions . . . to prevent their becoming the 'quaint' customs of ethnic tourism?" (1989: 116).

The effects of tourism in destination areas have been largely exam-

ined in terms of how the "outside" impinges on the "inside." In some cases, these are construed as two discrete and opposed categories generating a whole series of contrasts on the lines of local/foreign, third world/industrial nations, traditional/modern (Doğan 1989). Other writers stress the continuity of pre-tourism contacts between the "outside" and the "inside" (Smith 1989; Farrell 1979), or the reinforcement in another form of neo-imperialistic relations of power and dependency between tourist generating and tourist receiving regions (Nash 1989), which impose a "foreign mentality" on indigenous relations (Erisman 1983). "Identity" is implicitly treated as an inner core of "culture" which resists or gives way to externally induced changes in social and economic organization.

Some recent anthropological work, not directly concerned with tourism, provides a critique of such culture models and the inside/outside dichotomy, which underlies tourism studies. Eriksen, writing on the metaphor of "cultural islands" in anthropological theory and research, stresses the interpenetration of the global and the local. He suggests that the concept of cultural islands is a useful device for isolating bounded units for research. But he argues that the metaphor overplays the notion of fixed, isolated culture entities, such that, even where contacts with and influences from the outside have been recognized, they have been depicted as "extra-systemic links . . . not forming part of the relevant social unit" (Eriksen 1993:134). Although some societies may be physically isolated, global economic systems and communications enable communities and groups within them to simultaneously maintain local and supra-local identities, and boundaries are drawn wherever difference is socially relevant. This view is similar to the arguments made by Friedman in a critique of postmodernist trends in anthropological theory. He refers to culture as "the formation of boundaries of specificity," which are created and embedded in social life. Thus, social relations create identity, rather than vice versa; to see culture as an "essence" is to ignore the conjunctural nature of identity that forms itself in relation to others; to shift from "the social mechanisms of cultural production to the structures of the products themselves, turning the latter into the essence or even the determinants of practice in general" (Friedman 1991:103,113). Goody too argues that culture is not "encapsulated in small communities" (1992:29); it cannot be divorced from its referents in social and economic relations, but is internally and externally differentiated, with a variety of referents across permeable boundaries.

The relevance of constructions of gender and sexuality to issues of boundary and identity have long been recognized. Douglas argues that beliefs about purity, impurity, pollution, and contagion enacted on the human body symbolically reflect attempts to maintain social structure against threats from within and without: ". . . the symbolism of the body's boundaries is used . . . to express danger to community boundaries" (1984:122). As a category, women are positioned at the points of entry and exit of the structure, the weak points at the margins, through their association with the body's orifices (in childbirth, sex, and food preparation), and socially in the recruitment, retention, loss, or reproduction of new members (marriage, childbirth). In their position at

the boundary, women become a symbol of group identity and social relations. Goddard makes use of Douglas' insights in her study of the honor and shame complex among working class women in Naples. She concludes that controls discouraging women from taking waged factory work, "phrased in terms of dangers to a woman's chastity in mind and/or body," function to mark group identity, which for working-class Neapolitans is constructed at the boundaries marking the difference between Italy's north and south, national and local, and state structures and informal structures (1989:166).

Although there are obvious links between gender, sexuality, and identity, the terms of their relationship are not fixed but are highly contextual (Caplan 1989; Loizos and Papataxiarchis 1991). With reference to modern Greece, Loizos and Papataxiarchis argue that discourses of gender and sexuality are increasingly being constructed outside the realm of the domestic. Tourism constitutes one such extradomestic context, and has seen the emergence in Greece of a new form of interaction between the sexes known as *kamaki* (harpooning). This is a term describing the sexual encounters between Greek men and tourist women premised on a set of understandings about Greek male and foreign female sexuality which is different from locally dominant notions at the same time as they are deeply embedded in them. Castelberg-Koulma (1991) and Zinovieff (1991) have noted that the images of sexuality associated with female tourists have in some respects worked to marginalize local Greek women, who are represented both in postcards and in conversations among the male *kamaki* as backwards, traditional, and unattractive, in contrast to the scantily-clad and available women from northern Europe. Castelberg-Koulma (1991) sees the phenomenon largely in terms of the roles available to Greek women in tourism destinations; Zinovieff (1991) explores how *kamaki* expresses the ambivalence of the men toward their own society and the affluent north of Europe. Within the activity of *kamaki*, the female tourist provides a new reference for ideas about identity, gender, and sexuality, which stems from and has consequences for the social organization of the community.

The issue of identity in tourism has generally been studied in terms of the host/guest relationship, but another group receiving less attention is migrant workers employed for shorter or longer periods in construction or in the tourism service sector. Lever's study of migrant workers in the Spanish resort of Lloret de Mar analyzes the economic and political effects of seasonal tourism employment on the lives of the largely female migrant workforce and the rural hinterland from which it is drawn (Lever 1987). In Northern Cyprus, most of the migrant workers are drawn from mainland Turkey. But, in the wake of the social and economic changes in eastern Europe, they have been joined by an increasing number of women, predominantly Russian and Rumanian, from the former Soviet and eastern bloc countries. On one level, the Russians and Rumanians constitute merely one among several groups entering Northern Cyprus as students, tourists, migrant workers, etc. However, on another level, they have a particular status, reflected in the special regulations governing their entry into the country, which arises from their association with prostitution. Women from

a variety of class and professional backgrounds travel to Turkey to trade in markets close to the Russian border or to engage in prostitution. In mainland Turkey, the figure of the "Natasha," as Russian prostitutes are known, has already entered popular parlance (Beller-Hann, forthcoming; Hann and Hann 1992). The reputation they have acquired in Turkey has also colored their reception in Northern Cyprus, where they are employed in a range of jobs in tourism and entertainment, as waitresses, dancers, croupiers, and nightclub hostesses.

