

**A CRITICAL ETHNOGRAPHY OF TOURISM  
ENTREPRENEURSHIP & SOCIAL CHANGE IN  
A FISHING COMMUNITY IN  
GRAN CANARIA**

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*This thesis is dedicated to the memory of my grandfather, Cav. Valerio Bianchi*



## ABSTRACT

This thesis constitutes an examination of a fishing village in Gran Canaria which has undergone social change in relation to a series of tourism development processes over the past four decades. It considers different aspects of these transformations within a critical theoretical framework, with specific emphasis on the formation of entrepreneurial classes and the contested nature of resource use and appropriation in the context of tourism development.

Much of the existing literature on tourism development is dominated by generalized models which fail to theorize the diverse and complex dynamics of local level tourism development, or particularist ethnographies of the impact of tourism on 'host' societies. These are often overly descriptive and fail to connect local processes of tourism development to the wider societal context and distribution of power within which they occur. The approach adopted here is based on a critical ethnography of tourism entrepreneurship which examines how broader processes of social, political and economic change have conditioned specific configurations of tourism within the village, distilled through the experiences and accounts of local residents. Evidence was gathered via sustained interaction with a number of key informants with different modes of involvement in tourism. This was supported by extensive secondary research using archive materials, newspaper sources and informal interviews with relevant personnel.

The touristification of Playa de Mogán has occurred as a series of processes which relate to wider changes in the macro-economic environment, and whose consequences have been uneven for members of the the resident population. An earlier phase of visitation by 'explorer-travellers' stimulated entrepreneurial responses amongst formerly more marginal members of the social formation, whereas the subsequent development of a tourist marina precipitated a wider scope of capitalistic intervention into the tourism landscape of the village, underpinned by the political agency of different levels of government. The examination of different modes of local response to tourism suggests that processes of tourism development cannot be easily predicted or be explained through recourse to linear or dualist models. An ethnographic approach to the analysis of the structure of tourism enterprise and social composition of local entrepreneurial classes reveals a range of antagonisms which indicate that the dynamics of social change related to tourism are differentiated and uneven.

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## **List of Abbreviations**

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A.A.M.	Archivo del Ayuntamiento de Mogán
CEDOC	Centro de Documentación de Canarias
CIES	Centro de Investigación Económica de Canarias
EDEIC	Equipo de Estudios e Investigaciones Canarias
EDIS	Equipo de Investigación Sociológica
INE	Instituto Nacional de Estadística
ISTAC	Instituto Canario de Estadística
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
WTO	World Tourism Organisation

## Glossary of Terms

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<i>arrendatario</i>	tenant farmer
<i>ayuntamiento</i>	municipal government/local council
<i>baldíos realengos</i>	forest/scrub-land under the jurisdiction of the Crown
<i>barranco</i>	deep, eroded valley
<i>barrio pesquero</i>	fishing quarter
<i>bienes de propio</i>	communal lands leased by local councils
<i>burguesía agrícola</i>	agrarian bourgeoisie
<i>cabildo insular</i>	island council
<i>cacique</i>	rural [political] boss/patron
<i>cofradía de pescadores</i>	fishermens' cooperative
<i>comunidad autónoma</i>	autonomous community (region)
<i>desamortización</i>	disentailment
<i>factoría de salazón</i>	(fish) salting factory
<i>fanegada</i>	a unit of land measurement equal to 0.6 hectares
<i>gobierno autónomo</i>	autonomous [regional] government
<i>jornalero</i>	agricultural labourer
<i>labrador</i>	medium-sized farmer
<i>mayorazgo</i>	primogeniture, entailed estate
<i>medianías</i>	middle areas in the interior (500-1000m. above sea-level)
<i>medianeros</i>	a type of sharecropper whereby the direct producer would divide the harvest between themselves and the landowner.
<i>minifundías</i>	small plots (often less than 1 hectare) farmed by peasant families who often have to combine this with wage-work.
<i>peón</i>	(manual) worker/labourer
<i>pesca artesanal</i>	artisanal (craft) fishing
<i>pesca de aire/(túnido)</i>	tuna fishing
<i>oligarquía terrateniente (oligarquía caciquil )</i>	landowning oligarchy; descendents of conquering nobles
<i>regadío//secano</i>	irrigated//dry land
<i>secretos del mar</i>	'secrets of the sea' (fishermens' knowledge)



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# INTRODUCTION

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According to Dennison Nash, "*a good deal of theoretical work needs to be done*" within the field of tourism research, and indeed a cursory glance at the literature bears witness to his statement (1992: 223). Sessa (1984) supports this claim and goes so far as to attribute an entire chain of shortcomings within tourism education, management and policy-making to this theoretical deficit, while Muñoz de Escalona (1992: 24-28) suggests that it is precisely the weakness of tourism research's theoretical backbone which has led to such a confusing and contradictory array of definitions and which thus leads him to claim that 'tourism' has not yet reached the status of a scientific concept. Ap (1990) is adamant that unless tourism research can achieve the transition from an elementary descriptive stage into an explanatory one, and demonstrate a higher level of theoretical sophistication, then it is condemned to remain in an arena of pragmatism which will be unable to discern the underlying dynamics which underscore its deeper essence.

The diversity of tourism scholarship can be attributed in no small part to the nature of the historical evolution of tourism research which grew out of a disparate range of disciplinary fields, in particular economics, geography, sociology and anthropology. However tourism inquiry should not feel in any way constrained or disadvantaged by this rich intellectual heritage. On the contrary the demolition of the artificial boundaries between the different strands of the social sciences can only serve to enrich our understanding of an enormously diverse phenomenon. Nor should inter-disciplinarity be confused with an attempt to develop a uniform theoretical order. Tourism scholarship must continue to develop an integrated and *inter-disciplinary* approach to research, informed by a diversity of theoretical perspectives and discourses, as urged by authors such as Crick (1989) and Lanfant (1992). Echtner, in a recent conference devoted to paradigmatic concerns within tourism scholarship, argued that we must become "*academic tourists*" and "*wander across disciplinary boundaries*".<sup>1</sup> The benefit of porous 'boundaries' has been ably demonstrated by the "*natural affinity*" that exists between the anthropology and sociology of tourism, both in terms of their theoretical heritage and their subject matter (Nash 1996: 12). There has also been a rich cross-fertilisation of ideas from geography, political economy and social theory which has injected a valuable source of theoretical dynamism into tourism research (Urry 1990; Britton 1991; MacCannell 1992; Rojek and Urry 1997). However, despite the breadth of tourism scholarship and the increase of paradigmatic concerns (see Jafari 1990), thanks to amongst other things, the *Annals of Tourism Research* and the recognition of tourism as a legitimate area of inquiry by the *International Sociological Association*, there is ample room to extend our theoretical and conceptual understanding of tourism still further (Milne 1998).

Both Cohen (1979a) and Dann *et al.* (1988) have argued that tourism research had failed to acknowledge the interplay between theory and methodology and that furthermore this had resulted in an imbalance in most areas of tourism inquiry which fall into three categories. Firstly, there is a small body of *a priori* work devoted to theoretical discourse, which although providing valuable philosophical insights and instrumental in mapping out the theoretical terrain upon which tourism research is able to proceed, is often insufficiently explored through empirical analysis. Despite such criticisms however, Nash concedes



that even theoretically-oriented authors such as MacCannell (1992), have increasingly recognised the need for “*hard-headed ethnography*” (1996: 83). Second, there is a considerable body of descriptive work which perhaps reflects the vocational pressures within the field of tourism studies. Earlier work on the impact of tourism on destinations demonstrates the normative manner in which these studies framed research questions (Wood 1993; 1997), which amount to little more than lists of economic, social or cultural impacts which make little or no attempt to examine the complex underlying dynamics of the touristification processes (e.g. UNESCO 1976; Mathieson and Wall 1982). The third category outlined by Dann *et al.* (1988) consists of data analyses, which offer supposedly ‘objective’ or universal explanations at the expense of theoretical content and wider contextualisation. Tourism economic impact studies are indicative of this ‘normative outlook’ whereby the ‘benefits’ of tourism are calculated according to a series of quantitative variables derived from a set of ‘value-free’ economic concepts.<sup>2</sup> This does not mean to say that quantitative measurement of this nature cannot be usefully employed in tourism research, but rather that the normative approach of such analyses is often regarded as the most valid and effective means by which the success of tourism development can be measured. These studies tend to ignore the societal context in which individual access to resources are mediated, and which moreover defines their relationship to the agents of economic decision-making and the meaning ascribed to the substance of *development* itself (see Hobart 1993: 6). It is still therefore useful to bear in mind Nash’s warning against premature “*theoretical closure in an uncharted area*” as well as the inadequacy of “*simply accumulating empirical studies that are not theoretically informed*” (1981: 468). Arguably, the investigation into the dynamics of tourism development at a local level ought to embrace:

a middle way between a presumptuous attempt to create a monolithic (generalizing) ‘theory of tourism’ and the piece-meal, ad hoc investigation of discrete empirical problems. (Cohen 1979a: 32)

The level and extent of theorizing within tourism research has however been somewhat ad hoc and uneven (Allcock 1983). Although Oppermann and Chon claim that “*the development of tourism resorts and destinations is among the most researched topics within tourism studies*” (1997: 57), much of the literature devoted to the examination of tourism development often tends to fall back on descriptive typologies and linear models, which fail to problematize the essence of tourism as a social phenomenon. Moreover they are based upon unspoken assumptions regarding their methodological strategies which contributes to the paucity of theoretical insight and their explanatory utility. If, therefore, the examination of tourism is to have any relevance for the major academic debates within anthropology and sociology as a whole, it is vital that we bear in mind that “*it is only at the theoretical level that research findings achieve a sufficient level of generality to be of interest and relevance to those wider audiences*” (Booth 1993: 59).

Proponents of theories which claim to be ‘objective’, normalise power inequalities and thereby serve to reproduce the existing social, political and economic arrangements of the social formation under study (Lukes 1974). Sherman (1987) rightly argues that it is a misconception to suggest that values of the researcher can be separated from social analysis, as they are grounded within a specific cultural context and refined according to certain philosophical principles which provide the overall map which guides and



shapes their analytical procedures (see Chapter Five). To return to the theme of tourism, beneath the surface of institutionalised fora of policy-making there are very real material class interests and cleavages between social groups which requires an analysis of the societal structures within which socio-political relations occur, and which underscore the bargaining processes where development issues are concerned (Strange 1994).

### *Tourism, Development and Power*

Several scholars have highlighted the absence of research into the political dimensions of tourism (Richter 1989; Matthews and Richter 1991; Hall 1994a). They point to a number of reasons for this neglect including, "*an unwillingness on the part of many decision-makers both in government and in the private sector to acknowledge the political nature of tourism*" and an insufficient politicisation of the particular issues relating to tourism (Hall 1994a: 4). However what is perhaps more significant is not the fact that the political dimension has been neglected within tourism research, but rather the manner in which the political dimension *has* been studied. Pluralist<sup>3</sup> notions of power underpin various branches of tourism research, including community involvement in tourism (*e.g.* Murphy 1985) and rational-prescriptive studies of the tourism policy and planning (*e.g.* Gunn 1994). In a more recent publication, Milne (1998: 35) laments the lack of a "*responsive theoretical framework*" in the literature on sustainable tourism development, which fails to address the complex and stratified nature of areas in which tourism emerges. Thus as a number of scholars have recently urged (Nash 1996; Wood 1997), we need to build on the insights gained from existing studies of tourism development where appropriate in tandem with the application of theoretically derived concepts in order to continue to advance our understanding of how tourism takes shape in diverse destination areas, and the socio-economic changes it gives rise to.

Pluralist perspectives are also well represented in the literature on tourism development, whose apolitical conception of tourism development is removed from a socio-historical context which would account for inequalities of power between generating and receiving areas. While there has been considerable research into tourism's potential to stimulate economic growth, the impact of tourism and to some extent the patterns of tourism entrepreneurship, there have been fewer studies of the social, political and ideological factors that underlie and condition tourism development in particular localities. The conceptualisation of tourism expansion into receiving societies has to a significant extent been informed by diffusionist theories on a large-scale of analysis. These include, the elaboration of *development stage* models which depict the temporal evolution of tourism destination areas as a sequence of linear economic development stages (Noronha 1979; Butler 1980), and secondly, *spatio-temporal* models of tourist destination area transformation which illustrate the temporal evolution of tourist resort areas across space (Christaller 1963; Miossec 1976) or peripheries (Gormsen 1981), driven by the expansion of resort and transport infrastructure.



A sustained critique of the diffusionist approach which does examine the nature of tourism development and structural inequalities, was put forward by numerous critical scholars who drew their inspiration from the neo-Marxist theory of dependency, which viewed tourism development as the principal agent in the reproduction of a neo-colonial relationship between the tourism generating and destination societies (Nash 1989; Britton 1982). The influence of dependency theory was significant in many of these earlier studies and as a result they were largely confined to macro-structural analyses at the expense of any micro-sociological consideration of the socio-historical circumstances of development at local levels, and the inequalities of power that cut across the structural opposition of 'centre' and 'periphery'. There is nevertheless a significant body of ethnographic work, which has examined varied responses to the emergence of tourism within different local contexts, in relation to a range of conceptual variables in order to highlight local forms of ethnic and social stratification and other culturally-specific factors which mediate tourism development at local levels (see Chapter Three). These scholars have therefore opened up a rich conceptual terrain which seeks to contextualise the processes of tourism development in specific societal contexts, by recognising the complexity and diversity of processes of "*touristification*", which argues Picard constitutes, "*more than just developing an area and equipping it with the facilities necessary to accommodate tourists*" (1995: 46).

The analysis of tourism development here is not concerned with the realm of *economic* development conceived of strictly in terms of advances in material well-being, and whose object it is "*to explain and/or predict the processes involved in achieving or failing to achieve development*" (Sklair 1988: 701). Rather the emphasis is on the degree to which the structure of the local social formation mediates different strategies of entrepreneurship pursued by networks of actors and social groups seeking to appropriate and control tourism resources. Tourism development is therefore a political phenomenon in its widest sense:

The economy thus is political but appears not to be. It is political in the most fundamental sense: it organizes power, distributes goods, and rules people. (Lummis 1991: 32)

It concerns not just the formal decision-making activities of governments and elected politicians, but an entire spectrum of social activity whose underlying motive it is to seek control over or access to resources. Within the realm of tourism there is an added cultural and political significance attached to the production and consumption of resources which are endowed with a symbolic resonance (MacCannell 1976). Simply stated politics is after all "*about power, who gets what, where, how and why*" (Laswell 1936: cited in Hall 1994a: 2). The assumption that policy and planning processes are value-free and based purely on a 'rational choice' between possible alternatives, assumes that power is evenly distributed throughout the social formation and that decision-making is a rational and value-free process capable of delivering prescriptive planning solutions to the problems afflicting tourism development (Hall 1994a: 169).

Pluralist approaches to political economy therefore 'de-politicize' development processes (Burnham 1994). However, the very act of 'de-politicization' is a political act in itself through which ideological



discourses attempt to “*lay down the categories through which reality is perceived*” (Wolf 1982: 388). The dynamics of economic development are reduced to a mechanical inter-play between supply and demand, guided by the ‘invisible hand’ of the market whose outcomes are measured through a series of technical coefficients such as the level of savings and GNP indicators. Wholly absent from this perspective is any notion of the relations of power which underpin the ownership and control of capital, entrepreneurial behaviour and most importantly the bargaining power between actors (Mehmet 1995: 83; Hildyard *et al.* 1996: 142). The favoured tool of planners and consultants for quantifying the ‘benefits’ of tourism, such as cost-benefit and multiplier analyses, illustrate an abstract conceptual approach allegedly ‘untainted’ by values and ideologies. They can therefore provide a useful rhetorical device whereby partisan interests may be dressed up in the language of ‘community’ and presented in the ‘public interest’ (Stewart 1975: 36).

In a seminal paper Lanfant (1980: 17-18) eloquently exposed the limitations of such an approach to the study of international tourism which “*insiduously invades the field of sociology*”, masking the structural inequalities and intricate relations of power and interdependence which are spun across the international tourism system. The trajectories of tourism development experienced in a particular locality must therefore be considered, not simply as the outcome of the interaction between tourism flows (demand) and tourist resources (supply) (e.g. Mathieson and Wall 1982: 14-18), but in the context of different “*political strategies to conquer resources, to exploit lands and to occupy territories*” (Lanfant 1995a: 6). The approach adopted in this study examines development as processes of societal transformation which arise out of the interaction of human beings in pursuit of different livelihood strategies, not merely as a quantifiable state exemplified in the annual OECD economic surveys or World Bank Development Reports.

### ***Towards a Conceptual Framework***

Apart from some notable exceptions (see Britton 1991; Lanfant *et al.* 1995; Boissevain 1996a; Picard and Wood 1997), there has been erratic progress towards a more theoretically informed understanding of tourism that grasps the diversity of tourism development experiences without losing sight of the underlying structures of political economy. More specifically, the experience of social transformation seen through the viewfinder of entrepreneurial responses to tourism, is an area that has been oversimplified or has received scant attention within studies of tourism development (Shaw and Williams 1998). This research deficit is furthermore paralleled by a lack of theoretically derived concepts with which to examine questions of ownership and control of tourism resources. In light of this and Selwyn’s suggestion that tourism research must, “*become rigorously ethnographic and more theoretical*” (1994: 734), the principal aim of the thesis constitutes an examination of the pattern and substance of *local adaptation to and involvement in* the processes of touristification experienced in the village of Playa de Mogán, through the emergence of touristic enterprise, set within the wider social context. In this regard, processes of tourism development in the village studied are explored in the context of “*complex*



*interactions between individuals and groups*", who are furthermore, "*endowed with different and changing amounts of power and knowledge*" (Booth 1993: 56).

More specifically it aims to contextualise the entrepreneurial responses to tourism and the configurations of touristic enterprise in relation to local structures of community stratification. It therefore examines the connections between the material basis of control over tourism resources and variation in the social nature of entrepreneurial agency and ownership. However, rather than reduce the analysis of tourism development to individual entrepreneurial decision-making, this thesis draws on recent advances in the contemporary political economy of development in an attempt to relate patterns and processes of tourism development and entrepreneurship at the micro-scale to both intermediate and wider social, political and economic processes (see Booth 1993; Massey 1995). In order to develop such understanding a critical ethnography is advocated (see Chapter Five) which can illuminate the varied strategies of adaptation and entrepreneurial agency at the village level, and the associated changes in the socio-spatial configuration of tourism, in relation to changing structural conditions at wider levels. Hence, local adaptation and responses to tourism are also explored through the conceptions of space amongst the different social actors and groups who live, work and move through this locality. This will help illuminate how particular social relations and political and ideological processes are implicated in and shape the spatial contours of resort transformation. The examination of patterns of entrepreneurship in relation to the commodification of space in the village (a key component of tourism), can thus also reveal the degree to which local responses to tourism vary across the social structure. By incorporating a more critical awareness of the relationship of space to the underlying structural conditions of social change, this study also subjects the normative views which inform prevailing development discourses, which envisage the marina development in this village as a prime exemplar of '*quality tourism*' in Gran Canaria, to critical examination. In particular, Chapter Ten examines the development of the marina-fishing port of Puerto de Mogán, seen by policy-makers and developers as a 'new' and more 'enlightened' type of tourism development differentiated from the 'mistakes' of the past, in light of the conflicts between different social groups over the control of space in the village.

It is thus to the manner in which both structural concepts and ethnographic inquiry can be combined in a study of tourism development, that this thesis is devoted. The examination of tourism development in the fishing village of Playa Mogán<sup>4</sup> is a 'problem' rather than 'place-oriented study, and as such attempts to distance itself from the more conventional case study approach (often associated with the tourism impact studies rooted in the Anglo-American tradition of empiricism and ethnographic fieldwork - Selwyn 1996a: 4), which tended to treat localities as bounded social units which can be studied in isolation from the broader context. It is driven by theoretical and paradigmatic concerns derived from the author's critical examination of several existing approaches to the analysis of tourism development at both macro and local levels, discussed in Chapters One to Three. The resort itself provides the focus of inquiry and should not be mistaken for an *a priori* statement regarding its internal cohesion and relationship with the 'outside' world (see Wolf 1982: 18). As such the research setting represents the vehicle with which to explore local configurations of tourism development through subjects' experiences,



in the context of theoretically derived concepts of social change. In its broadest sense, this study constitutes a theoretically-informed examination of the emergence of tourism development, which emphasises the exploration of varied responses to tourism by different social segments within the destination area, and their outcomes, rather than attempt to identify and categorise successive stages of tourism development as an end in itself. For a critical understanding of tourism's relationship to social change at a village-level, it is considered more fruitful to examine how and why particular structures of enterprise and patterns of response to tourism amongst different social segments have emerged, not merely to document and categorise their existence and evolution.

## Summary of Research Questions

In order to elaborate further on the approach adopted in this study, it is necessary to first of all review existing conceptualisations and models of tourism development, in order to distil their theoretical underpinnings and provide the theoretical foundations for a critical ethnography of the processes of tourism development in Playa de Mogán. It is not suggested that the approach adopted here is any way better than others, but rather that the approach adopted in this thesis offers a different insight into processes of tourism development in a manner which, in the view of the author, is not evident in much of the tourism research which has been carried out in this area. However, an ethnographic approach to the study of tourism development does not merely necessitate the adoption and elevation of one particular set of methodological tools over another. As demonstrated in the unique analysis of corporations and commodities by Miller (1997), what distinguishes an ethnographic approach to social analysis from others, is an explicit and transparent recognition that it is embedded within a particular conception of society and the processes which shape it. Thus it is hoped that a deeper theoretical understanding of tourism development sensitive to the fluid and changing nature of the local social formation can be achieved; one which moreover reconciles the theoretical insights of macro-sociological perspectives empirically-grounded in micro-sociological accounts of social experience.

The analysis is driven by recent attempts to transcend the sterile debates surrounding structure and agency, which owe much to recent attempts to formulate a "*new comparative political economy*" (Evans and Stephens 1988: 719), and a greater awareness of the distinctiveness and variability of local capitalist formations (Massey 1995).<sup>5</sup> The approach adopted here attempts to take on board these insights and examine tourism development as a series of processes which manifests and contributes to:

the capacity of social agents, agencies and institutions to maintain and transform their environment, social or physical. It is about the resources that underpin this capacity and about the forces that shape and influence its exercise. (Held 1994: 311)

The combination of an analysis theoretically-informed by political economy and methodologically rooted in a critical ethnography, engages with empirical data gathered at a local level and enables the role of human agency to be considered within its broader societal context. Normative studies of tourism development on the other hand have been predominantly concerned with attempts to construct a single



comprehensive model of tourist destination area transformation, or else to adapt these models to a range of empirical contexts. Tourism development models have thus attempted to incorporate a diversity of touristic experiences into unilinear and monocausal schemas. However a theoretically-sensitive awareness of the underlying structures of tourism development can only be gained if we look beyond observational data and the isolation of a few related variables “*to discover different types of basic dynamics*”, as suggested by Cohen (1979a: 24).

Although there has been a considerable degree of effort dedicated to this precise task, evidenced by recent publications by Lanfant *et al.* (1995) and Bossevain (1996a), there is still a significant degree of theoretical inconsistency with regard to understanding the relationship between tourism and social change. According to Dann *et al.* (1988: 22), hosts and their societies were still an under-researched constituency less than a decade ago. To summarise, it is the aim of this study to examine the role of local agency in relation to specific processes of tourism development within a particular community, which eschews earlier tendencies to merely categorise the positive and negative effects of tourism. Equally it does not attempt to substitute existing models of tourism development which collapse the dynamics of tourism development into a single linear dimension, with an equally deterministic and generalised ‘theory’ of tourism development.

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<sup>1</sup> “Paradigms in Tourism Research” (July 4-7th, Jyväskylä, Finland), a conference convened by the Research Committee 50 on International Tourism, International Sociological Association.

<sup>2</sup> See Weeks (1978) for a critical discussion of economics as a ‘value-free’ science.

<sup>3</sup> A pluralist approach assumes that power is evenly diffused throughout societies and focuses only on the ‘visible’ sphere of decision-making where “*power is totally embodied and fully reflected in ‘concrete decisions’ or in activity bearing directly upon their making*” (Bachrach and Baratz 1970: 7). This therefore ignores the submerged values and ideologies that condition the articulation of power, which is not necessarily observable but shapes and reproduces the social structure itself (Lukes 1974). Pluralist conceptualisations of social phenomena derive their intellectual inspiration from a positivist epistemology whereby reality or ‘truth’ is manifest in the directly observable structures of society, and knowledge is objective and value-free, which ultimately “*obscures the highly if obscurely organized political circumstances obtaining when knowledge is produced*” (Said 1991: 10). There is an implicit assumption here that there exists a value consensus, in the Parsonian sense, throughout the different actors and groups involved in processes of decision-making. The significance of such an approach is that it ascribes a primacy to technocentric and managerial planning solutions which can be measured against specified goals and targets, and which are furthermore removed from the realm of competing values and ideological struggles that prevail in different social and institutional contexts.

<sup>4</sup> For the purpose of clarity and consistency it is important to dwell for a moment on the usage of the terminology used to identify and demarcate the boundaries of the locality under study. Prior to the construction of the tourist marina-fishing port, the village was known as *Playa de Mogán*, and is still referred to as such by many of the older inhabitants of the village. Strictly speaking the tourist marina-fishing port is referred to as *Puerto de Mogán* and the different neighbourhoods which constitute the existing settlement, as *Playa de Mogán*. Although, given its heightened touristic importance the new name has increasingly become part of everyday usage (and is the name featured on bus timetables). Thus, when referring to the locality in general the term *Playa de Mogán* will be used as this was the term preferred by most informants when referring to their ‘place’ of residence, *i.e.* the village. Conversely, the term *Puerto de Mogán* principally refers to the tourist marina (which also comprises the fishing port) and more specifically, the touristic identification of the locality. Where relevant throughout the analysis chapters, the symbolic relevance of this terminology will be discussed in relation to the different social groups involved in and affected by tourism.

<sup>5</sup> See also work by Girling (1987) and Mouzelis (1988, 1990).



# CHAPTER ONE

## Tourism Development: *Tradition versus Modernity*

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Travel seems to generate consistently ambivalent or contradictory representations. (Crick 1989: 307)

### Introduction

The following chapter consists of a brief appraisal of the legacy of evolutionary theories and in particular, modernization theories in the literature on tourism development. Three particular strands of tourism development research will be considered in relation to diffusionist perspectives in general. The first area to be considered is the early work on tourism as an instrument of economic development in which diffusionist perspectives are most explicit. This chapter then moves on to explore the relationship of comprehensive models of tourism development used to depict the evolution of tourism regions through space and time to this particular conceptual tradition. Lastly, it considers the influence of *acculturation* and *development* for the study of tourism and its effect on cultural contact and change (Nash 1996: 25), in light of the emergence of concerns amongst anthropologists regarding the effect of tourism on 'host' societies.

### *Tourism and the Contradictions of Modernity*

The inalienable right to the freedom of movement is enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and encapsulates notions of progress, change and above all modernity which are rooted in the ideals of the Western Enlightenment. Whilst not referring to tourism, Marshall Berman's description of modernity captures precisely those contradictory and conflicting elements that make-up its dynamic essence:

To be modern is to find ourselves in an environment that promises us adventure, power, joy, growth, transformation of ourselves and the world-and at the same time, that threatens to destroy everything we have, everything we know, everything we are. (1983: 15)

Modern day travel, particularly where MacCannell's (1976) 'authenticity seeking' tourist or Wheeler's (1993) 'ego-tourist' are concerned, is a quintessential component of Western modernity, in which the autonomous subject embodies Condorcet's notion of the 'progress of the human spirit'. Moreover the seventeenth century doctrine of possessive individualism is reflected in the increasing sanctity of the market, and are values which have been reconstituted within the context of contemporary global tourism, manifest in the consumption of a global hierarchy of places and cultures by tourists, eagerly supported by a powerful metropolitan tourism lobby often in the name of economic development of the 'underdeveloped societies' (see Mowforth and Munt 1998). The tourist is thus a 'free agent' rightfully satisfying his or her inalienable rights, and is the fulcrum around which the corporate-capitalist international tourism system pivots. Indeed Urry (1993) suggests that the the right to travel has in itself become a "*marker of citizenship*" at a time when processes of globalization have increasingly eroded territorially-specific (national) identities. Tourists, particularly those from among the more affluent



segments of the 'advanced' capitalist societies, play a fundamental role in the articulation of a new symbolic economy in which place-bound peoples and cultures are forced to respond and re-identify themselves (see Castells 1996: 415-417).

Mass tourism, as MacCannell reminds us, has thus demonstrated a capacity to disregard traditional boundaries and transform societies on a magnitude not previously experienced:

In the name of tourism, capital and modernized peoples have been deployed to the most remote regions of the world, farther than any army was ever sent...tourism is not just an aggregate of commercial activities; it is also an ideological framing of history, nature, and tradition; a framing that has the power to reshape culture and nature to its own needs. (1992: 1)

Concern over tourism's detrimental effects on receiving societies highlights the double-bind faced by those countries which embrace tourism as a development tool, referred to by Krapf as "*tourism or nothing*" (1961). Several scholars have illustrated the paradox which underlies the promotion of tourism as an instrument of 'development', amongst them Jafari (1984), who likens tourism to a double-edged sword, and Lanfant who argues that:

...there is a flagrant contradiction in pretending to bring modernization to traditional societies while at the same time encouraging them to form part of a process of 'cultural involution' by caring for their traditions so as to maintain their brand image on the international tourism market. (1980: 38)

It is a contradiction which defines and divides attempts to conceptualise the processes which give meaning to notions of modernity and the place of tourism within processes of societal development, and which is ultimately enmeshed in competing worldviews and ideological configurations of power. Indeed the contradictory essence of modernity is further illustrated by the consistent attempts of Western social theory to impose a coherent theoretical order on a society which at the level of popular experience is consistently ambiguous, fragmented and in flux (Rojek 1995). On the one hand the distinction between "*using tourism as a vehicle for development*" in terms of improving the material well-being of a particular society, and "*developing tourism*" (Richter 1989: 182), provides a convenient rhetorical device whereby the partisan interests of tourism development agencies are presented as in the interests of societal development as a whole. Yet at the same time tourism has opened up possibilities for consumption in societies on the edge of the industrialized world, and thus presents a conduit through which previously subordinate groups can negotiate access to modernity (see Miller 1995). More forceful critics of development have argued that the essence of developmental thinking is fundamentally rooted in a "*rational scientific epistemology*" which has conditioned the notion of what development is and how it should be achieved since the ascendance of European modernity from the sixteenth century onwards (Hobart 1993: 5). Nevertheless despite its current hegemony, European modernity is one amongst many and will not necessarily remain dominant in the future (Mouzelis 1998).

Tourism, according to MacCannell, "*today occupies the gap between primitive and modern, routinely placing modernized and primitive peoples in direct, face-to-face interaction...*" (1992: 17). It thus embodies the societal forces unleashed by the modern industrial epoch and has now become a substantial component of an emergent post-industrial era which visibly embraces the contradictions of modernity and



subsumes them beneath a surface of playfulness and transitory sensations (see Urry 1990; Britton 1991; MacCannell 1992). Tourism therefore both encapsulates the modernist belief in rational order as the organising principle of modern social life (Weber 1978), in the structured and routine breaks between work and leisure (Graburn 1989), but conversely, contains within it forces of disruption that are set in motion once places, cultures and environments become incorporated into the ever widening circuits of a global touristic gaze (Urry 1990). As Lévi-Strauss (1955) explains in his classic text *Tristes Tropiques*, part travelogue part anthropological monograph, the act of discovery also constitutes one of destruction, a central theme which has preoccupied tourism scholars over the course of the past four decades, and one to which we need to turn our attention.