The aim of this paper is to examine how employment is related to constructions of female sexuality and Turkish Cypriot identity which are formed in relation to "outsider" groups. Although it would be possible, as Lever does, to approach the issues from the angle of economic class, the focus of this discussion is rather on the fluidity of cultural categories of "outsider" and "insider" which are embodied in social and economic relations with migrant female labor. The analysis combines the models of culture and boundary proposed by Eriksen (1993), Friedman (1991), and Goody (1992) with the gender perspective of Douglas (1984) and Goddard (1989). It starts by considering the symbolic importance of tourism to Northern Cyprus, before going on to look at the relationship of informal categories of insider and outsider to the formal categories constituted at borders, and their implications for the gender division of migrant labor. Later sections explore changes in Turkish Cypriot life, in particular in the roles and expectations of women, and the challenges they pose to the sense of being *medeni* (modern or civilized), which is an important aspect of Turkish Cypriot identity. The pattern of female tourism employment is discussed in terms of women's dual roles as social actors and symbols of identity, and the issues are drawn together in a case study that examines how one particular group of women—Rumanian croupiers—are incorporated into the workplace and the neighborhood where they live. It will be argued that outsider groups who are seen as external sources of disorder provide a temporary solution to internal contradictions, but also highlight areas of unresolved ambiguity.

Research for this paper was carried out during an 18-month period of fieldwork in Northern Cyprus. The main methods were semi-structured and open-ended interviews with people working in a wide range of tourism activities, a systematic survey of three local newspapers, and participant observation in the resort town of Girne (Kyrenia). The presentation of data on Northern Cyprus presents a number of problems to do with the highly politicized context of any study of Cyprus since the division of the island in 1974. Interpretations of both the island's past and its present situation are hotly contested, the use of terminology highly charged, playing into one or other of the competing discourses which have been constructed around Cyprus. The Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC) is not a recognized state, but the paper refers to structures of state and government in the North because, from the perspective of people living there or entering and leaving the country, that is how they function. When referring to geographical names, the paper gives the name which is current in Northern Cyprus, followed by the name most familiar to English

speakers as appropriate (King and Ladbury 1988 deals with the full complexity of the issue of place names). In acknowledging the contested identity of Cyprus, it must be stressed that it is an issue which should be seen as part of the problem to be analyzed.

### THE SIGNIFICANCE OF TOURISM IN NORTHERN CYPRUS

Cyprus' tourism development started soon after achieving independence from British rule in 1960. During the course of the 1960s, the sector received substantial financial and institutional support from the government, and by the end of the decade, the island had "taken off" as an international tourism destination (Ioannides 1992). Before 1974, however, Turkish Cypriot participation in Cyprus' tourism industry was minimal (Çağın 1990; Martin 1993). Disagreements over the new constitution of the independent republic concerning the partnership role and division of power between the Greek and Turkish Cypriot communities culminated in bloody conflict. The Christmas war of 1963 marked the beginning of a period of intercommunal violence that was to last for most of the rest of the decade. The majority of the Turkish Cypriot population, who had previously lived in settlements dispersed throughout the island (Wellenreuther 1993), withdrew into defensive enclaves, where they subsisted on refugee payments from the Turkish mainland (Stavrinos 1975). With a few exceptions, the tourism boom bypassed Turkish Cypriots; and, by 1971, their average per capita income was only 50% that of Greek Cypriots' compared with 80% in 1961 (Ladbury and King 1982).

The intervention of Turkish mainland troops, in the wake of an internal coup which had aimed to topple President Makarios, changed the situation in Cyprus dramatically. In the course of 1974-1975, an exchange of Greek and Turkish Cypriot populations between the north and south of the island was effected. The resulting partition of the island into Turkish Cypriot and Greek Cypriot sections has never been accepted as permanent or legitimate by the Greek Cypriot government, whereas to the vast majority of Turkish Cypriots it represented a preferable alternative to their situation of the preceding 10 years. In their efforts to create an economically viable Turkish Cypriot state, tourism presented itself as a natural development strategy.

In terms of its contribution to the economy of Northern Cyprus, the success of tourism has been mixed. While it forms a considerable proportion of invisible earnings and has stimulated the construction sector, as a proportion of GDP, it has remained fairly static at around 2%. Agriculture, particularly citrus production, still remains the backbone of the economy, with the garment sector also making a significant contribution. Politically and symbolically, however, tourism is of enormous importance. In the mid 1980s, tourism was designated the "locomotive sector" of the economy. As with other investment projects undertaken in the north (Ladbury and King 1982), tourism represents the future and the viability of the Turkish Cypriot state. Additionally, it represents an opportunity to *tanıtılmak* (promote or make known) the north to the outside world. Equally, Northern Cyprus' tourism is fiercely opposed by the Greek Cypriot government in the south, which,

as the only recognized government on the island, considers the area in the north to be under occupation. International boycotts on aid and investment, and on direct flights to the north of the island, pose problems for the north's tourism; and campaigns against advertisements abroad for the north frequently result in publicity being withdrawn. Tourism in the north is not just about economic development, but about visibility, identity, and legitimacy. It is significant that the most hotly-debated measures proposed by the UN in the talks about the future of Cyprus are the proposals to open up Maraş (Varosha) (Cyprus's prime resort until 1974) and Nicosia International Airport (both closed since 1974) for joint Turkish and Greek Cypriot operation. While tourism may set the scene in the future for the cooperation of Turkish and Greek Cypriots, at present it is an arena where the differences between the two communities continue to be prosecuted.