## 1.2 Tourism Development as Modernization

The following section will outline the principal tenets of the 'diffusionist paradigm' (Browett 1980), whose influence as others have shown (Oppermann 1993), has been significant amongst certain branches of tourism development 'theory'. Principally two main strands are examined; firstly, the legacy of modernization theory, the main aspects of which are briefly considered below, whereby tourism is conceptualised as a unilinear process of economic development which transforms [traditional] receiving societies into [modern] developed economies. Secondly, it reviews the contribution of *linear stage models*, which share many of the "domain assumptions" of the diffusionist paradigm (Browett 1980: 63), but which embrace spatial as well as temporal aspects of the tourism development process, as destination areas move through a series of discrete stages.

During the past four decades, much of the literature devoted to the analysis of tourism development has concentrated on macro-level accounts of the penetration of tourism into the less developed countries of the so-called 'Third World' (Nash 1981).<sup>1</sup> While a common experience of colonial exploitation often unites many of those countries considered to be 'less developed' or 'underdeveloped', particularly with regard to the structural orientation of their economies towards the export of primary commodities or agro-export, such rigid conceptual categories obscure the differentiated experiences of development and social transformation that underly surface regularities as well as the varied responses, resistance and adaptation to the hegemony of Western economic, political and cultural processes (Worsley 1990). Despite the manifold changes wrought by processes of de-industrialization in the West and processes of globalization, which have led to the reformulation of many unquestioned assumptions within anthropology and sociology (Friedman 1994), Sklair concedes that normative conceptualizations of development still "*provide a cognitive dynamic and moral passion*" for development thinking at a policy level and within international finance agencies (1994: xi). Although modernization has become largely discredited as an economic theory of development (Sillitoe 1998), many of its Eurocentric assumptions still underly development approaches which promote the unfettered penetration of market forces in an era of heightened globalization, within which tourism has become a prominent force (Mowforth and Munt 1998).



### *The World in 'Our' Image: the Legacy of Modernization Theories*

The country that is more developed industrially only shows to the less developed, the image of its own future. (Marx 1974: 19)

Contemporary diffusionist theories of development emerged during the first two decades of the post-war era, although as the quote above illustrates they are consistent with some of the principal tenets of the linear conceptions of societal development formulated in the nineteenth century. However, whereas the nineteenth century political economists were concerned with explaining European industrial development, the 1960s saw the emergence of modernization theories whose focus shifted towards the newly independent states of the 'Third World'. Also significant is the fact that this particular worldview rose to prominence in the context of rising US hegemony and the emergence of the 'Third World' as a distinct economic and political entity. Two fundamental presuppositions are embedded within modernization theory which is also apparent in the vocabulary of tourism development literature; firstly, an emphasis on the centrality of attitudes and values in order for societies to be able to develop, and secondly, a linear conception of 'development' in terms of a transition from a traditional society based on customary values to a modern one, characterised by 'values' of progress, innovation and mass consumption culminating in material prosperity and stable democratic government. One of the principal exponents of modernization theory was Rostow ([1960] 1971), the Director of Policy and Planning in the US State Department during the Kennedy administration, who put forward the claim that the key to the development of a modern industrial society in the less developed countries, lay in the extension of the liberal capitalist model of development to these 'backward' societies so that they could replicate the growth trajectories of the industrialised capitalist countries through the exploitation of their comparative advantage. Inherent within this claim lay the assumption that all societies will eventually advance along the continuum from 'simple' to 'complex' ones through the gradual adoption of the Western mode of social, economic and political development:

Historically, modernization is the progress of change towards those types of social, economic and political systems that have developed in Western Europe and north America from the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries. (Eisenstadt 1966: 1)

Rostow's conception of change whole-heartedly invoked the universalist and evolutionary orientation of Parsonian functionalism,<sup>2</sup> which he articulated in a theory of development that took its cue from the conceptual distinction between traditional and modern societies, and the inherent superiority of the latter. According to this logic, the static and parochial nature of traditional society acts as an impediment to the development of a dynamic modern one, which can only be overcome through the diffusion of the rational values of scientific progress epitomised by the 'bourgeois work ethic' characteristic of European industrial society, as expounded in the works of Max Weber and Adam Smith (Girling 1987: 70-73). Central to Rostow's model is the conceptualisation of an inevitable transformation which moves 'backward' traditional societies from subsistence agriculture to modern cash economies based on an increasing rate of "productive investment" and the development of industrial manufacturing, combined with the requisite social, political, legal and cultural institutional frameworks to fuel and regulate this growth. He foresaw this transformation occurring in a linear sequence of development stages, as follows: "traditional"; "pre-conditions for take-off"; "take-off"; "drive to maturity"; "age of high mass



consumption” (Rostow 1971). Thus according to Rostow’s worldview, ‘development’ denotes both progress and the quintessential form of Western society, one which all societies should aspire to achieve:

There may not be much civilization left to save unless we of the democratic north face and deal with the challenge implicit in the stages-of-growth, as they now stand in the world, at the full stretch of our moral commitment, our energy, and our resources. (Rostow 1971:167)

The conflation of the concept of modernization with that of development thereby assumes that the latter is the inevitable and irreversible outcome of contact with the forces of modernity emanating from the ‘civilized’ nations of the West (see Harrison 1991: 153-6).

### *Tourism as an Instrument of Economic Development*

During the 1950s and 1960s a general consensus emerged amongst Western governments, financial institutions and aid agencies that tourism could provide a valuable means of economic development for the so-called less developed countries (LDCs) (see OECD 1967; World Bank 1972).<sup>3</sup> The study of tourism was thus quite simply an examination of the trade-off between costs and benefits (Diamond 1977). Moreover this tradeoff has often been conceived of in terms of the degree to which ‘traditional’ cultures could be sacrificed for the sake of economic advancement (Economist 1989). This climate of optimism was reflected in the dominance of studies which examined tourism’s economic impact upon destination areas, which for the most part came down in favour of tourism. The promise of income and employment generation through the adoption of tourism was articulated in the Checchi report which urged nations in the Pacific and the Far East to embrace international tourism as a vehicle of economic development (Wood 1984):

The economic gap between rich and poor has widened over the past ten years. But to create new industries and to transform rural life in Asian, African and Latin American countries is a gigantic task. The relevance of tourism to this situation is that income from international tourism can bring the foreign exchange essential for major investment. (Peters 1969: 10)

Their principal argument consists of the notion that tourism can contribute to national and regional development through the diffusion or spread of development impulses from more developed core nations/regions to economically underdeveloped regions peripheral to the centres of accumulation (Christaller 1963; Kassé 1973).<sup>4</sup> The conception of development as *growth* was articulated in narrow economic terms as an increase in material prosperity (foreign exchange and employment) measured according to changes in the rate of economic growth and per capita income. The enthusiasm for economic impact studies can also be interpreted in terms of the degree to which they serve political ends justifying the support of tourism development (Pattullo 1996), a phenomenon which has been particularly prevalent in the ‘developing world’ for whom tourism often became emblematic of political virility and economic modernity, as it did in the Philippines under President Marcos (Richter 1989). However Lanfant identified a contradiction in the normative approach which defined Western tourism policy towards the Third World:

...an intensive propaganda campaign was directed at the less developed countries (LDCs), which were enjoined to place the tourist sector high on the list of priorities for their economies, to open their frontiers to tourists, to welcome foreign capital for investment in the tourist domain and to concede tax advantages and guarantees to it. (1980: 15)



What is significant is the implicit ethnocentrism whereby it is assumed that it is both the responsibility and the right of the Western powers to decide the development fate of the rest of the world and the means by which to alleviate the perceived problem which is defined according to the values and ideological presuppositions of the dominant powers (Hobart 1993: 2). It is axiomatic that there exists a need to transform non-Western societies in order to emancipate them from backwardness, and that this task shall fall to the Western powers who are in a 'qualified' position to define the development priorities of 'Third World' countries (Mehmet 1995: 84-6). In the same theoretical vein are those studies derived from the 'growth-pole' theories and which apply a diffusionist model to the regional level of analysis (e.g. Alonso 1968). Browett, paraphrasing MGee (1974), demonstrates the relevance of the concept to tourism:

development is set in motion through the penetration of *culturally rich* but *economically bereft* and previously isolated, backward, archaic and traditional less developed areas by elements of modernization and change which emanate from the more developed areas. (1980: 65) [emphasis added]

Often the justification for Western-backed development, hinged on the assertion that many less developed countries suffer a weak resource base which hinders their development (Dieke 1989: 7), especially small island micro-states (Wilkinson 1989). However this conception of development conceals the fact that the industrialised states of the West secured their own advancement at the expense of many underdeveloped states, as a result of securing favourable terms of trade for the exploitation of their abundant mineral wealth and natural resources (Mehmet 1995). Furthermore they stressed that tourism would provide the means to diversify their economy away from reliance on the extraction and export of primary commodities and thus lead to autonomous economic development, ignoring the irony that it was the founders of these international financial agencies who as colonial powers initially laid the structural foundations of their mono-crop economies, often referred to as 'plantation economies' (Beckford 1972; Mandle 1972).

In 1963 the United Nations further endorsed the view that tourism could make a vital contribution to the economic development of the 'Third World', underpinned by the assumption that the wealthy capitalist countries would offer technological, financial and managerial 'assistance' to the LDCs in order to facilitate the development of tourism thereby setting them on the path to 'development' (Lanfant and Graburn 1994: 95). The dominant ideology of modernization was also reflected in a pioneering academic paper at the time, in which Krapf (1961) explicitly wedded a prescriptive analysis of tourism development to Rostow's linear stage theory of economic development:

on constatera que le tableau de la croissance économique, brossé par Rostow, pourra également s'appliquer à l'évolution du tourisme. (Krapf 1961: 85)<sup>5</sup>

Equating the less developed countries with the "traditional" and "pre-take-off" stages outlined by Rostow, Krapf's outlook defines the normative approach to tourism development during this epoch, was unambiguous in his assertion that tourism would provide the necessary requirements to stimulate economic growth in these areas as a result of the favourable "*terms of tourism trade*", conceived of in terms of the abundance of cheap wage labour and the low price of food (1961: 87). In particular he points to the 'natural' comparative advantage of less developed countries whose natural beauty and favourable



climates represent abundant resources which could be exploited for the development of tourism, a view also shared by Bond and Ladman:

many underdeveloped countries have a comparative advantage in tourism. The ingredients for the 'tourism package' are variable but include an appropriate climate and service outlets. Many of these countries are located in appealing climates, and because of redundant labour supplies services are inexpensive. (1980: 232)

Of particular note is the reference to “*redundant labour*” which implicitly suggests that unless labour is ‘usefully’ employed in the modern capitalist sector of an economy it serves no ‘productive’ purpose, as conceived in a neo-classical economic sense. Krapf cites the example of Spain, as evidence of tourism’s ability to generate valuable foreign exchange in export-dependent economies. It is this factor above all which links Spain, for whom tourism’s contribution to the balance of payments is *essential* for economic survival, to the less developed countries during this period (1961: 87). Like Rostow he emphasises the role of aid in order to stimulate expansion of the ‘leading’ or ‘modern’ sector which act as the engine of economic growth (1961: 85-86). Bond and Ladman's definition of tourism as an “*export product*” also employs Rostowian concepts to the consideration of economic development in a clear exposition of the tourism advocacy platform:

It is widely recognized that the key to modernization of today's less developed countries is their internal transformation from preponderantly traditional agricultural economies to industrial economies. (1980: 231).

Significantly they distinguish between the 'modern' and the 'foreign' sectors in addition to the 'traditional'. Tourism operates in the foreign sector and through the exploitation of low-cost labour from the 'traditional' sector acts as a catalyst for capital formation in the modern sector. This analysis mirrors that of the ‘two-sector’ model elaborated by Lewis (1954), whereby the expansion of output in the ‘modern’ sector of the economy stimulates the absorption of ‘unproductive’ labour from the subsistence sector. Using a similar logic, Peil (1977) argues that the tourism sector would stimulate the uptake of wage-labour in Gambia and thereby facilitate the rotation of workers between the agricultural sector in the wet season and the tourism sector in the dry season (cited in Nash 1996: 20). This optimistic view of the capacity of tourism to stimulate ‘development’ is however disputed by Harrell-Bond (1978), and Farver (1984) who contests the notion that low-paid, unskilled employment, tourism’s principal ‘benefit’ for Gambians, constitutes ‘development’.

Indeed the thinking behind the growth-oriented platitudes related to tourism in the 1960s can be seen as the precursor to the neo-classical view of economic development prominent in the 1980s, where:

rapid gains in overall and per capita GNP would either ‘trickle down’ to the masses in the form of jobs and other economic opportunities or create the necessary conditions for the wider distribution of the economic and social benefits of growth. (Todaro 1989: 87)

Scholars and policy-makers alike, thus believe that tourism has the capacity to stimulate development in peripheral regions through its “*potential multiplier effects on the local economy*” (Oppermann 1993: 538), and thus lead to the reduction of regional development disparities. This view is unequivocally supported by Kahn:



tourism is an extraordinarily useful way to spread economic benefits and further the trickle down to the bottom levels, to the start the growth process in many parts of the world. (1980: 12)

The diffusionist faith in tourism as a catalyst for development is reflected in the numerous empirical studies which have employed *multiplier analyses* at national and regional levels in order to quantify the degree of tourism's economic impact on a particular destination region (see Archer 1972; 1977; Cleverdon 1979: 33-36; Fletcher 1989).<sup>6</sup> The extent to which tourism is able to contribute to local employment and prosperity is dependent upon the intensity of backward linkages to the suppliers across different sectors of the local economy (agriculture, fishing, artisans, construction) (Archer 1989: 130). In this respect Bond and Ladman (1980) suggest that tourism could generate strong linkages predominantly because it is a labour-intensive activity and as such does not compete with other sectors for scarce capital. The figures for the tourism receipts in a tourist economy are then balanced against 'leakages' which refer to the proportion of tourist expenditure which leaves the economy in the form of food and equipment imports (Bryden 1973). For example, in a study carried out by Fletcher in Fiji and the Bahamas, these island destinations are shown to have relatively similar income multipliers, 0.72 and 0.79 respectively (1989: 527).<sup>7</sup> However these figures tell us little about the underlying configurations of ownership and power structures which mediate access to wealth, resources and entrepreneurial opportunities in tourism.

From the evidence discussed above it is clear that the tourism advocacy platform draws its reasoning directly from both the classical political economy of Adam Smith and David Ricardo and more contemporary diffusionist theories, namely, modernization theory and neo-classical economics. Their central presuppositions revolve around the opposition between 'traditional' and 'modern' sectors of the economy, and more recently, the belief in free trade as the engine of economic development (see Mehmet 1995: 31-34; 40-50; 81-86). In an article generally favourable towards tourism, *The Economist* suggests that the destruction of local culture merely constitutes the inevitable "*growing pains of any economy in transformation*", and that "*like all change, tourism exacts a price*" (1989: 22). This argument displays all the ethnocentric bias familiar to modernization theory, which assumes that the concept of 'development' is value-free and universally shared. The next section will examine these presuppositions in light of attempts by tourism scholars to devise development stage models applicable to destination area transformation.

### *Models of Tourism Development*

The theoretical underpinnings of modernization theory have not been applied to models of tourist area transformation in an explicit manner, although Haywood argues that, "*the tourist area life-cycle serves as a descriptive model of the stages of market acceptance, and represents the 'supply' view of the diffusion model*" (1986: 154). Hence, they constitute another component of tourist development thinking which is rooted in the same 'objectivist' and 'value-free' tradition of positivistic social science. These models have provided the basis for a number of generalisations regarding the dynamics of tourism development



across a number of different resort contexts, which to some extent has contributed to the absence of rigorous theoretical work in the sociology of tourism development:

The tendency of sociologists (and tourism research as a whole) towards generality is also reflected in their effort to evolve a general model for the development of tourism in a destination area and for the concomitant change in tourist-host relationships. (Cohen 1979a: 23)

In an early attempt to elaborate a general model of tourism development, Noronha (1979) suggests that tourism develops in a sequence of three stages; *discovery*, *local response and initiative* and *institutionalisation*. According to this model during the initial stages of tourism development in any region there is a spontaneous response by locals who proceed to supply basic goods and services to visitors. As the newly discovered destination begins to develop the earlier initiatives by locals begin to be progressively eclipsed by outsiders who eventually monopolise control by the time the 'institutionalisation' stage is reached, which is also characterised by the decision of national governments to intervene in tourism development (Noronha 1979: 9-10). Arguably, by far the most influential stage model is the resort life-cycle, devised by Butler (1980) who based it on the product life-cycle, a concept drawn from marketing. Butler's model follows a similar logic to that of Noronha (1979) but also drew on Christaller's (1963), spatial analysis of tourist diffusion in which it is made explicit that "*types of tourists change with the tourist areas*" (1980: 6). Butler's model identifies six stages of development in the hypothetical evolution of a tourist area; "exploration", "involvement", "development", "consolidation", "stagnation" and "decline", through which resorts (conceived in their broadest sense) will progress. The model posits an inevitable linear progress towards decline, albeit with the prospect of "rejuvenation" for those destinations which are able to re-invent themselves with for example the addition of a man-made attraction, as occurred in the case of Atlantic City (Butler 1980: 9).

Like Noronha (1979), Butler concludes that as a particular destination area moves through the different stages its tourist infrastructure becomes progressively controlled by non-local organizations. Keller (1984) devised a model which is almost indistinguishable from Butler's, but is more explicit with respect to the progressive loss of control over local tourism resources as a 'resort' (scale/type not specified) evolves through the stages of development from 'local' to 'national', 'regional' and finally, 'international' control. Similarly, he builds on the linear logic of Doxey's (1975) "irridex"<sup>8</sup> which posits a determinate link between increased levels of development and an increase in local opposition to tourism amongst permanent residents. Despite citing an exception to the sequence of stages (*e.g.* Cancun, Mexico) and although he presents the model as a generalization with a view to future empirical substantiation through the application of *quantifiable* data, the compelling logic of his conclusions are clear:

While other writers such as Cohen, have warned against the problems of unilinear models of social change, there seems to be overwhelming evidence that the general pattern of tourist area evolution is consistent. The rates of growth and change may vary widely, but the final result will be the same in almost all cases. (Butler 1980: 6)

The evolution of tourism through a linear sequence of stages is also reflected in conceptual models of tourist type elaborated by Cohen (1972), Plog (1973), Thurot (1973) and Smith ([1978]1989). Further to this, Keller's (1984) graphic illustration of these models indicates the degree to which these typologies



and models of different aspects of tourism share a common conceptual outlook. In each case the independent variable, in this case, the changing nature of 'tourist type', is determined by the gradual increase in the scale of resorts and volume of tourists.

A number of criticisms of the applicability of the tourist-area life cycle have been raised by several authors including Pearce *et al.* (1996:16-17) who question the contention that destination areas develop according to a pre-ordained sequence of stages, the demarcation of which are at best vague. Haywood (1986) has also questioned the validity of the criteria by which a particular stage can be identified, as well as the vagueness of the time scale and the specific nature of tourism itself. In light of these shortcomings there have been attempts to test the validity of the model in the context of specific resort areas at different levels of abstraction. For example, Hovinen's (1981) study of tourism in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, challenges the overall shape of the life-cycle, due to the effect of a price rise in petrol which stemmed the flow of tourists for a period. In an attempt to give the life cycle greater analytical validity, Ioannides (1992) argues that the interaction between internal and external actors, as well as the role of the state, need to be examined. Although he accepts the overall normative assumptions of the life cycle, in a study of tourism development in Cyprus he demonstrates how the role of government has been active in shaping the tourism infrastructure in Cyprus, a factor not considered in any detail by Butler (1980). Getz (1992) however disputes the relevance of the life cycle for planning purposes. A survey of experts regarding the state of tourism development in Niagara Falls, revealed that opinion is immensely varied. Thus he concludes that many of the stages, and in particular 'maturity', are "*collinear and perpetual*" and so require constant policy efforts to ameliorate declining competitiveness (1992: 767).

Young (1983) bases his six stages of resort development in the 'touristization' of a 'traditional' fishing/farming village in Malta on the resort life cycle, whose model Barke and France (1992) then adopt in a similar analysis of the evolution of tourism in Torremolinos. Although Barke and France (1992) highlight some destination specific contrasts with the model developed by Young, in both cases the empirical data is selected in order to suit the linear stages of tourist development. Moreover a similar range of assumptions are made regarding the changes in the nature of tourists and the local attitudes towards them. A more sophisticated attempt to transcend some of the shortcomings of the tourist area life-cycle is demonstrated by Haywood (1986) who questions its rigidity and elaborates on six further variables with a view to making it operational for development planners. Most notably he questions the 'unit of analysis' with regard to the need to delineate more clearly the scale and type of resort based on the purpose of the specific investigation (1986: 155-6). Moreover he also questions the ability to observe the shift from one stage to another based purely on the number of tourists (1986: 158). Despite challenging the propensity of the life cycle to be a self-fulfilling prophecy, Haywood nevertheless retains a normative outlook and a faith in technical variables at the expense of theoretical development regarding the social determinants of transformation.



Geographical studies of resort development have tended to concentrate on urban morphology linked to changes in the pattern of land-use and accommodation infrastructure (Lavery 1974; Pigram 1977). Barrett (1958) in an early study of beach resort development in England and Wales, devised a model which depicted a concentric pattern of accommodation infrastructure radiating out with decreasing intensity from a central core of services on a beach-front strip (cited in Smith 1991: 190). A concentric model is also favoured by Gormsen (1981), although it is conceived at an international scale. In his model, the resorts of northern Europe constitute the “*first periphery*” from which six subsequent phases of tourist development became dispersed across the world between 1800 and 1980. Miossec’s (1976) well-known model illustrates four phases of development in the evolution of an increasingly dispersed hierarchy of resorts characterised by increasing functional specialization and variation in the nature of impacts on the region. The development impulse begins with the establishment of a ‘pioneer resort’ which then multiplies to create a network of resort hubs connected by a web of transport infrastructure, until the area becomes saturated (1976: 60). Further studies have also examined resort development from a similar perspective, using other criteria such as the relationship between changing patterns of land-use and the development of commercial touristic infrastructure (Stansfield and Rickart 1970; Morris and Dickinson 1987; Barke and France 1992).

Smith (1991) is critical of the static structure of most morphological studies as well as the broad nature of the life cycle which, he argues, does not specify the nature of the resort type. In contrast he elaborates a comprehensive ‘beach resort model’ (BRM) which highlights common patterns of morphology and resort aspects for beach resorts which can be generalized across a wide range of cases. Lewis (1998) proposes a model of the tourism development process specifically for rural areas, based on empirical research in four different rural communities. In particular he focuses on the manner in which tourism evolves at the beginning of the process, a factor omitted from most other models according to him. Although he emphasises certain specific contrasts with Butler’s life cycle, in particular the fact that tourism resources have remained in the hands of the ‘local community’ (whose substance is not theorized), there is little significant deviation from the descriptive methodology and all-embracing linear approach characteristic of development stage models in general.

Oppermann (1993) has attempted to elaborate a more sophisticated model of ‘tourist space’ in developing countries by refining some of the variables of these earlier studies. In particular, he situates his model in a hypothetical non-island destination into which he then incorporates the formal/informal sector concept (see Chapter Three: *Tourism and Economic Dualism*). This is done in order to distinguish between what he refers to as an upper (formal) and lower (informal) circuit of tourist sector activity which he argues are manifest in contrasting patterns of spatial diffusion (1993: 545). He later addresses this model to the analysis of tourist flows in Malaysia, and with the help of survey data demonstrates a similar contrast in spatial behaviour (1998). Thus he concludes, the territorial distribution of the lower circuit of tourist supply is much wider than that of the upper circuit, a pattern reflected also in the dispersion of tourist flows. Oppermann (1993) has rightly criticized diffusionist models for ignoring the existing socio-economic arrangements in areas where tourism development takes place. However the model of tourism



space development he posits as an alternative, fails to transcend the theoretical weaknesses of the former. He thus ignores the long-term historical and societal context of development which conditions 'observable' processes of physical transformation in tourist resort areas.

## 1.2 *"All That is Solid Melts into Air": The Impact of Tourism on 'Host' Societies*

One of the most significant contributions made by anthropology and sociology to the study of tourism, has been to investigate the impact of tourism on host societies (Cohen 1984). Much of the early literature reflects a more general concern amongst Western academics for what are deemed to be the destructive effects of industrial society on the 'weaker' more 'authentic' cultures of the 'Third World'. Indeed these works are characterised by description and moral judgements rather than analytical explorations of tourism and social change (Nash 1996: 15). Within this body of literature there is however an implicit conception that tourism constitutes an external force imposed upon a bounded social, cultural and geographical 'community', a worldview which can be traced back to the sociology of Tönnies and Durkheim and the distinction between societies characterised by 'mechanical' (traditional) and 'organic' (modern) solidarities.<sup>9</sup>

Although by the mid-1960s particularist community studies were in the process of being discarded in anthropology (see Chapter Four: *The Problematization of 'Place'*), these notions were still prevalent in tourism impact studies, and to a certain extent have not been entirely discarded (Wood 1997). The most common approach was to describe a set of observed changes in some aspect of the host culture directly attributable to the presence of tourism (Nash 1981: 466), articulated within normative assumptions regarding their 'progress' or 'destruction' (Wood 1993). Furthermore not only do tourism impact studies contain the intrinsic assumption that the value of positive and negative is self-evident, they presuppose shared notions of value across a multiplicity of actors thus reinforcing the dominance of a Eurocentric, scientific epistemology which defines the criteria upon which our notions of 'good' / 'bad' development, and what is / is not of cultural value, are premised.

Jafari (1990) has termed these perspectives, the tourism 'advocacy' and tourism 'cautionary' platforms respectively. The latter perspective, particularly prominent during the 1970s, was articulated in a number of case studies of tourism's impact on the societies and cultures of the less developed world (e.g. Cleverdon 1979) and in peripheral regions closer to the heart of the industrialized West (e.g. Greenwood 1976; Boissevain and Serracino-Inglott 1979). For the most part these scholars came to the conclusion that the expansion of tourism was largely responsible for the demise of social cohesion and cultural traditions present in these societies prior to the arrival of tourism (Smith 1978). Within the large volume of published work in this area (see Smith [1978] 1989; de Kadt 1979; Cleverdon 1979; Cohen 1984; Crick 1989; Nash 1996) there has also been an ongoing debate concerning the degree to which tourism can be singled out as the principal cause of social change in destination societies (Nash 1996:



25). Whilst Nash (1996) and others (*e.g.* Schürman 1981; Nuñez 1989) are sceptical with regard to tourism's sole culpability, except in regions with few other inputs 'of consequence', Varma (1980) is more adamant that tourism is a major force through which the ideas and values of modernity are transmitted to modernizing nations in the less developed world.

Whether advocating tourism as a vehicle of development (Bond and Ladman 1980; Krapf 1961) or lamenting the destruction of 'traditional cultures' by the penetration of tourism (Forster 1964; Turner and Ash 1975; Bugnicourt 1977), impact studies are rooted in a belief in the absolute opposition between 'tradition' and 'modernity' (Wood 1993). According to Hiller tourism expresses the values and needs of industrial society; it acts both as an escape valve for the alienated workers of industrial society and is itself an apparatus of industry (1976: 108). Moreover the consequences of tourism, by turning 'smiling natives' into packaged commodities (Hiller 1976: 107), compares with the classic critique of industrialization in the nineteenth century, articulated by Marx and Engels in this well-known passage from the *Communist Manifesto*:

All fixed, fast-frozen relations, with their train of ancient and venerable prejudices and opinions, are swept away, all new-formed ones become antiquated and ossify. All that is solid melts into air, all that is holy is profaned. (Marx and Engels 1985: 83)

It is the advent of the monetary economy that Marx singles out as the motor force of capitalism and which, "*dissolves the bonds and relations that make up 'traditional' communities*" (Harvey 1990: 100). In this respect early scholars of tourism's impact emphasised 'host cultures' as vestiges of a pre-industrial simplicity in danger of being destroyed as a result of their increasing exposure to the global expansion of international tourism. The impact of tourism has thus been likened to "*a ballistic vision, which amounts to perceiving the host society as a target hit by a missile, like an inert object, passively subjected to exogenous factors of change*" (Picard 1995: 46), and as such reinforces the notion of 'host' communities as passive victims of tourism:

the focus is on the community and community members and on how they cope, or fail to cope, with agencies and forces over which they exercise little control, but which may be tolerated inasmuch as they yield some measure of economic benefit. (Pi-Sunyer 1989: 187)

Passivity is thus an integral element in the conception of host communities, one which according to Black (1996: 116) has reduced them to, "*blank screens upon which to project ideas about a 'lost past'*". Bell (1994) argues that there is a fascination with a particular conception of the *primitive*, the *exotic*, or rather, the 'Other', deeply embedded within the European mindset. This urge has underpinned the desire by so-called 'civilized' peoples to travel to faraway exotic places, in order to witness 'primitive peoples' living in a place 'untouched by Western ways' (Bruner 1991: 243). Indeed it has been noted by several authors, how images of paradise and exotic natives have fuelled the Western imagination with respect to the South Pacific since the 18th century (Cohen 1982a; MacNaught 1982; Douglas 1996). A similar theme of nostalgia, what Williams has referred to as "*the perpetual retrospect to an 'organic' or 'natural' society*" (1975: 121), pervades Boorstin's (1964) lament for the passing of the educated 'traveller', at a time when mass tourism and the 'hordes' associated with it, was in the ascendance. Western tourist discourse often appeals to deeper psychological 'needs' and often "*offers the tourist nothing less than a*



*total transformation of the self*" (Bruner 1991: 239). There are parallels here with earlier processes of exploration and colonisation whereby, "*European civilization first invented savagery and then set out to discover it - as a way of coming to understand itself*" (McAll 1990: 110). Whether in the form of tourists who come to witness 'primitive peoples' supposedly on the verge of irrevocable change (*e.g.* as depicted in Dennis O'Rourke's (1987) seminal documentary *Cannibal Tours*, which documents the experiences of a group of wealthy European and North American tourists in Papua New Guinea), or anthropologists attempting to document 'dying cultures', the trope of the "*vanishing primitive*" has been consistently evoked in one form or another in Western discourses on non-Western societies, and often legitimates intervention in one form or another (Clifford 1986b: 112).<sup>10</sup>

The frontier, or rather "*contact-zone*" (Pratt 1992), between primitive and modern society is a trope inherited from the Enlightenment worldview and later invoked in the journals of explorers and evolutionary theories of the nineteenth century, where 'savagery' came into contact with 'civilization' (Turner, 1958). It thus represents a European rhetorical construct which mystified and legitimated colonial expansion, and is one which has been reconstituted as a metaphor in the literature on tourism, envisaged as a monolithic force diffused outwards from the industrialized 'core' countries of the West, into the underdeveloped cultures of the 'periphery'. Turner and Ash (1975: 42) single out Rousseau's veneration for the noble savage as "*the foundation of bourgeois escapist philosophy*" and the precursor to the ethic of modern mass tourism (see also Barthes's analysis of the nineteenth century travel guide, the *Blue Guide* 1972: 74-77). In the pioneering critique of the culturally destructive effects of international tourism Turner and Ash (1975) invoke many of the ethnographic allegories presented above, a passage from which is worth quoting at length:

The act of *discovery* has led to the destruction of something *fragile* and *irreplaceable*. Peripheral cultures only retain their air of *antiquity* and their ethnic individuality by virtue of their *isolation* from the dominant and expanding cultures of the metropolises. This is especially true of the *remote* island cultures of Bali and the South Pacific. Once distance has been contracted by the building of an airport capable of taking jets, the *antique*, the ethnic and the *pristine* in their cultural and environmental aspects are immediately *threatened*... Although he may have been motivated by the desire to *escape* from his home society, the tourist soon imposes his [sic] values on the society he is visiting...The tourist's superior economic wealth rapidly *erodes* the sensuous and aesthetic wealth of cultures that have developed in *isolation* from the western world. (Turner and Ash 1975: 130) [emphasis added]

Their analysis invokes many of the allegories noted above (see italicized), in particular the themes of nostalgia, authenticity and a detachment from the pernicious lifestyles of modern, industrial society. From a conceptual point of view their analysis is situated within the "*guiding paradigm*" (Nash 1996: 25) of *acculturation*, defined as "*culture change that is initiated by the conjunction of two or more autonomous cultural systems*" (SSRC 1954: 974). Acculturation occurs by a process of borrowing between two cultures however most studies of tourism have concluded that the interaction between tourism and host societies has resulted in asymmetrical 'borrowing' of the cultural traits of the more powerful 'donor' culture by the weaker 'receptor' culture (Nuñez 1989: 266):

This exchange process, however, will not be even, because the stronger culture will dominate and begin to change the weaker culture into a mirror image. (Murphy 1985: 131)



Murphy thus goes on to argue for the protection of the “*more isolated and non-commercialized communities from abrupt changes in their lifestyles and values*” (1985:148). The identification of the ‘host’ culture as subordinate had already been described in one of the earliest studies of tourism and cultural change by Nuñez (1963), who in his study of a rural Mexican village, claims that tourism has had detrimental effects on, amongst other aspects of local society, traditional value systems. This process is similar to what many tourism scholars have described as the “*demonstration effect*”, whereby the native inhabitants of tourist destinations attempt to emulate the lifestyle, language and behaviour of tourists as a result of direct interaction with them (de Kadt 1979: 64-66). Examples of locals incorporating new patterns of behaviour as a result of exposure to tourists include changes in local consumption patterns in the Seychelles (Wilson 1979: 229-230), the expression of a more forthright sexuality by Maltese men towards female tourists in Malta (Boissevain 1979: 283), and the imitation of the dress sense, lifestyle and behaviour of Western visitors in Kenya (Bachmann 1988: 191). Conversely in other studies it has been found that tourism did not have a significant impact on local values, as for example in Cyprus where the tourist was not considered as an “*invader [and] there is no positive evidence at all that the ‘demonstration effect’ of tourism was detrimental*” (Andronicou 1979: 248).