### *Natural Boundaries and National Borders*

In terms of Eriksen's (1993) distinction between "literal" and "metaphorical" islands, Cyprus can be classed as both an island and not an island. While the 3,355 km<sup>2</sup> of land surrounded by sea constitute an island in the literal sense, its position in the eastern Mediterranean and its long history of colonizations have drawn it over the millennia into regional and global systems that continue to be cultural, political, and economic referents for the island's inhabitants. The partition of the island since 1974 has left it with *de facto* borders. While not internationally recognized, the borders reflect the divisive orientation of the two largest communities on the island towards a respective Greek and Turkish motherland that has bedeviled efforts to create a sense of Cypriot nationhood (Papadakis 1993; Stavrinides 1975).

The lack of recognition of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus borders has meant that TRNC's tourism is heavily dependent on the Turkish mainland as a source of finance and investment, as a gateway to the rest of the world, and as a tourism market (Lockhart and Ashton 1990). Data show that 70–80% of Northern Cyprus' tourists are from Turkey, although these figures need to be treated with caution, as many of those entering as tourists in fact come looking for work. The majority of tourists from "third countries" are from the United Kingdom and Germany, with smaller numbers from Austria, Scandinavia, France, and Italy.

The two main markets—the Turkish and the British—have strong associations both with the past and present of the island, and symbolic importance for the issue of Turkish Cypriot identity. From 1571–1878, Cyprus was a province of the Ottoman Empire, and from 1878–1960, a British crown colony. Many Turkish Cypriots study or work in Turkey, and there is a substantial Turkish Cypriot community in Britain centered in London. British rule in Cyprus coincided with a time of enormous upheaval on the Turkish mainland culminating in the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire and Atatürk's modernizing revolution, which laid the foundation for modern Turkish national consciousness. The relationship to the *anavatan* (motherland) and the symbol of Atatürk were important referents for Turkish Cypriots while

the Greek Cypriot EOKA movement was pressing for *enosis* (union with Greece) in the 1950s and during the intercommunal struggles of the 60s and 70s. But British rule effectively split Turkish Cypriots from the developments on the mainland before 1960 and incorporated them within British colonial structures. Turkish Cypriots refer to themselves under the generic heading of *Türk*, but frequently make distinction between *Kıbrıslı Türk* (Cypriot Turk) and *Türkiyeli* (Turks from Turkey). The bases of this distinction are their relationships with other Turkish Cypriots, which are characterized by dense, multistranded ties in a social environment where almost everybody is assumed to be related to or know almost everybody else; by their shared history with Greek Cypriots; and by their divergent historic development as a British crown colony. Cypriot Turks tend to regard themselves as more modern and European in their outlook than Anatolian Turks, particularly in matters of religion and the status of women. But some, particularly young Cypriots who have been brought up in London, identify themselves with the urban culture of middle class metropolitan mainlanders.

#### *Gender Division of Migrant Labor*

The formal regulation of borders creates categories of outsider and insider distinguishable by ease of entry and restrictions on length of stay and activities in the country. All migrant workers entering Northern Cyprus are required to obtain work permits and undergo health checks, including a test for the HIV virus. However, legislation enacted in 1992 introduced an additional requirement for single women under 40 years of age (from certain central and eastern European countries) who have to obtain a visa and health certificate before leaving their country of origin. These regulations are aimed principally at Russian and Rumanian women, who are regarded as entering the country primarily for prostitution. In contrast, many of the male unskilled workers from Turkey enter as tourists with only an identity card, and work as *kaçak işçiler*—illegal or cheap agricultural and construction laborers, living either in barrack accommodation or in the unfinished buildings on the sites where they work.

The town of Girne possesses the seaport nearest to the Turkish coast, and as the leading resort of Northern Cyprus is a center for building work. The casual laborers from Turkey are, therefore, a common sight, and a recurring theme in everyday conversations of the locals. The opinions expressed by people from all walks of life and political persuasion are remarkably similar. It is said that “they come as tourists with 10,000TL (about US \$1.00) in their pocket and work on building sites—they live like animals—they walk around, and when they see an open door they go in and take what they can find.” This antipathy is an expression both of distaste and fear. The workers are overwhelmingly single men or have left their families in Turkey, and often come from the least developed areas in the east and Black Sea regions of Turkey. Because they live in all-male groups, and are regarded as not *medeni* (modern or civilized), their presence is perceived as threatening. It is frequently said that “they are not used to seeing women uncovered,

in shorts, and mini-skirts," which is how young women in Girne often dress, and their gaze is felt as unnerving. A highly publicized case of rape by illegal workers in the summer of 1993 gave further confirmation to these views. Another common opinion is that they are "bad for tourism" and "give the wrong impression" of Cypriots to tourists, who do not realize that the workers are not Cypriot. The feeling is that they create an atmosphere that is not in keeping with Girne and the more modern, relaxed attitudes of the Cypriots.

The presence of the illegal workers has given rise to the expression *sorma-gir hanı olduk* (literally, we have become a "don't-ask-come-in house"). However, the tight controls on certain foreign women coming into the country suggest that this is not strictly true. In contrast to other groups, these women are assumed not to be tourists, and are required to obtain their visa and health certificate before entering the country, instead of after their arrival. These formalities are usually seen to by their employers, and permission to stay in the country is commonly dependent on the women remaining with those employers.

Although prostitution is illegal in Northern Cyprus, certain night clubs employ registered hostesses who perform the same function, and it is in such places that *Natashas* work. They are required to undergo weekly health checks at the state hospitals, and are generally allowed only to stay for a few months at a time. This time limit places restrictions on the individual women, rather than on the activity itself, as employers maintain a steady flow of new *Natashas* via Turkey every few months. A number of newspaper reports (which appeared in the summer of 1993) about *Natashas* reveal that they are also subject to strict surveillance by their employers while in the country, and that the women are seldom allowed out for shopping or to the beach unsupervised. These restrictions perform a double function. On the one hand, the women are sexual commodities whose company must be paid for, and opportunities for non-monetary relationships would undermine their commercial value. On the other hand, the controls conform to a generalized view that the dangerous sexuality of these women poses threats to health (HIV, venereal disease), public morality, and the family.

It appears that the arrival of Russian and Rumanian *Natashas* has marginalized the role of Turkish women as registered hostesses. According to newspaper reports, the number of Turkish hostesses is declining, although some work illegally as prostitutes, an offence for which they are liable for deportation. The participation of Turkish Cypriot women in prostitution is minimal, although in the past some did work in the "zig-zag," as the old-time houses of ill-repute are known. A couple of women friends (informants) said that they had known of one or two such women in the past, whose own background and life-style had marked them as outcasts, and it was suggested that the newcomers had undercut local prostitutes; but another factor is the availability of women who constitute a clearer "outsider" group.

The fact that restrictions on entry apply to all women from central and eastern Europe, and not just those coming to work as hostesses, appears to vindicate the often-heard view that "all these women are the same." Men in particular believe that "they are all here to earn money



whatever way they can" and that even those working as croupiers and waitresses would be "open to offers." Yet some press articles give a different message. The main Turkish Cypriot daily paper, *Kıbrıs*, has regular color center spreads devoted to the entertainment and disco scenes that often feature Russians and Rumanians, who in this context are never referred to as *Natasha*. Bland articles on strippers, dancers, cabaret artistes, and mannequins appearing in some of the big hotels and clubs convey tolerance and "modern" attitudes toward sex in certain sanctioned contexts. Interestingly, the same journalistic clichés—and particularly the "green-eyed blonde-haired" stereotype—appear in articles about Russians and Rumanians and about foreign tourists dancing the night away in discos with young locals of both sexes. The disco scene is presented as a positive aspect of Northern Cyprus' touristic image, representing a cult of youthfulness and harmless fun. Seen within this range of contexts, the figure of the Russian/Rumanian becomes particularly ambiguous.

The attitude of women also reveals interesting variations. In the town of Güzelyurt (Morphou), local women organized a petition to get rid of the Russian women working there. Many of the objections were to the behavior of their male customers, but the women themselves were blamed for this behavior, for the threat they posed to the family, and for the diversion of money away from the home. They were also thought to endanger men through AIDS and the transmission of sexual diseases. These objections applied to all Russian and Rumanian women, even those known not to be working as hostesses. On the other hand, some women identified with certain of the foreigners' problems, having themselves been the objects of similar stereotyping while students in Turkey. One woman recounted how local residents had campaigned to have the Cypriot women's hostel closed down. "At the time we wore mini-skirts, we laughed and talked in the street. We were away from home, and some girls had boyfriends. We didn't behave like the Turkish women, they were much more traditional then . . . some of the Cypriot boys warned us that Turkish students in the hostels gossiped about us, and that we should be careful how we behaved with them." The women had responded to their situation through self-imposed restrictions on their behavior, which were collectively enforced on all the women living in the hostel. Women who did not conform were asked to leave. She commented: "I don't know now if we were right to do that. These things are very complex [*iç içe*, or "one within the other"], they turn women against each other—just like now, it's women who are saying 'send the *Natashas* back to Moscow'."

The complexities in the situation identified by this speaker reflect the multiplicity of boundaries and referents at work in Turkish Cypriot constructions of sexuality and gender, consonant with Eriksen's (1993) and Goody's (1992) models of culture and boundary. While the contrast with mainland Turkey signals the progressiveness of Turkish Cypriot society, attitudes towards the Russian and Rumanian women reveal an ambivalence towards female sexuality that highlights the tension between Turkish Cypriot progressiveness and conservatism. The burden of the resulting contradictions is born by women, both foreign and Turkish Cypriot.

*Turkish Cypriot Women and Change*

The behavior of outsiders is evaluated in terms of locally prevailing ideas about gender and sexuality, but these ideas are themselves undergoing transformations. Writing of Turkish Cypriots in London in the mid 1970s, Ladbury (1979) noted the importance to the community of the concept of *namus* (reputation or sexual honour/shame). Both a woman's marriage prospects and the reputation of her menfolk depended on avoiding situations that might give rise to gossip, and this entailed restrictions on women's employment and social contacts outside the home. Twenty years ago, very few Turkish Cypriot women worked in paid employment. Today, young women generally expect to go out to work even after they have children, and in recent years the number of creches and private childminders in Girne has increased dramatically. The establishment of universities in Northern Cyprus within the last 10 years has made it easier for girls to go on to higher education, and it is also more common for Cypriot girls to study in Turkey than it was in the past.

Changes have also occurred in the areas of marriage and gendered patterns of socializing. The discotheques that the tourists go to are also attended by young Cypriots of both sexes, although girls are frequently in groups accompanied by a male relative or even a parent. It is widely recognized that many girls have boyfriends, either with or without their parents' knowledge, and, although it is no longer the practice on the morning after a wedding to show the blood-stained sheet as proof of virginity, according to a local doctor the *tamir* operation (repairing the hymen before marriage) is common—an indication both of the incidence of pre-marital sex, and of the continuing attachment to the idea of virginity, even if only symbolically. Although the involvement of parents and kin in arranging marriages is still important, it is increasingly common for parents to be required only to consent to a marriage that has been agreed upon independently by a couple. Neither divorce, nor remarriage after divorce, is unusual.