More usually it is the cultures of the *less developed countries* that are seen as helpless to resist the penetration of tourism from the outside. However as Harrison (1995: 31) argues this is not only patronising but ignores contradictory evidence which suggests that these (Pacific Island) cultures may possess a cultural resilience which allows them to adapt to new influences and even reinforce their own internal structures. The over-dramatization of the social impacts of tourism (the ‘fatal impact thesis’) fails to take into account the overall context of social change, and furthermore may inhibit the implementation of mitigating policies (MacNaught 1982). In reference to the the dismay of Mexican intellectuals regarding the “*cocoacolaization* “ of native society (see also Shivji 1975: 10), and the tendency of anthropologists to blame tourism for such detrimental changes, Nuñez (1989) in a later publication, warns that no community has been immune to ‘outside’ contact. MacCannell is more forceful in his critique of the tendency to view societies as timeless constructs in mutual isolation from each other:

Even as they were put on a pedestal as ‘original’ and ‘authentic’, traditional communities were specifically denied all known paths to development, exploited for cheap labour and raw products, their local industries were destroyed and they were forced to consume Western things from pop culture to fast food. (1992: 290)

In a similar display of physical determinism, the impacts of tourism in geographically enclosed environments, particularly islands or what are known as “*small island micro-states*” (Wilkinson 1989), have been regarded by some as more accentuated by virtue of their insularity and thus according to this logic, cultural fragility (*e.g.* Rajotte 1980). Following the logic of this argument, Turner and Ash (1975) argue that Hawaii was already approaching a crisis stage in the 1970s as a result of being swamped by tourism (1975: 160-167). Hawaii has indeed become the benchmark of cultural destruction through tourism, here indicated by Urbanowicz’s concern for the potential dangers of mass tourism to the island of Tonga, which could he argues, “*‘Waikiki’ the beaches, and inundate local culture, as has already happened in certain parts of the Fiftieth State*” (1989: 116).



The conception of small peasant communities as closed and static entities, isolated from the modern world 'outside', has not been restricted to the analysis of non-European societies, but can also be found in the anthropological literature dedicated to the study of peasant societies in the Mediterranean (Gilmore 1982; Davis 1977). The tendency to tribalize these societies referred to by Gilmore (1982: 184) as the "*village fetish*", has often led to the idealisation of peasant societies and the misconception that they are characterised by a social egalitarianism and intense parochialism (see Chapter Four: *The Problematization of 'Place'*). In the context of the USA, Buck's (1978) analysis of tourism and boundary maintenance amongst the Amish in Pennsylvania promotes an image of a seamless community living in a socio-cultural bubble which is disconnected from wider American society. However, in contrast to the pessimistic view that 'host' societies are inevitably weaker than tourist cultures, he adopts a view more akin to Collins (1978) theory of 'cultural drift'. This view argues that hosts are able to temporarily adjust to the presence of tourists, as well as maintain a 'cultural distance' from them. By doing so they are able to ensure the continued 'preservation' of their cultural traditions. Nevertheless both points of view are emblematic of the approach to the conceptualisation of community referred to by Wilson as an "*ethnographic time-trap*" (1993), in which 'traditional' and 'modern' cultures are seen as uniform entities in mutual separation from each other.

In a similar fashion Greenwood's (1976) account of the onset of tourism in Fuenterrabia, in the Basque Country, reflects the dominant assumption that tradition and modernity are incompatible. In this case he argues that the arrival of tourism led to increasing "*social differentiation*", and a decline in 'traditional' ties of mutual cooperation and solidarity (1976: 135). Greenwood presents an account of a peasant community whose prior state of relative stability and equilibrium is threatened by the de-stabilising forces of tourism which has undermined older ties of relations of reciprocity, encouraging more intense competition in its place (1976: 135). Furthermore he depicts a gradual shift in control outwards from the village, into the hands of 'outside investors', in a linear manner later formalised into models of tourism development discussed earlier. The essentialist conception of an amorphous host society threatened by the *penetration* of tourism acting as an external agent of social change has also been reinforced by the use of 'prostitution' as a metaphor to highlight tourism's negative effects on host societies. More explicitly Black Power leader Evan Hyde compared tourism to "*whorism*" in Belize (Erisman 1983: 339), a not uncommon metaphor attributed to tourism by its most vociferous critics (e.g. Srisang 1991).

Studies of the interaction between tourists and locals have often reflected an element of naive generosity towards the existing solidarity amongst community members. Hence some authors have concluded that tourism has led to the increasing atomization of the host society (e.g. Stott 1978), which is often manifest in increased competition and conflict amongst local people (Redclift 1973: 7). Jafari observes that tourism gave rise to "*its own brand of ethnicity*" (1984: 5), that is, the mutually exclusive categories of 'tourist' and 'resident' or rather 'host', affirmed in the title of the seminal volume of essays entitled, *Hosts and Guests* (Smith 1978; revised in 1989). Thus early studies of tourism's impact tended to focus solely on the interaction between these two groups entirely within the physical confines of the *destination* itself, envisaged as a culturally bounded unit of society, with little reference to the broader



social and political environment (e.g. Greenwood 1976). Indeed Redclift (1973) in his study of socio-economic change induced by tourism in a Spanish village in the Pyrenees, laments the demise of the "*corporate peasant community*" characterised by a high degree of internal cohesion, or what Bauman terms "*dense sociability*" (1990: 151). Although Redclift does recognise the existence of ties that bind peasant communities to "*outside interests*", he still couches his analysis of social transformation in a linear model of historical development which depicts socio-economic change as a process of linear transition from a "*corporate peasant community*" to a "*post-peasant society*" which eventually results in "*a weakening of ties to the community*" (1973: 11).

The commoditization of host cultures is another rich seam which has been debated at length in the literature. Opposition to the allegedly contrived nature of tourist attractions was forcibly expressed by Boorstin (1964) who claimed that tourist attractions consisted of nothing more than "*psuedo-events*" with little inward significance for the tourists (Cohen 1988: 33). MacCannell (1973, 1976) formulated a theoretically-grounded response to Boorstin's claim that cultural performances for tourists are devoid of any meaning beyond the strictly commercial. In contrast, he argues that modern tourists are in effect engaged in a modern secular pilgrimage *in search of* authenticity, embodied within the touristic sites and 'shrines' located beyond the confines of their own alienated social environments at home (Cohen 1988: 33-35). In the course of being revered by tourists, these sites and attractions become sacralized and incorporated into an itinerary of symbolically significant 'Centers'. However, as MacCannell concludes, the touristic quest for authenticity is also doomed to failure, since locals contrive to create contrived "*tourist spaces*" in which authenticity is "*staged*" and "*spurious attractions are decorated and presented as if they were 'real'*" (Cohen 1988: 34). MacCannell's work laid the foundation for a number of ethnographic case studies which followed, including Greenwood's (1978) pessimistic analysis of the debasement of the *Alarde* festival in the village of Fuenterrabia. As a result of being promoted as a tourist spectacle, the *Alarde* festival which had become an important symbol of community solidarity, became stripped of all meaning and authenticity:

Making their culture a public performance took the municipal government a few minutes: with that act, a 350 year old ritual died. (Greenwood 1978: 137)

In addition Greenwood's conception of the 'host' culture reinforces a static and unchanging view of culture which revolves around an 'ethnically pure' Basque identity. Moreover, he adopts the ethnographic allegory discussed earlier whereby the anthropologist is witness to the dying moments of an authentic cultural performance which is on the verge of permanent disappearance upon contact with the modernising forces of tourism. However in a revised edition of his paper, Greenwood was to re-assess his earlier conclusions regarding the disintegration of culture in the Basque town of Fuenterrabia:

To speak unproblematically of "traditional" culture is not permissible. All cultures continually change. What is traditional in a culture is largely a matter of internal polemic as groups within a society struggle for hegemony. (1989: 183)

As a result he suggests that anthropologists enlarge their analyses to include a broader array of theoretical issues including, "*culture as representation, cultural diversity [...] and the links between political*



*economy and systems of meaning*" (1989: 185). To this effect, Wilson (1993) cites a field study in Fuenterrabia conducted over a decade later, which revealed that in fact the Alarde festival was still thriving and relevant to the cultural life of the village. Greenwood (1989) himself recognised that he had underestimated the influence of local power structures in the construction of the cultural performance for tourists, as well as the changing nature of its *symbolic* significance. The festival had thus become "*imbued with contemporary political significance*" and was now a vehicle for the expression of a regional Basque identity in response to the contemporary socio-political realities of the post-Franco Spanish state (1989: 181).

By the end of the 1970s certain scholars had already begun to highlight the conceptual deficiencies of what is referred to by Wood (1980) as "anthropological populism", in which internal social antagonisms do not appear to pre-date the arrival of tourism (cited in Allcock 1983: 353). Echoing this critique, Nash (1981) was critical of the "parochialism" of anthropologists who tended to exhibit a "knee-jerk" condemnation in reaction to the "imposition" of tourism on the distant societies and communities of the less developed world which they have been so fond of studying. Often the more pessimistic conclusions were implicit generalizations from extreme cases of the destructive effects of tourism, usually based on observations of mass tourism development in less developed societies where existing inequalities and undemocratic governments exacerbated the powerlessness of inhabitants to voice their concerns about the detrimental social costs of tourism, such as for example in Haiti and other Caribbean societies, cited in the work of Turner and Ash (1975) and Hiller (1976). Moreover, their condemnation of international tourism made little attempt to distinguish between different modes of tourism development, thus concluding that tourism offered little or no hope for the inhabitants of tourism destination areas who are endlessly condemned to become degraded, commoditized and exploited for and by tourism (see Chapter Two: *The Political Economy of Tourism Development*).

However, more ambiguous conclusions regarding the relationship of tourism to 'host' societies, often based upon detailed ethnographic casework, began to emerge by the end of the 1970s, including a more positive assessment of the impact of tourism in Malta (Boissevain 1977), and in Catalonia (Hermans 1981). It could be argued that this was due to their studies being located in relatively 'developed' societies. At the same time, less condemnatory positions were also reached by those who had studied non-industrialized societies including, McKean (1977), who claims that tourism had led to the regeneration of indigenous culture in Bali, and Cohen (1979c), whose study of tourism on hill-tribes in northern Thailand concludes that the extension of political control by lowland Thai elites is of greater concern to locals than tourism (see also Michaud 1995). In this respect de Kadt (1979) argues that the effects of tourism on receiving societies cannot be considered apart from the context of the indigenous social structure and wider political economy. Indeed the edited volume by de Kadt (1979) signalled a turning point, and heralded the arrival of a more critical body of research which is reflected in a shift to research which is both contextualised and better theorized.



Greenwood's re-assessment of the impact of tourism on the *Alarde* festival reflects a more critical current of thought which is concerned with the symbolic nature of culture and its constitution *within* processes of commodification associated with tourism (e.g. Friedman 1990; Wood 1993; Selwyn 1996a; Picard and Wood 1997). Although Wood (1997: 3) concludes that so far tourism research has been slow to transcend simplistic questions of whether tourism is 'good' or 'bad', he does concede that a 'post-normative' trend is evident, which has rejected existing normative frameworks in favour of critical analyses of the manner in which 'tradition' and 'authenticity' are symbolically constituted in the context of the struggle between different social groups for representation, authentication and domination. Nevertheless a more sophisticated body of literature has arisen which is concerned less with examining tourism as an agent in the destruction of host societies, which, argues Lanfant, "*is a banal theme*" (1995: 5), but rather with the nature of different touristic processes as constitutive of the social reality they are part of, not separate from it.

## Conclusion

This chapter set out to examine a number of normative approaches to the study of tourism development, and in particular to demonstrate the principal presuppositions which underpin diffusionist approaches to the development of tourism and its effects on 'host' societies. It started with a review of specific discourses of tourism development which were firmly rooted in the tradition of modernization theory, and which prevailed until the turbulent macro-economic changes of the 1970s. Enthusiasm for tourism as a motor of economic advancement was a reflection of Western political and economic hegemony after the Second World War, and in particular the United States and the international financial agencies such as the IMF and World Bank, which enabled them to promote the economic development of 'underdeveloped' societies, as well as the necessary means by which to achieve this, in this case, through tourism. The view of tourism as a benevolent force of change, echoes Schumpeter's (1976) notion of 'creative destruction' whereby there is an inevitability as well as a desirable consequence within the outcome of contact between tourism and 'underdeveloped' societies.

Linear stage models of tourism development, framed within the earlier diffusionist tradition represented by modernization theory, were also reviewed. It was demonstrated that on the whole these constitute conceptualizations of tourism development which eschew critical analysis in favour of universalizing and generalized description. Development stage models are not without relevant insight into the broader patterns of destination area development, however the central assumption common to development stage models, whereby tourist destination development can be reduced to a preordained sequence of stages, reduces the study of tourism development to what Larrain terms, referring to modernization theory in general, "*the construction of abstract models of universal applicability*" (1989: 99). A number of weaknesses are contained within these works including an absence of theorization with respect to both the composition of social agents involved within touristic processes, and the structural and institutional circumstances surrounding them. Linear stage models of tourism development thus simplify or omit



entirely the social determinants of transformation, describing experience rather than seeking to explain the context within which these processes emerge. Hence the correlation of 'impacts' with the expansion in scale and changing tourist types, makes little effort to understand this in context - it is by no means certain that progressively larger volumes of tourists will necessarily be less beneficial for a destination.

The final part of the chapter was devoted to a consideration of the earlier ethnographic tradition in the anthropology and sociology of tourism concerned with the documentation of tourism's impact on 'host' societies. Here too it has been argued that the legacy of modernization, and more particularly, structural-functionalist conceptualisations of the mutual exclusivity of 'traditional' and 'modern' societies has been influential. In a variety of particularist case studies and generalized critiques, the conceptualisation of tourism as an invading force has reduced 'host' societies to passive victims of the wider destructive forces of modern mass tourism. Nevertheless, brief reference has been made to a body of literature which has come to a more ambiguous set of conclusions with regard to tourism, and more specifically the emergence of a critical body of literature which has begun to theorize tourism as a series of processes embedded within social change, rather than as a unitary agent of change that assails 'host' societies from the outside. These and other more critical approaches will be discussed in more depth in Chapters Three and Four. Beforehand however it is important to review the principal tenets of what is more generally referred to as the political economy of tourism, which draws on neo-Marxist theories of dependency, in order to postulate a more critical view of tourism development.