Twenty years ago, endogamous marriage was the common practice; the trend away from this tradition is one feature of modern life that is considered by older women to have both positive and negative consequences. Marriage within villages and extended kin groups results in dense social networks, with economic relationships underpinned by relations of kin and marriage—a familiar universe in which everyone is connected to everyone else. On the other hand, it is also seen more negatively as inbreeding, said to cause thalassemia, which is common throughout the Mediterranean, and must now be screened through blood tests before marriage. Inbreeding is spoken of as a sign of backwardness, of village parochialism, and rural Turks from the mainland are said to all marry their first cousins. Some people say that the breaking down of the old tight-knit communities after 1974 has resulted in more beautiful babies, a compliment that is often also paid to children who are *melez* (mixed blood). But a foreign daughter- or son-in-law may not be accepted so easily, and this can extend to opposing marriage to a mainland Turkish spouse. News of a Turkish Cypriot man's marriage to a non-Moslem is likely to be greeted with a *bir*

*sey degil* (never mind), which expresses both tolerance and commiseration; "marrying out" by Turkish Cypriot women is, in general, strongly opposed, and a relatively rare occurrence.

Young women, on the whole, tend to emphasize the things that have not changed. Women, whether married or single, are not as free as men to go out alone or in single-sex groups, and are not free to mix informally with tourists as men are. Although husbands and wives socialize together, and this is increasingly expected by young couples, for many men their social life is still focused on the cafe, while women meet in each other's houses. Some women complain that their husbands do not allow them to work, or to do the type of work they want to do (in fact, men are legally entitled to forbid their wives to work and to determine the place of residence of the household, though no cases where this legal right has been invoked were observed).

In short, it is quite apparent that the roles and expectations of women have changed more than those of men. The contradictions that this situation produces are keenly felt by many, particularly the younger female population, and the struggle between traditional and *medeni* (modern) values goes on.

#### *Tourism: A Woman's Work?*

When asked "What kind of jobs can women do?," Turkish Cypriot women's first response was usually "anything." When this question was qualified along the lines of "Are there any jobs which are considered less suitable for women?," a distinction was generally made between professional and white collar work (more suitable), and less skilled work involving a degree of intimacy with clients (less suitable). Pharmacist, doctor, teacher, civil servant, and bank employee were regularly listed as good jobs for women; objections were raised to nursing, and some types of shop work when the store is not family-owned. Whereas women might be considered able to do "any job" in the sense that they can aim as high as men, these answers suggest that the job options of women without college or professional qualifications are limited by notions of respectability.

These considerations also apply in the field of tourism which, on the face of it, offers a wide range of employment opportunities for women. One woman in charge of housekeeping at a prestigious hotel said that she faced opposition from her family when she started working in hotels 20 years earlier (because tourism was not considered respectable work for women). However, the family "turned a blind eye," because she insisted on doing the work, merely stipulating that her elder brother collect her from work every day. Today, it is particular jobs within tourism that sometimes raise family objections. The state hotel and tourism school offers all-round training in hotel and catering, mostly to graduates of *ortaokul* (middle school or non-high school graduates), which for women includes housekeeping, bar work, and waitressing. For those women who do not have the language skills for reception work, family pressure is liable to ensure that their final choice of job lies in housekeeping and cleaning rather than bar or waitress work. Some women who have chosen bar work encounter initial resistance

from home, but have persisted in their choice because they get considerable satisfaction from meeting the demands of competence and skill that their job requires. For married women, the objections of husbands are harder to overcome. Two women with language skills who were dissatisfied with their current office jobs had met opposition from husbands when they suggested working as a hotel receptionist or tour guide. Sometimes the reasons for this resistance are not articulated, but expressed only as "There's no need for you to work." In other cases, the shift work (working at nights, unsteady or unsocial hours that are incompatible with family responsibilities and particularly childcare) or the difficulty of the work involved ("Do you think it's easy to be a tour guide?") are given as reasons.

Some comments reveal more specific concerns underlying these objections. A young woman from Turkey working as a secretary in a travel agency expressed the opinion that some jobs, such as airhostesses, waitresses, and tour guides, are considered *ayıp* (shameful) because "people read things into the jobs and make assumptions about what the women do in their private lives." Cypriot women working in hotels also felt that women doing service and bar work are looked at askance, but disagreed that they were regarded as *ayıp*: "People think it is men's work rather than women's work"; "It's because of the culture; Cypriots are very conservative"; "They're not used to seeing women doing these jobs."

The issues surrounding women's work in tourism can be understood in terms of Douglas' (1984) analysis of body symbolism and social or community boundaries. Jobs that involve regular and prolonged contact with tourists, the provisioning of food, drink, etc., fall into the category of those "dangerous" activities that occur at the margin and that pose a particular threat when supplied by women. It is noticeable that the most effective resistance to women's employment comes from the husband. Traditional ideas about sexual honor and shame, encapsulated in the concept of *namus*, make men the ultimate guardians of their womenfolk's reputation—the impugning of a woman's honor simultaneously challenges that of the men of the family. Ladbury makes the point that for a married woman tied to children and the home, ". . . her circumstances are themselves a control over her, and the possibility of her losing shame is much reduced" (1979:147). In Cyprus 20 years on, some of the controls on single women have been relaxed, but a woman's domestic commitments provide an argument that can be forcefully deployed by men in order to avoid a situation that may have repercussions for their reputation.

There is a demand from the tourism industry for female labor, and also a demand from women for jobs in tourism, particularly as it is seen as the most dynamic sector of the economy with the most promising future. Various accommodations are possible between the sometimes conflicting requirements of job and reputation. In family-run hotels and guesthouses, female participation in the business occurs within the protection of the family environment. In travel agencies, women's work generally keeps them in the office doing ticketing or making telephone contacts. In contrast, men's work combines the traditional male pastime of *gezme* (to be out and about) with making the

necessary outside contacts, collecting and delivering tickets, etc. In large hotels, the day shift on reception is generally reserved for female staff. However, another strategy is the avoidance of some particularly problematic categories of work. Female tour guides are generally foreign, single or divorced. The only tourism businesses in Girne managed entirely by women are run by foreign women. Jobs in the entertainment field, whether as croupiers, waitresses in a tavern, singers, dancers, or cabaret artistes, are performed by foreigners (although some Turkish Cypriot entertainers work in Turkey). Employment in the tourism sector in Girne, therefore, reveals a clear division of labor among women as well as between women and men.

### *Rumanian Croupiers*

Several Turkish Cypriot businessmen have started to take advantage of the new economic opportunities offered by the opening up of former eastern bloc countries, and one line which has been developed is gambling. By law, Turkish Cypriots are not permitted to gamble in casinos in Northern Cyprus, and trips are organized to a casino in Moscow owned by Turkish Cypriot partners. A flow has also begun in the opposite direction of young women, mostly in their early 20s, to work in casinos in Northern Cyprus, catering mainly to Turkish tourists. Rumanian women are recruited in Bucharest through newspaper ads or by friends and acquaintances who have themselves worked in the casinos. No previous experience is required, as training is given before starting work, and applicants are hired by the casinos' representatives on the basis of their appearance.

Rumanian women do not require a visa to enter Turkey. The journey to Istanbul is by bus and to Northern Cyprus by plane. The employer deals with all entry visa requirements, and health checks, blood tests, etc., are done after arrival. The women work on a one-year contract, which specifies the casino for which they are working; work permits and permission to stay are agreed with the employer rather than the employee, so changing employer means that paperwork and permissions have to be obtained anew. Women are employed as dealers, chippers (handing out the chips for roulette), and inspectors (double checking the work of chippers and dealers on each table). Wages vary, according to whether accommodation is provided, from 100–200 pounds sterling per month plus tips, which are shared from a common pool on the basis of points allocated to particular jobs and can amount to an extra 50% on top of the basic — an average local wage. Not stated in the contract is the requirement that the women obtain permission from their manager to be allowed to see certain people outside work. Relationships with men working at the casino are not permitted, and male friends from outside the casino are also supposed to be vetted. The explanation given for this is that women may be distracted (or show partiality) if a boyfriend comes into the casino while they are working. Another reason given is that the man may be married or have a bad reputation. A Turkish croupier working with Rumanians offered a slightly different interpretation. She said that the men working in the casinos all wanted to go out with the Rumanians — the rule

on out of work contacts with colleagues is intended to preempt rivalry among the men. Furthermore, "some people say that the girls are for sale . . ."—hence the restrictions on their contacts protect the reputation of the casino as much as that of the women.

The women are doubly dependent on their employer, both for work and for permission to stay in Northern Cyprus. The organized recruitment and protection of the women by the casinos means that some formalities are waived (for example, the requirement to have blood and health tests done before entering the country). By contrast, a Rumanian traveling independently would have to show visa and health certificates before embarking on the plane in Istanbul. The element of arbitrariness in the application of some of the rules means that the women are particularly vulnerable, which simultaneously increases the power of employers. A woman whose paperwork is not in order can be deported by ferry from Girne without notice and left without money in the southern Turkish port of Taşucu, unless her employer intervenes.

The pay and conditions of Rumanian (and Turkish) croupiers compares unfavorably with those of the qualified British croupiers who previously dominated the profession, and who were earning 100 pounds sterling per week five years earlier (for working the tables and training other croupiers). The British women were less subject to the controls and restrictions on their social life than the Rumanians. According to one British who had worked as a croupier, "there would have been a strike if they'd tried to do that to us." Moreover, a British croupier dissatisfied with her job could leave and get another contract anywhere in the world without much difficulty. The situation of the Rumanians is very different. Motives for coming to Northern Cyprus to work combine the desire to travel and see the world, with the priority of escaping the conditions of unemployment and poverty in Rumania. A Rumanian croupier said that she earned as much in a month as she would have earned in a year in her former job as a waitress in Rumania. This young women was sending home remittances to pay for her sister's education, and saving for a house in Rumania. Women also report that they enjoy the fresh air, scenery, and climate of Cyprus. They also enthused about their work, taking great pleasure in describing the intricacies of their job, the dexterity and mental agility required, and the challenge of playing against the customers: "You might not like it [the job], but I really enjoy it"; or "I especially enjoy working on the roulette, it is really beautiful." Their employment, therefore, offers satisfactions on many levels; but even if this were not so, their options would be limited. Although there are nine casinos in and around Girne, the pay and conditions do not vary substantially, and in any case not all of them can sustain year-round business. Moreover, entry into other countries is not easy with a Rumanian passport, so the opportunities to find work elsewhere are limited.

From the point of view of casino owners, female croupiers make a casino more attractive, and foreign women add an extra touch of glamor. But in the case of Rumanian women, this is double-edged, because they are also seen as endangering the reputation and smooth-running of the casino. The potential dangers of this outsider group are contained by incorporating them within a framework of control which

echoes the moral and gender norms of the community, and which can be applied effectively because of the vulnerability of the group.