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<sup>1</sup> The term 'Third World' was first coined by the French demographer, Alfred Sauvy in an article for *L'Observateur* in August 1952, entitled 'Trois Mondes, Une Planete', (see Worsley 1990: 83). Moreover the rather mechanistic distinction between 'developed' and 'underdeveloped' societies (or for that matter, North / South) is as much ideological as one of actual contrasts in economic structure which reflects an essentialism conditioned by the uneven development of the global capitalist system itself (Larain 1989; Bell 1994).

<sup>2</sup> Parsons (1951) outlined a series of four 'pattern variables' which formed the basis of his distinction between traditional and modern 'social systems'. He later adapted these into a more sophisticated theory of social change which was underpinned by the principles of organic evolution and Weber's notion of (instrumental) rationality (Parsons 1964). The Parsonian theory of social change asserts that change is dependent upon the existence of certain 'evolutionary universals' which shape the adaptive capacity of each society to its external environment and thus influence its ability to 'break out' of the "*primitive stage of societal evolution*" (Parsons 1964: 342). Social change occurs when certain social systems are subject to the diffusion and importation of new cultural values and factors, which leads to internal structural differentiation and functional adaptation. During its transition from a simple to a more complex social system, increasing social differentiation causes the society in question to institutionalise new normative expectations and create new institutions with which to maintain social order. Parson's ethnocentric evolutionary schema was to provide the substantive intellectual propellant to the advancement of the Western mode of societal development across the globe via the diffusion of bureaucratic/technological/managerial values underpinned by foreign capital.

<sup>3</sup> Between 1969 and 1979 the World Bank financed 24 tourism projects in 18 different countries (Lanfant and Graburn 1992: 96).

<sup>4</sup> See Browett (1980) for a more comprehensive discussion of the diffusionist paradigm in development theory.

<sup>5</sup> "one could also apply the theory of economic growth elaborated by Rostow to the development of tourism." [author's translation]

<sup>6</sup> The use of tourist multipliers to calculate the economic impact of tourism in destination areas has produced conflicting evidence. For example, the *Zinder Report*, an economic impact study carried out in the Caribbean in 1969 by consultants on behalf of USAID, was heavily criticised (see Bryden 1973) for confusing gross receipts with income received by residents (Lea 1988: 43).

<sup>7</sup> An increase in tourist expenditure of \$1.00 would generate a further 72 and 79 cents in the respective economies.

<sup>8</sup> Doxey (1975), cited by both Noronha (1979) and Butler (1980) elaborated the "irridex" as an indicator of changing resident attitudes towards tourism. He contends that they proceed in a sequence of four stages from 'euphoria' (at initial contact with tourists), to 'apathy' then to 'irritation' before displaying overt 'antagonism' towards visitor saturation (see Murphy 1985: 124).

<sup>9</sup> The French sociologist Emile Durkheim ([1902] 1964), developed a theory of society premised upon a distinction between two idealised forms of social cohesion, 'mechanical' to 'organic' solidarity. The former type of societies are characterised by parochial agrarian communities regulated by traditional beliefs and communal solidarity, whereas in the latter social relationships become more complex and differentiated a result of increasing population density and a more sophisticated division of labour. Weber (1978) outlined his interpretation of this conceptual dichotomy based on his distinction between different types of rationality which regulate social action in simple and complex societies. In his view industrial societies are underwritten by a distinct form of [economic] rationality, in contrast to the customary values and ascriptive ties which enforce social roles within traditional, small-scale societies. Implicit in their distinctions is the differentiation between simple and complex societies and the increasing individual autonomy and social complexity characteristic of the latter. Neither however suggested that there was an evolutionary or inevitable progression between the two forms of social reality, and in this respect Durkheim allowed for the existence of both within the same historical moment and Weber explicitly states that they are 'ideal types'. It was rather the Chicago school of sociologists, including Robert Park and Robert Redfield, who adapted Durkheim's dichotomy in order to illustrate an evolutionary continuum from 'folk' (rural) society to modern 'urban' society which are historically incompatible (Cohen 1992: 21-38). Nevertheless the conceptual distinction between two ideal societal types each with functionally uniform characteristics inevitably, "*underwrites a linear evolutionary conception of history*" (Hobart 1993: 6).

<sup>10</sup> Although the advocacy and cautionary platforms are ostensibly contrasting views of the value of tourism, both invoke a rhetoric of 'salvage' which reflects the nineteenth century contrast between the reverence of nature and/or 'primitive cultures', accompanied by the desire to protect it/them from the onslaught of industrial society, and the wish to 'civilize' remote and backward societies (see Short 1991). See also Clifford (1986b) on 'Ethnographic Allegory' and Williams (1975) for a perceptive analysis of the contrast between the country and the city as an allegory for primitive and civilized.



# CHAPTER TWO

## The Political Economy of Tourism Development

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### Introduction

The term ‘periphery’ has been applied across certain areas of the social sciences to illustrate asymmetrical power relations between dominant centres and subordinate peripheries. To a certain extent ‘peripheries’ are social constructions, as exemplified by the dominant worldview of the European colonial mindset which implicitly evoked the notion of a periphery that existed beyond the ‘frontier’ of Western civilization (Turner 1958). The narratives of colonialism which accompanied the attempt by European powers to impose their civilizations on non-Western peoples evoked images of a ‘savage’ and ‘primitive’ domain to be explored, conquered and ‘civilized’ (Pratt 1992; Bell 1994). Symbolic representations are nevertheless underscored by the uneven distribution of power. Thus since the rise of industrial societies in Europe, the encounter with the unknown has been at once a source of inspiration, witnessed for example by the reverence for ‘wilderness’ amongst the first colonists to arrive in East Africa, as well as a source of fear and derision, exemplified by the subjugation of existing indigenous populations situated in precisely these same ‘wilderness’ environments (Short 1991).

More specifically, the concept of centre-periphery relations has been applied in development studies, as a useful conceptual device around which notions of economic and political (and to a lesser extent, cultural) marginality and powerlessness articulate with varying degrees of spatial inequality. Thus Shields argues, “*geographic marginality...is a mark of being a social periphery*” (1992: 3). The concept of core-periphery has been widely applied in studies of uneven development between states, and is derived from the work of the neo-Marxist dependency theorists in the late 1960s and 1970s. Dependency theories challenged the assumption that societies could be examined in isolation from each other as bounded cultural systems. Rather, they argued that the growth of long-distance trade since the fifteenth century had begun to integrate far flung parts of the world into a globally-integrated economic system, in which the metropolitan core states (*centre*) became enriched at the expense of underdeveloped satellite regions in the *periphery*. Not only did ‘dependency theories’ shift the focus of interest from existing concerns with ‘development’ to underlying structural causes of ‘underdevelopment’, but more significantly dependency theories were postulated in direct contrast to the optimistic outlook put forward by modernization theories.

Tourism, as a distinct mode of capitalistic development, lends itself to the conceptual framework depicted by centre-periphery relations, by virtue of the systemic linkages which bind tourism generating countries and tourism receiving societies into a web of economic and social transactions which stretches across a wide geographical area. The political economy approach to tourism, as it has been termed by some (Lea 1988), thus proposes that tourism perpetuates exploitative economic relations between metropolitan generating countries and peripheral destination societies. Moreover, core-periphery relationships not only refer to the asymmetrical political-economic relationships between the core industrial or post-industrial



societies which generate a large proportion of the world's tourists and the peripheral tourist destination regions to which they travel. It is also a useful conceptual device which can illuminate the manner in which the 'periphery' is a cultural construct and an extension of the metropolitan imagination, as several of the contributions in Selwyn (1996a) amply demonstrate. Before considering the political economy approach to tourism development in more detail, it is useful to consider some of the main propositions of dependency theories in general, which have been invoked within studies of tourism development in peripheral regions.

## 2.1 Theories of Dependency

Although dependency theories cannot be viewed as a coherent or monolithic body of theory,<sup>1</sup> they share a common underlying concern which denies the artificial separation between traditional and modern societies postulated by modernization theory. The most widely cited exemplar of dependency 'theory' is the mechano-formalistic strand developed by scholars from the Monthly Review School, including Baran, Sweezy and Frank (and later Wallerstein) who drew their inspiration from the pioneering work of the Economic Commission on Latin America (ECLA) launched in 1948 (see Larrain 1989: 102-110). The essentially economic analyses of development problems in Latin America carried out by the ECLA contained elements of modernization theory (*e.g.* faith in the development potential of capitalism) but it did recognise the existence of inequalities between the centre and the periphery which in its view, had arisen as a result of the incomplete industrialization of Latin American states in the periphery.

The aim of dependency theorists was however more radical. They sought to develop an explanation for the root causes of underdevelopment in an holistic framework which highlighted the exploitative nature of exchange relations between powerful metropolitan states and their dependent satellites, in the global economy. In contrast to Rostow and other enthusiastic proponents of capitalism, in their view, capitalism did *not* act as a progressive force of development in the peripheral countries, but rather, furthered *dependence* on the core capitalist economies, leading to a perpetual state of underdevelopment in the periphery. It was stressed that 'backwardness' or rather 'underdevelopment' emerged as the result of capitalism, and thus was not the result of the persistence of pre-capitalist social structures (Baran 1957). They therefore took modernization theories to task for ignoring the historical process of global capitalist expansion whereby the metropolitan countries had incorporated large parts of the world into a global system of exploitation, connecting the zones of supply in the dependent satellites to the centres of production in the metropolitan core states, which enabled the centre to generate economic surpluses at the expense of development in the periphery.

André Gunder Frank, one of the key scholars of the Monthly Review School, drew global attention to the 'theory' of dependency beyond Latin America in the 1960s (Foster-Carter 1976; Munck 1985). Drawing on the theoretical legacy of Marxist political economy, he sought to uncover the historical



processes through which the emergence of a single world capitalist system had given rise to the structural inequality between the underdeveloped periphery and the developed centre:

contemporary underdevelopment is in large part the historical product of past and continuing economic and other relations between the satellite underdeveloped and the now developed metropolitan countries. Furthermore, these relations are an essential part of the structure and development of the capitalist system on a world scale as a whole. (1966: 28)

One of the central elements of his original thesis argues that the penetration of the capitalist mode of production is a universal process which embraces all societies disrupting and ultimately destroying all previous indigenous modes of economic production in even the most isolated areas in the periphery (Frank 1966: 28). The dominance of foreign capitalist interests prohibits an autonomous internal dynamic of capital accumulation and thereby sets in motion the domination of the peripheral economy by external interests, thus resulting in the “*development of underdevelopment*” (Frank 1966).

Refinements to Frank’s original thesis still retained a common reference to centre-periphery relations. Wallerstein (1974) shared Frank’s conception of the capitalist world economy, but instead extended the contradictions in the global economy to one between three structural zones; the core, the semi-periphery and the periphery (Larrain 1989: 122). Nevertheless, like Frank, Wallerstein envisaged the capitalist world system as one defined exclusively by the production of profit through the mechanisms of exchange on the world market, which inevitably leads to a transfer of surplus up the chain to the metropolitan centre, rather than one based on the development of productive forces in a system of surplus extraction (Palma 1995). Alternatively, other dependency writers have focused more explicitly on the terms of trade and ‘unequal exchange’, notably Emmanuel (1972) and Amin (1974), both of whom elaborated specifically on the *mechanisms* of surplus transfer which regulate capitalist exchange relations in the extraction of surplus from the periphery by the metropolitan centre. Their analyses highlighted the differential wage levels between the centre and periphery as the root cause of underdevelopment. Amin (1974) however disagrees with Frank’s assertion that the capitalist mode of production was dominant in the periphery, but nevertheless stressed that the direct transfer of surplus from the periphery to the centre is the fundamental cause of underdevelopment.

One of the most significant achievements of dependency theories was to expose the inherent inconsistency within modernization theories which equated ‘traditional society’ with ‘underdeveloped’, a logical inconsistency given that ‘traditional’ societies are pre-capitalist whereas an ‘underdeveloped’ society only exists in relation to the capitalist world system, to which moreover it owes its underdeveloped status (Larrain 1989: 40). The concept of underdevelopment, according to dependency theories, can thus only be understood in relation to the emergence of a world capitalist system which created the polarisation between centres of economic and political power and subordinate dependent satellites. There have been a number of critiques levelled at dependency theory, with regard to the totalizing and abstract treatment of centre-periphery relations (*e.g.* Cardoso 1977; Booth 1985). Wolf (1982: 23) argues that although Frank and Wallerstein never set out to investigate the varied reactions of micro-populations to the wider forces of capitalism, without deeper insight into the range and variety of



local responses, the concept of ‘periphery’ is in danger of being reduced to a generalized term of little analytical worth, such as ‘traditional’. These and other criticisms of the centre-periphery framework will be explored in more detail in the conclusion to this chapter and in both Chapter Three and Four. Firstly though, we must turn to an exploration of the influence of dependency theories on our understanding of the political economy of international tourism.

## 2.2 Tourism and Centre-Periphery Relations: A Form of *Neo-Colonialism* ?

It is typical for places of tourism to be on the periphery. (Christaller 1963: 98)

The concept of the ‘Pleasure Periphery’ was popularized within the literature on international tourism, by Turner and Ash, who conceived of the term in a geographic sense as, “*the tourist belt which surrounds the great industrialized zones of the world*” (1975: 11). The broad thrust of their argument claims that the evolution of international tourism is rooted in historical patterns of travel motivated by the pursuit of the ‘exotic’ and the desire to visit the relics of past civilisations. Thus in the modern industrial era, the ability of peoples from the metropolitan centres to visit “less dynamic” and “pre-industrial” societies has been underpinned by rising affluence and increased leisure time brought about by the uneven development of industrial capitalism. Significantly though, the ‘Pleasure Periphery’ is not a fixed geographic category, but rather changes according to the prevailing distribution of power between regions. Hence Turner and Ash (1975: 12) describe the emergence of a number of different ‘Pleasure Peripheries’ situated within two to four hours flight from the large metropolitan centres, although they concede that a uniform global pleasure periphery had started to emerge, embracing destinations as varied as Florida, the Caribbean, Pacific Islands, East Africa and the Mediterranean. In a later article, Turner (1976) singles out the Third World, in which a number of destinations had emerged in the former colonial domains of the industrialised capitalist countries, as a discrete category within the international division of leisure by virtue of tourism’s promised economic benefits.

Unsurprisingly the concept of centre-periphery relations in tourism development has been commonly applied to those destinations that have arisen in former colonial territories, where certain metropolitan powers have grafted a touristic infrastructure onto the structural linkages and infrastructural foundations which were put in place for the exploitation of raw materials and plantation agriculture during the colonial era (Davis 1978; Britton 1980). Burns and Holden (1995: 11) put forward the concept of “*meta-tourism*” in order to differentiate metropolitan-dominated tourism in ‘Third World’ countries from ‘mass tourism’, which they argue exists also between developed countries. The ‘theory’ of dependency was well received by certain scholars of tourism who argued that tourism perpetuated relationships of dependency on the metropolitan countries who subordinated the needs of destination economies in favour of their own economic interests, thus reinforcing the structure of a peripheral social formation dependent on capital, technology and of course tourists, from the metropolitan centre (Davis 1978: 305-306). Early



critiques of tourism development did not provide much detail with regard to the nature of 'underdevelopment' as such or even discuss theories of dependency at length. They tended to focus almost exclusively on the effects of tourism on unequal exchange by using detailed economic data to demonstrate the unequal economic benefits which arose from metropolitan dominated tourism development. The best known example is perhaps Bryden's (1973) widely-cited critique of the purported economic benefits of the Caribbean tourism industry, in which he concludes that the high degree of foreign ownership and the repatriation of profits severely diminishes the contribution of tourism to social and economic well-being. This pattern is replicated in a number of different developing countries where the import content of gross tourism earnings leads to leakages of foreign exchange back to the metropolitan countries. Figures vary widely according to the local circumstances of development however the dominance of foreign capital in peripheral destinations has resulted in leakages of up to 70% in Fiji (Britton 1987a: 116), 90% in Mauritius (Cleverdon 1979: 32), and more recently 90% in the Bahamas (Pattullo 1996: 38).