### *Rumanian Neighbors*

The comings and goings of a group of female croupiers living in an apartment block on a residential road were watched with interest by the neighbors. Every evening, the young women would walk in a large group down the road to work, conspicuous in their uniforms of white blouse and black mini-skirt, laughing and talking together and paying no attention to the neighbors watching from their gardens and verandahs. The neighbors assumed that they were Russian and/or Rumanians because they “looked different” and spoke an unrecognized language, but they were surprised when they saw a Turkish woman among them.

The opinions expressed about the women reflected the information gleaned from newspapers about *Natashas*. An elderly male neighbor indicated a woman entering the local shop and observed: “She’s Rumanian,” adding, “They’re dangerous, you know. They’re dangerous to young men’s health — you know — every night they’re out with a different one.”

Several factors suggested to the locals that the women were *yaramaz* (good for nothing) apart from the *Natasha* association: the fact that they were in Cyprus without their family (“families don’t send their daughters off to work alone in foreign countries”), the knowledge that the women were working in casinos, and their failure to acknowledge their neighbors. The Turkish woman (among the Rumanians), on the other hand, would greet the neighbors with a respectful *iyi akşamlar ablacığım* (good evening, older sister), and stop to exchange comments on the garden. Her anomalous position caused some puzzlement: her association with the other women suggested that she was *terbiyesiz* (not decent), but this was contradicted by her good manners, and she was the only one of the women who was known by name. Apart from this, some things also suggested that the women were *pis* (dirty, in a moral sense). It was widely known where the women were living; cars of men started to cruise the neighborhood, and sometimes men would follow the women home from work in the early hours of the morning. There were diverging opinions about the men who were cruising the neighborhood. Some women were sure that the men were illegal workers and condemned them as *pis*. One older woman, however, referred to them as *bizim delikanlılar* (our young men) who were being led astray by the women. In her opinion, the men were only following their nature. “Imagine you are a man, single. Of course you look at women, and try and talk to them. If you are a *terbiyeli* [decent] woman, you look away, you don’t talk back, or you just return their *merhaba* [hello]. But if you say: [in English] ‘hello’ you are very nice, and invite them to your house, of course the young man will go.”

Ladbury (1979) observes of the concept of *namus* that it indicates the existence of a community standard without defining it. The changes in ideas about gender, sexuality, and the lives of women do not mean that there is no longer a community standard, but it does seem that the

parameters have widened, making definition more difficult. It is perhaps significant in this context that Turkish Cypriot women discussing objections to certain types of female employment in tourism specifically rejected terminology recalling "traditional" notions of *namus* (e.g., *ayıp*, meaning shameful), and chose instead to phrase the discussion in instrumental terms. Therefore, attitudes towards outsiders are revealing; the process of trying to understand the outsider in terms of community standards highlights what those standards are and makes manifest the boundary between the community and the other.

The views expressed in the neighborhood about the croupiers indicate the boundaries of tolerance of community standards. However, as neighbors, in particular women, became more accustomed to the presence of the croupiers in the street, the initially harsh judgements were softened. Concern was expressed for the safety of the girls walking home from work late at night. The difficult economic situation in Russia and Rumania was discussed, with the comment *Napsın, çalışmalılar* (what can they do, they have to work). As a group, however, Russian and Rumanian women exceed the bounds of acceptable female behavior. In so doing, they show where those boundaries lie.

## CONCLUSIONS

The arguments presented here offer an alternative perspective on the categories of inside and outside and the concept of culture as they usually appear in the tourism literature. Discussions of boundary strategies in tourism usually focus on how the relationship between insider/residents and outsider/tourists is managed, and its implications for cultural authenticity and change. Such analyses are implicitly rooted in and determined by the "cultural islands" model criticized by Eriksen, who also notes that "the idea of the world as a 'mosaic of cultures' . . . [is] still a common metaphor in travel literature" (Eriksen 1993:142). But the cultural "products" marketed in tourism have referents in the social and economic relations which are formed across as well as within boundaries, as the encounter with a migrant workforce makes particularly clear.

Although Russian and Rumanian women in Northern Cyprus are seen as a source of disorder and danger, they actually have a more complex role in helping to define community boundaries at a time of change in gender roles and expectations. In this, they play a similar role to illegal Turkish workers, who represent the antithesis of *medeni* (modern) values. But at the same time, they highlight the unresolved contradictions of women's position. The two aspects of female sexuality symbolized by Russians and Rumanians — deviant and unambiguously dangerous, as well as modern, attractive, and ambiguous — are present in constructions of gender and sexuality that also apply to Cypriot women. Russian and Rumanian women are an embodiment of the outsider within, a role that is illustrated by the way in which they are incorporated into "traditional" structures of authority and control — unlike mainland Turkish workers, who remain outside those structures. In this sense, their situation is emblematic of women's position



at the boundary, where they function as symbolic markers both of *medeni* values and their limits.

But as tourism employees, women also function as social actors. The increasing participation of Turkish Cypriot women in tourism employment represents a relaxation in traditional restrictions in response to changes in the social and economic environment, but continues to be circumscribed in ways which reflect boundary concerns, and local women's crucial position as "insiders" at the margin. Russian and Rumanian women, on the other hand, are constituted both as "outsiders" and as a sexual/sexualized category by the formal border controls regulating their entry; by the informal mechanisms of "community standards"; and by the manner in which they are placed into the tourism workforce, where they perform those jobs not socially and culturally acceptable for Turkish Cypriot women to perform.