Lundgren (1972) was one of the first to set the study of tourism development in the context of dependency theory describing the relationship between the (developed) tourist generating countries and the (underdeveloped) peripheral destinations as one of a "*metropolitan hegemony par excellence*" (cited in Pearce, 1989: 93). Hills and Lundgren (1977) later elaborated a more sophisticated core-periphery model to illustrate the hierarchical relation of dependence between several peripheral Caribbean destinations and the metropolitan North American markets. Their argument posited an asymmetrical relationship between these two 'sub-systems', whereby the peripheral destinations are dependent upon the metropolitan centre for tourists, capital and technology. They thus describe the international tourist system as "*a metropolitan corporate multi-functional entity*" which operates in the interest of tourism's "*global metropolitan management*" (Hills and Lundgren 1977: 258). However it was the work of Britton (1980, 1982) which firmly anchored the study of tourism and centre-periphery relations in the context of neo-Marxist development theories, and began to conceptualise tourism in relation to the broader historical forces which have conditioned tourism development in 'Third World' countries. The structural inequalities between the metropolitan generating countries and dependent destinations is schematically depicted by Britton (1982), in a three-tiered enclave model of 'Third World' tourism which is intended to demonstrate the manner in which the organization of the industry is controlled by metropolitan tourism companies at the apex to which the majority of benefits from tourism flow.

At the heart of these analyses is the dissatisfaction with the diffusionist paradigm (see Chapter One: *Tourism Development as Modernization*), and the belief that tourism replicates the structures of imperialistic dominance through which metropolitan capitalist countries are able to perpetuate their position of superiority within the global political economy. This characteristically pessimistic view is echoed by Husbands who suggests that "*tourism is [being] used as a tool for the development of the periphery, but the entire organization and control of the industry reside in the core region*" (1981: 42). There are two inter-related aspects to this exercise of metropolitan dominance; firstly, the existence of superior levels of productivity in the metropolitan centres which sustains the affluence, time and



mobility of the metropolitan leisure classes and generates the impulse to travel, and secondly, the dominance of metropolitan capital in the formation and penetration of a specific model of tourism development in the periphery (Davis 1978: 308; Nash 1989: 39).

Thus the analogy of colonialism or imperialism lies at the heart of these structural perspectives which perceive tourism to be a form of “*leisure imperialism*” or rather, “*the hedonistic face of neo-colonialism*” (Crick 1989: 322), sustained by the desire of Western tourists to ‘escape’ the alienation of industrial work in the metropolitan centre (Hiller 1976). These scholars see little benefit of tourism for Third World countries in particular, for whom tourism represents a new form of economic domination which reduces its landscape, wildlife and inhabitants to a spectacle for tourist consumption, in designated “*reservations*” (Bugnicourt 1977: 2), or “*enclaves*” (Freitag 1994). In their view tourism continues and often extends the metropolitan domination of the peripheral states which was explicit during former periods of colonial rule. Although the peripheral states may be politically independent and have wrestled political and legal control over their respective territories from previous colonial rulers, their economies are structurally part of the metropolitan economies who continue to exercise *de facto* control over them as a result of the penetration of foreign capital in the tourism sector (Matthews 1978). In one of the most ardent critiques of tourism in a ‘Third World’ country (Tanzania), Mahiga argues;

Since the success of tourism depends primarily on our being accepted in the metropolitan countries, it is one of those appendage industries which give rise to a neocolonial relationship and cause underdevelopment. (1975: 48)

One of the principal mechanisms by which metropolitan capital established a foothold in the ‘periphery’ was through the rise of the capital-intensive export-oriented agricultural plantation at the end of the nineteenth century, which has been severely criticised elsewhere for contributing to underdevelopment in areas such as Latin America and the Caribbean (Beckford 1972; Galeano 1992). In their discussion of capitalist development in Papua New Guinea, Amarshi *et al.* describe the economics of the plantation system in terms which reflect the dependency worldview:

plantations have invariably been metropolitan-owned and have operated parasitically within colonial economies transferring their surplus to the metropole. (1989: 29)

It has been suggested that there are certain similarities between the structure of tourism development in peripheral economies and the plantation system of agriculture implanted by the colonial powers (Matthews 1978; Weaver 1988). Wolf (1982: 315) defines a plantation as a capital-intensive ‘enclave’ amidst other modes of production, which achieves economies of scale through the devotion of resources to the cultivation a single crop for export on the world market. Hence the similarities with “*the plantation tourism economy*”, are defined by Hall (1994b: 41):

- \* Tourism is structurally part of an overseas economy
- \* It is held together by law and order directed by the local elites
- \* There is little or no way to calculate the flow of values



The comparison of tourism with a plantation economy is supported by Weaver who argues that tourism, “*was readily incorporated into the existing core-periphery structure of the Caribbean, with its endemic plantation system*” (1988: 320). He emphasises the preponderance of foreign capital and expatriate management, the use of cheap unskilled local labour and an emphasis on external rather than internal needs, as the key elements of similarity between tourism and the plantation system. Thus a plantation tourism economy is characterised by both a structural and a spatial similarity to the existing plantation system, exemplified by Weaver’s model of a ‘plantation tourism landscape’ based on the Caribbean island of Antigua. The plantation analogy has also been usefully applied to analyses of the structures of tourism development in both Hawaii, where tourism is characterised as “*a new kind of sugar*” (Finney and Watson 1975; Kent 1975, 1983), in which only the key players have changed (Farrell 1982), and in Fiji where the location of tourism infrastructure was strongly influenced by the pattern of freehold land in which sugar and copra plantations had been situated (Britton 1980).

There is a common assertion amongst many studies of tourism and dependency that the penetration of foreign capital is largely facilitated by a subservient national bourgeoisies, or “*collaborative indigenous elites*” (Crick 1989: 323), often indistinguishable from metropolitan controlling interests (Weaver 1988: 329). This view asserts that control over tourism development in peripheral receiving societies is exercised almost entirely by metropolitan interests in the tourist-generating countries in the metropolitan core, with the cooperative support of local elites (Shivji 1975: 9; Britton 1982: 343-345). In an early analysis of the ‘evils’ of tourism, Frantz Fanon singled out the national bourgeoisies of the less developed countries as passive agents of metropolitan dominance in the emerging nations of the Third World:

In the colonial countries, the spirit of indulgence is dominant at the core of the bourgeoisie; and this is because the national bourgeoisie identifies itself with the Western bourgeoisie, from whom it has learnt its lessons...The national bourgeoisie will be greatly helped on its way towards decadence by the Western bourgeoisies, who come to it as tourists avid for the exotic, for big game hunting and for casinos. The national bourgeoisie organises centres of rest and relaxation and pleasure resorts to meet the wishes of the Western bourgeoisie. Such activity is given the name of tourism, and for the occasion will be built up as a national industry. (Fanon 1968: 153)

Fanon’s virulent critique of the national bourgeoisies in colonial countries, is thus a precursor to Frank’s theory of dependency and the concept of *comprador* elites (Sklair 1990: 117), who exacerbate the internal economic distortions in less developed countries rather than contribute to autonomous economic development (Larrain 1989: 124). Wood’s (1979) study of tourism and underdevelopment in Southeast Asia would appear to support this analysis. He argues that the tourism industry tends to distort local development structures as a result of its emphasis on luxury hotel investment, and in so doing exacerbates internal class inequalities and reinforces the conservatism of ruling political cliques (Wood 1979: 282-283). A relatively unique approach to the examination of tourism and dependency is exemplified by Francisco (1983) who attempts to test the correlation between Caribbean countries which are economically-dependent upon tourism (from the USA), and their degree of political compliance with the United States. His conclusion reveals that there is in fact little correlation between the two, however it is perhaps also unsurprising given his narrow empirical approach to the problem which is based on the



correlation between US votes and those of Latin American and Caribbean states in the UN General Assembly.

The analysis of the pervasive influence of tourism on Third World societies has also been extended to include its effects on the cultivation of a new cultural consciousness amongst local peoples, subordinating them into a passive acceptance of commodification and servility (Hiller 1976), thus amounting to a form of “*cultural imperialism*” (Shivji 1975: ix). Husbands refers to this as the “*welcoming society*”, that is, a form of social and political dominance rooted in the structures of colonial society (1983). Erisman (1983), in a review of four theoretical perspectives (Trickle Down; Commoditization; Mass Seduction and Black Servility) explores the interface between economic and cultural dependency. Although he finds some validity in these approaches, he is generally critical of their inability to recognise the resistance of Caribbean populations to processes of ‘cultural dependency’, and thus argues that further empirical research is required. However Palmer (1994) examines the relationship between colonialism and tourism in the Bahamas from a less deterministic perspective which is cognisant of the historical class and ethnic dimensions of a dependent island economy. While the economic, political and legal infrastructure of the islands is a direct legacy of the colonial administration, the symbolism and ideology of the colonial era continues to be refracted through the imagery and activities associated with tourism. By virtue of the economic and cultural power of the tourist industry, the myths and stereotypes of the past serve to perpetuate the colonial ideologies of dominance and Western superiority well into the post-independence era. Ultimately she argues that these ideas permeate notions of Bahamian national identity and reinforce the devalorization of a pre-colonial (African) heritage (Palmer 1994: 802-803).

Britton (1980, 1982) has also argued that the emergence of tourism development in many less developed countries cannot be understood without reference to the historical processes of colonialism. He thus presents an analysis of tourism and dependent development, of the kind espoused by Cardoso and Faletto (1977) rather than Frank (1966) and Wallerstein (1974), in relation to the concrete historical and socio-political context of tourist development in Fiji. Britton argues that “*Fiji is a classic example of a structurally dependent economy*” (1982: 348) and traces the emergence of tourism in Fiji to the historical evolution of the “*colonial space-economy*” which itself is the product of strategic class alliances between the Fijian chieftancy, the colonial state, the European planter class and the owners of foreign monopoly capital (1980). His analysis therefore links the expansion of European capitalism in the South Pacific to the specific internal political and class structures which prevailed during different historical periods. He thus concludes that the emergence of an externally-oriented and dependent tourism economy is directly rooted in the historical evolution of specialised commodity export enclaves (predominantly for sugar and copra) during the height of the colonial economy which determined the location of touristic infrastructure in a pattern similar to the spatial organization of the colonial sugar economy in coastal enclaves. The strength of Britton’s study is that it examines Fiji’s development experience in the context of both the introduction of a commodity economy and the articulation of contrasting modes of production:



The most important spatial processes inherent within an underdeveloped peripheral capitalist economy is, that at any given time, the level of development of the forces and relations of production interlock with previous historical forms to produce a territorial division of labour. (1980: 271)

He therefore highlights the significance of the specific internal class structures which mediated and determined the penetration of foreign capital into Fiji's economy, particularly during the period of European settlement whereby, "*the collaboration of the Fijian authorities facilitated the transfer of land ownership to Europeans*" (1980: 258). He also goes on to mention the role of conflict between different factions of the Fijian chieftancy and the European planter and settler classes which led to the imposition of 'indirect' colonial rule by Britain in 1874 in order to quell civil unrest and ultimately to ensure that there was no disruption to the capital interests of the European planter classes (1980: 259-60). The particular modalities of these alliances and the nature of conflict between different classes and social groups resulted in:

the 'locking up' of Fijian land and labour within a pre-capitalist mode of production [which] profoundly influenced the evolving spatial organization of the colony. It also effectively marginalized Fijian society from participating in development. (1980: 271)

Britton therefore relates the spatial and structural expansion of Fiji's tourism economy to the historically specific nature of internal Fijian society and its response to the forces of capitalist penetration, which he explains through detailed historical and empirical analyses. In his view there is thus no inevitability or concrete trajectory of tourism development which replicates a generalized and universal model of dependency .

### ***Dependent Tourism Development in Islands***

According to Turner and Ash (1975: 160-167), Pacific Islands epitomise the 'Pleasure Periphery' into which they have been incorporated by the corporate expansion of tourism. However, others have been more critical of the earlier tendency to equate tourism development in peripheral regions with 'imperialism' or 'neocolonialism'. For example, Latimer (1985) argues that much of the 'anti-tourism' literature had generalised their findings from small island states where the problems of dependency and restricted development opportunities are acute, to the developing world as a whole. In particular he argues that the decline of export agriculture in Caribbean islands cannot be entirely attributed to tourism, and that in any case export agriculture in islands is never secure. The claim put forward in Weaver's 'plantation model' that tourism may lead to a decline in agriculture either directly by occupation of the same area, or indirectly through land speculation, is contested by Butler (1993: 81) who suggests that there is no necessary causal relationship between the two. Moreover, Latimer (1985) claims that the association of agriculture with slavery in Caribbean states, results in a preference for other occupations such as tourism, even if wages are comparable. Other studies have also demonstrated the existence of substantial linkages between hotels and local agricultural producers in Fiji (Arndell 1990), and in Sri Lanka (Burns 1994), and to a more limited extent between secondary tourism establishments (local shops and restaurants) in the Dominican Republic (Freitag 1994: 543).



Nevertheless there is general agreement that dependency relationships are accentuated in the small island micro-states of the Caribbean and the Pacific, many of which inherited the plantation system of export agriculture from the colonial economies, and that tourism perpetuates similar patterns of development characteristic of the former period of economic development (Kent 1975; Pérez 1980; Britton 1980; Bastin 1984; Weaver 1988; Hall 1994b). During this period they became incorporated into the international economy as zones of supply of raw materials, coupled with fragile eco-systems and the problem of insularity which permit little economic diversification. Other studies of tourism in small islands may recognise the historical legacy of plantation agriculture, but emphasise the physical obstacles to development in “*small island micro-states*”, or SIMS (Wilkinson 1989; Connell 1993) in the cause of dependency. The “*essential qualities of insularity*” (King 1993: 15) include; their peripheral location, small size and population, reduced domestic market, a lack of skills, local entrepreneurial classes and resources (including energy), and an inadequate social and economic infrastructure (Pearce 1987; Wilkinson 1987, 1989). This line of argument thus emphasises the role of physical and geographical characteristics of islands (isolation and insularity) rather than structural inequalities in the global economy, as key conditioning factors in the inevitable adoption of metropolitan-controlled tourism development, referred to by Wilkinson as the “*macrostate emulation syndrome*” (1989: 157).

Resource-poor island economies with limited space are, however, precisely the ones that may have the most difficulty in identifying viable development strategies that do not rely heavily on tourism. (de Kadt 1979: 17)

Peripheral island economies are thus more vulnerable than continental areas to large-scale, metropolitan-dominated tourism development, which undermines local involvement and increases dependence on foreign capital and the likelihood of neo-colonial control of the island's economy, as depicted by Britton's (1982) model. It is often the over-reliance on one tourist-generating country (often a former colonial power) which exacerbates this fragile situation (Wilkinson 1987, 1989), and which thus reinforces the vulnerability of island destinations to fluctuations in tourist demand (Oglethorpe 1984; Burns 1995). The almost inevitable dependency on tourism is identified by Connell (1993: 128-129) who argues that island states which have not developed a tourism industry, such as Tonga (Britton 1987a), are amongst the poorest countries in the 'Third World'. In particular it is their inability to generate alternative forms of economic development that lies at their root of their predicament (Conlin and Baum 1995: 6). It is perhaps ironic that the innate touristic attraction of islands, rooted in a combination of myths of 'enchanted paradise' and 'utopia', and evocations of a 'pristine' natural beauty, blurs the distinctions between them and often conceals the very poverty, marginality and lack of opportunities amongst island populations which leads them to adopt tourism as a way out of underdevelopment in the first place (Cohen 1982a). Indeed the overall tone of Connell's (1993: 141-142) argument emphasises that the only realistic approach for SIMS to achieve a measure of stability and development, is to maximise their ties of interdependence with metropolitan areas from whom they can negotiate concessionary aid schemes, whilst maintaining self-reliance in food production. Guthunz and von Krosigk (1996: 34) support this view in their argument that tourism may be incorporated as one element amongst a number of development strategies in order to transform MIRAB states into TouRAB states.<sup>2</sup>



More recent publications on a variety of island tourism experiences have begun to demonstrate the potential for diversification and the development of 'alternative' tourisms in island destinations, as a means of sustainable development (Briguglio *et al.* 1996a, 1996b). Although the focus of the case studies is largely on environmental and cultural 'impacts' in relation to sustainability rather than dependency, contributors such as Widfelt (1996) cites the examples of Dominica, St. Lucia and Bonaire where NGO-assisted projects have enabled locally-owned tourism enterprises flourish to a degree, and Wilson (1996) describes how Barbados and St. Lucia have attempted to move away from a dependence on mass tourism. However, Wilson (1996) and Widfelt (1996) both agree that alternative schemes such as ecotourism, can only hope to complement rather than replace mass tourism (see also Butler 1994). Butler *et al.* (1996: 9) conclude that increasingly island destinations are in a weak position with respect to being able to implement policies of sustainable tourism independent of metropolitan interests and control.