As Goody contends, "the cultural is the social viewed from another perspective, not a distinct analytic entity"; and culture can only be theorized in terms of "particular clusters of ways and products of thinking and acting" (1992:30), rather than in terms of bounded communities. Tourism forms one such cluster in which boundaries are redrawn, categories rethought, and identities created. □ □

*Acknowledgments*—The author thanks the unnamed individuals featured in this paper, and Jane Khatib-Chahidi and Chris Hann for their comments on earlier drafts. Fieldwork in Northern Cyprus, undertaken as part of Ph.D. research on issues of identity, visibility, and legitimacy in Turkish Cypriot tourism development, was funded with a post-graduate student grant from the Economic and Social Research Council of Great Britain.

## REFERENCES

- Beller-Hann, Ildiko  
 Forthcoming Prostitution and "Feminism" in North Eastern Turkey.
- Çağın, Hüsrev  
 1990 Structural Changes in Tourism. *In* Proceedings of a Conference on Structural Changes in the Economy of North Cyprus. Gazi Magusa: Eastern Mediterranean University.
- Caplan, Pat  
 1989 Introduction. *In* The Cultural Construction of Sexuality, Pat Caplan ed., pp. 1-30. London: Routledge.
- Castelberg-Koulma, Mary  
 1991 Greek Women and Tourism: Women's Agro-Tourist Co-operatives as an Alternative Form of Organisation. *In* Working Women: International Perspectives on Labour and Gender Ideology, N. Redclift and M. T. Sinclair, eds., pp. 197-212. London: Routledge.
- Doğan, Hasan Z.  
 1989 Forms of Adjustment: Sociocultural Impacts of Tourism. *Annals of Tourism Research* 16:216-236.
- Douglas, Mary  
 1984 [1960] Purity and Danger: An Analysis of the Concepts of Pollution and Taboo. London: Ark.
- Eriksen, Thomas H.  
 1993 In Which Sense Do Cultural Islands Exist? *Social Anthropology* 1(1B):133-148.
- Erisman, H. M.  
 1983 Tourism and Cultural Dependency in the West Indies. *Annals of Tourism Research* 10:337-361.

- Farrell, Bryan H.  
1979 Tourism's Human Conflicts: Cases from the Pacific. *Annals of Tourism Research* 6:122-136.
- Friedman, Jonathan  
1991 Further Notes on the Adventures of Phallus in Blunderland. *In Constructing Knowledge: Authority and Critique in Social Science*, Lorraine Nencel and Peter Pels, eds., pp. 95-113. London: Sage.
- Goddard, Victoria  
1989 Honour and Shame: The Control of Women's Sexuality and Group Identity in Naples. *In The Cultural Construction of Sexuality*, Pat Caplan, ed., pp. 166-192. London: Routledge.
- Goody, Jack  
1992 Culture and Its Boundaries: A European View. *Social Anthropology* 1(1A):9-32.
- Hann, Chris, and Ildiko Hann  
1992 Samovars and Sex on Turkey's Russian Markets. *Anthropology Today* 8(4): 3-6.
- Ioannides, Dimitri  
1992 Tourism Development Agents: The Cypriot Resort Cycle. *Annals of Tourism Research* 19:711-731.
- King, Russell, and Sarah Ladbury  
1988 Settlement Renaming in Turkish Cyprus. *Geography* 73:363-367.
- Ladbury, Sarah  
1979 Turkish Cypriots in London: Economy, Society, Culture and Change. Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation. University of London, School of Oriental and African Studies.
- Ladbury, Sarah, and Russell King  
1982 The Cultural Construction of Political Reality: Greek and Turkish Cyprus Since 1974. *Anthropological Quarterly* 55(1):1-16.
- Lever, Alison  
1987 Spanish Tourism Migrants: The Case of Lloret de Mar. *Annals of Tourism Research* 14:447-470.
- Lockhart, Douglas, and Sue Ashton  
1990 Tourism to Northern Cyprus. *Geography* 75:153-167.
- Loizos, Peter, and Evthymios Papataxiarchis  
1991 Introduction and Gender, Sexuality and the Person in Greek Culture. *In Contested Identities: Gender and Kinship in Modern Greece*, P. Loizos and E. Papataxiarchis, eds., pp. 3-28 and 221-234. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Martin, John  
1993 The History and Development of Tourism. *In The Political Social and Economic Development of Northern Cyprus*, C. H. Dodd, ed., pp. 335-372. Huntingdon: Eothen Press.
- Nash, Dennison  
1989 Tourism as a Form of Imperialism. *In Hosts and Guests: The Anthropology of Tourism* (2nd ed.), Valene Smith, ed., pp. 37-54. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Papadakis, I.  
1993 Perceptions of History and Collective Identity: A Study of Contemporary Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot Nationalism. Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation. Trinity College, Cambridge.
- Smith, Valene L.  
1989 Eskimo Tourism: Micro-Models and Marginal Men. *In Hosts and Guests: The Anthropology of Tourism* (2nd ed.), Valene Smith, ed., pp. 55-82. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Stavriniades, Zenon  
1975 *The Cyprus Conflict: National Identity and Statehood*. Nicosia: Loris Stavriniades Press.
- Urbanowicz, Charles F.  
1989 Tourism in Tonga Revisited: Continued Troubled Times? *In Hosts and Guests: The Anthropology of Tourism* (2nd ed.), Valene Smith, ed., pp. 105-118. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Wellenreuther, R.

1993 Siedlungsentwicklung und Siedlungsstrukturen im ländlichen Raum der Türkischen Republik Nordzypem. Materialien zur Geographie, University of Mannheim.

Zinovieff, Sofka

1991 Hunters and Hunted: Kamaki and the Ambiguities of Sexual Predation in a Greek Town. *In* Contested Identities: Gender and Kinship in Modern Greece, P. Loizos and E. Papataxiarchis, eds., pp. 203–220. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Submitted 31 January 1994

Accepted 2 May 1994

Final version submitted 14 June 1994

Refereed anonymously