### *Tourism and Dependency in Southern Europe*

Although southern European states were not integrated into the economic infrastructure of northern Europe as suppliers of raw materials as were their colonial territories, it has also been argued that similar centre-periphery relationships exist between northern and southern European states (Seers *et al.* 1979; Giner 1985). Although the process and structure of capitalist development in southern Europe occurred under different historical circumstances and within very different societies, induced capitalist development has left a legacy of uneven industrialization and a weak productive base which bears many similarities to countries in the 'Third World' (Sapelli 1995: 91-107; see also Giner 1985; Keyder 1998). The persistence of political clientelism and a weak industrial base has accentuated a growth model based on foreign investment and property speculation, two factors which have been central to the development of tourism in Spain (see Chapter Six). Thus Pearce argues:

Peripheral regions within developed countries...may exhibit characteristics of developing countries and the processes and consequences of tourist development there may be analogous to those identified in the Third World. (1989: 286)

Seers (1979b) distinguished a set of core European states from the periphery, in the sense that they were net exporters of capital and technology; centres of economic, political, military and cultural dominance and finally, net exporters of tourists and absorbers of migrants.<sup>3</sup> Indeed the very proximity of the European 'periphery' to the metropolitan capitalist states of the northern Europe has resulted in a significant flow of migrants and tourists between them, greatly facilitated by lower transport costs (Seers 1979a: xv), and European integration. As a result certain analyses of the structural patterns of tourism development in peripheral destination areas across southern Europe have also postulated that relations of dependent development characterise tourism development to varying degrees. It has therefore been argued that tourism in southern European has often resulted in the appropriation of resources (*e.g.* beaches, coastal land) by foreign capital in what has arguably given rise to a neo-colonial relationship between emitter and receiving societies. Schneider *et al.* (1972: 343) claim that tourism, amongst other variables including emigration, increases the dependency of southern European regions on metropolitan centres,



with no evident change in their social structure. There is a parallel here with the arguments cited above regarding tourism and dependent development in 'Third World' countries where plantation elites are merely supplanted by collaborative local elites in metropolitan-dominated tourism industries.

Processes of dependent tourism development are particularly evident in Mediterranean islands, including the islands of the 'Mediterranean Atlantic' (Madeira, the Canary Islands and the Azores), which can be considered as "*Europe's holiday playground*" (King 1993: 27). For example, King describes the incorporation of fishing villages into a network of mass tourism resorts dominated by foreign capital, which has led to the neo-colonial 'take-over' of some island economies, including the Balearic islands of Ibiza and Mallorca. He does however temper this with the admission that tourism has stimulated valuable economic activities and employment opportunities in these islands. This is certainly hard to contest given the standard of living in Mallorca, in which per capita income is 35% above the Spanish average and third only to Madrid and Gerona (Hughes 1994: 18). In contrast, Gaviria's (1974) virulent and detailed critique of tourism on the south coast of Spain which he likens to 'neocolonialism', is particularly critical of the role of tour operators which, he claims, reinforced a future relationship of dependency by advancing cheap loans to local entrepreneurs for the construction of hotels in return for 5-10 year contracts. Moreover Gaviria (1974) and Jurdao (1990) attribute a significant portion of blame to the lack of local democracy in Spain which enabled the Franquist government to arbitrarily designate large swathes of coastal land as suitable for tourist development and facilitate its appropriation by foreign capital through extensive credit schemes. Boissevain (1979a: 130-131) claims that nowhere is the economic dependency on tourism amongst Mediterranean higher than on the island of Malta, but argues that local pessimism is rare given the contribution of tourism to rising standards of living. The view from the French controlled island of Corsica is less sanguine, where, Richez (1994) maintains, tourism is viewed as an expression of Parisian dominance and cultural imperialism by the island nationalists.

It is evident from this discussion that the specific *nature* of dependent relationships which bind peripheral destination areas to metropolitan generating countries must be examined in depth, so as not to generalise a uniform situation of dependency across them all. Whereas the less than expected economic benefit of tourism in Malta is due to Malta's excessive dependence on British tourist arrivals which declined substantially between 1980 and 1984, and their rigid preference for visiting during the summer months (Oglethorpe 1984; King 1993: 29), the conditions of dependency for 'plantation economies' in the Caribbean are more intimately tied to the historical legacy of resource extraction by colonial powers (see Butler 1993), although parts of the Mediterranean have also been net suppliers of agricultural commodities to the world market (Schneider *et al.* 1972), a factor which contributed to uneven industrialization in southern Europe. In summary, it is the legacy of late and state-induced industrialization, and the emergence of dependent local bourgeoisies within the regional centres of accumulation which conditioned the development of dependent tourism development across much of southern Europe. The desire for the rapid accumulation of capital in the absence of a solid industrial base, led to the preference amongst local elites for short-term gains which could be acquired through land speculation and its associated form of accumulation, tourism. It is this fact alone which makes it



especially difficult for these regions to escape the webs of metropolitan dominance (Schneider *et al.* 1972: 347). Boissevain however insists that so long as the inhabitants of industrialized societies in western Europe continue to require a periodic escape from the pressures of their home/working lives and the north European winter, their own cultural and psychological dependency on the periphery will be sustained, and in turn, “*the periphery will continue to make a great deal of money*” (1979a: 133).

## Conclusion

This chapter has demonstrated the application of the ‘core-periphery’ concept to conceptualise the existence of asymmetrical relationships of exchange between tourism generating and tourism-receiving societies. These studies, referred to as the political economy approach to tourism (Lea 1988), are characterised by their criticisms of the earlier diffusionist approaches and an holistic approach to the organization and structure of tourism. Many drew heavily on the most forceful exposition of the core-periphery framework, exemplified by neo-Marxist theories of dependency, which linked the emergence of core metropolitan powers in the ‘core’ and dependent satellite states in the ‘periphery’ to the growth of capitalism on a world scale. Although the arguments put forward regarding dependency and tourism in different regions emphasise different aspects of the core-periphery relationship, the essential logic of ‘dependency’ and surplus transfer is common to most, ultimately leading to a dependent tourism economy based on mass tourism.

In contrast to the advocacy of tourism postulated by diffusionist approaches and the generally apolitical perspective of development stage models, tourism dependency studies saw tourism as integral to the perpetuation of structural inequalities between metropolitan generating societies and peripheral destination regions. Many thus likened tourism development in the ‘Third World’ to a form of ‘neo-colonialism’, especially where tourism grew out of or replicated the plantation system of export agriculture put in place during the colonial era. Where these ‘new plantation economies’, as they have been referred to, occurred in small island states, dependence on metropolitan countries has been exacerbated given the resource constraints and insularity of island economies. This has led many island states with few other development choices other than to adopt large-scale tourism industries where metropolitan capital is dominant. Finally, despite important contrasts in the historical development of southern Europe as compared with the ‘Third World’ and island states in the Caribbean and South Pacific, some studies have demonstrated certain similarities in the pattern and organization of tourism development in southern Europe and Mediterranean islands. Here, a legacy of late industrialization and agrarian backwardness has resulted in the periodic outflow of migrants and the massive inflow of tourists, particularly since the 1960s. This has resulted in a double dependence on the northern metropolitan countries in Europe, as a source of employment for migrants, as well a generator of tourists. According to these studies, a combination of state-induced capitalism and a landowning bourgeoisie keen to accumulate surpluses in the absence of a solid industrial base, has led to the enthusiastic promotion of tourism development which has replicated some of the features of dependent development seen in the ‘Third World’.



Despite the achievements of the dependency perspective in tourism development research, principally the exposure of a globally integrated tourism system characterised by power inequalities between tourist-generating (metropolitan) and tourist-receiving (satellite) countries, these studies often repeated some of the shortcomings of diffusionist approaches and ultimately substituted one essentialist model for another (Harrison 1995: 151-3; Wood 1993: 52-4). Whereas modernization theory claims that the diffusion of modernizing forces (tourism) into traditional societies necessarily leads to development, dependency analyses have merely reversed this determinism, asserting that incorporation into the global capitalist economy necessarily leads to the formation of 'tourist enclaves' dominated by metropolitan financial interests, thus stifling locally-driven tourism development in peripheral regions. Thus dependency analyses in fact coincide with modernization theories in their conception of tourism as an exogenous and monolithic force, in this case as an expression of metropolitan dominance rather than an exogenous agent of economic progress. Potential or existing areas of tourism development are depicted either as backward regions in need of Western assistance and guidance to develop tourism (Bond and Ladman 1980; Kahn 1980: 12), or as passive subjects condemned to universal subordination by the global tourism system (Pérez 1980).



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<sup>1</sup> The separate theoretical status of dependency is contested by several authors including Brenner (1977) and Larrain (1989: 176-180); see also the critical review of dependency by Cardoso (1977). Although it draws on some aspects of Marxist theory, dependency has much in common with the structural determinism of modernization theories, in particular the tendency to treat dependent societies as, "*objects in general, abstracted from specific historical determinations*" (1989: 113), much in the same way that modernization theory 'flattened' the diverse histories of non-Western societies. For a comprehensive analysis of dependency 'theories', see Larrain (1989: Chs 4-6).

<sup>2</sup> MIRAB stands for Migration, Remittances, Aid and Bureacracy and was an acronym devised to describe the features of small island states in the Pacific, whose economies are highly subsidized and controlled by New Zealand, but which can be applied to other small island states (see Bertram and Waters 1985).

<sup>3</sup> At that time the 'core' states included, West Germany, France, the Netherlands, Belgium, Switzerland, Austria, Denmark and Sweden. Britain, Italy and Finland were viewed as 'semi-peripheral' states, whilst Spain, Portugal, Greece, Yugoslavia, Ireland and Turkey were regarded as 'peripheral' countries. Britain's position as a semi-peripheral state may surprise some analysts. The criteria selected by Seers included the fact that Britain at that time was increasingly a net importer of foreign capital and tourists and along with Italy seen as having 'weak government'. Furthermore Scotland, Wales and the southwest regions suffered 'above-average unemployment and partial depopulation'. Italy on the other hand is seen as 'semi-peripheral' state by virtue of the internal disparity between the relative prosperity of the north and the economic underdevelopment of the south. (see Map A, Seers 1979b: 17).



# CHAPTER THREE

## Beyond the Periphery: Entrepreneurial Responses to Tourism Development

It may be appropriate to suggest that the anthropology of tourism is no longer to be found on any sort of periphery. (Selwyn 1994: 735)

### Introduction

Despite the contribution of the political economy approach to tourism discussed in the previous chapter, it would be too simplistic to conceptualise peripheries and destination localities at one level of abstraction or even as a fixed location in a structural hierarchy of power. Nor can they be geographically circumscribed or seen as culturally bounded. As argued by Husbands (1981) and O'Hare and Barrett (1996: 113), centres and peripheries cannot be seen as mutually exclusive spatial units whereby power is congruent with spatial forms. In this respect the notion of 'tourism enclaves' as repositories of dependent tourism formations reflects a spatial determinism which may over-simplify internal class structures and forms of stratification based on ethnicity and gender, for example. Moreover, the variables of insularity and peripherality attributed to islands should not be viewed as geographically given or indeed inevitable, as much of the literature on island tourism suggests. The relative underdevelopment of particular island regions needs to be analysed in connection with the historical circumstances of their insertion into expanding empires and networks of trade as a result of the uneven development of the world economy, which has left particular socio-economic and cultural imprints in geographically dispersed territories and insular locations (Wolf 1982; King 1993). The physical restrictions of the natural environment and geographical isolation certainly play a part, but what is significant are the manner in which the social forces of development condition the appropriation and use of available resources within specific historical epochs.

Thus, destination localities are therefore complex entities which cannot be considered as passive receptacles of entrepreneurial expertise, or simply as victims of domination by metropolitan tourism agencies from outside. A further weakness of the literature on tourism development, and one which has also been identified by Oppermann (1993) in relation to the arguments which postulate that tourism exacerbates a situation of dependency, is the almost exclusive focus on 'mass tourism', vaguely defined in terms of a tourist industry in which 'foreign' or 'metropolitan' ownership predominates, which is then generalised across destinations. This form of reductionism leaves no room for the analysis of diverse modes of tourism development, and beyond this, the possibility that responses to tourism within particular regions or destination localities, are far more diverse, and that furthermore, patterns of ownership of tourism resources/enterprise are more complex. Indeed it is at the level of human experiences in tourism destination areas that the weakness of the universalising tendencies within the literature on tourism development becomes evident. This chapter will review some of the principal approaches to the study of tourism at a local level of analysis, particularly in light of the entrepreneurial opportunities that emerge within local tourism development processes, an area which has received less



attention than other aspects of tourism development in the literature (Shaw and Williams 1994, 1998). It will highlight different approaches to the examination of the relationship between different modes of tourism development and patterns of social change within destination localities.

### 3.1 Tourism Entrepreneurship at a Local Level

Although specific reference to entrepreneurship in diffusionist studies of tourism is largely absent, Butler's life-cycle invokes the role of local entrepreneurs, who are involved in the provision of services to tourists during the early stages of development, as does Noronha (1979) (see Chapter One: *Models of Tourism Development*). Alternatively the role of 'locals' in general is alluded to in statements regarding the manner in which the values of modernity are transmitted throughout host populations (Varma 1980: 4), or else discussed in the context of multiplier analyses and linkages to suppliers in the 'local' economy (Lundgren 1972, cited in Williams and Shaw 1994: 126-127). Bond and Ladman (1980) argue that development occurs as a result of a functional response by the 'natives' to the entrepreneurial opportunities presented by the diffusion of tourism from the metropolitan capitalist countries. The stress on an 'achievement' orientation as the key to success invokes Weber's Protestant work ethic and is the foundation of McClelland's (1966) psychological determinism which reduces development processes to the motivation of the individual (see Larrain 1989: 94-95). He argues that the desire to achieve is manifest in the degree of innovation and entrepreneurship present in any given society. The entrepreneur thus embodies the creative destruction which Schumpeter argued is "*the leitmotif of benevolent capitalist development*" (Harvey 1990: 17). Hence, according to the diffusionist view, the lack of entrepreneurial inclination is perceived in narrow ethnocentric terms, and can serve to legitimate Western intervention in the development process of 'underdeveloped' societies whose values are at variance with those required for development.

At the time when Cohen (1979a) proclaimed the weakness of a generalizing tendency in the sociology of tourism, a number of studies had begun to emerge which were concerned with the social and geographical variations in the adaptation of local inhabitants to tourism. For example, de Kadt (1979: 47-49) drew attention to the influence of tourism on social stratification in destinations. The outcome of tourism development, he argues, is by no means certain, and may reinforce existing social inequalities or indeed stimulate the emergence of new social strata, particularly an entrepreneurial middle-class (cf. Tsartas 1992: 517-518). Despite its shortcomings, noted earlier, Greenwood's (1976: 36) study of tourism in Fuenterrabia had also highlighted this fact. As a result of tourism development a prosperous middle-class emerged, with strong ties to outside investors. Given the centrality of land to tourism, other studies have emphasised how the tourism-induced activities of construction and speculation have led to the emergence of wealthy elites in areas such as Malta (Boissevain and Serracino-Inglott 1979: 276), and in Cambrils, where Hermans (1981) has shown how prevailing patterns of land tenure enabled local farmers to benefit from the tourism-fuelled construction boom, and reinvest their profits in tourism. These few examples demonstrate the degree to which the broader societal context needs to be taken into account in an



examination of local tourism development processes. With this in mind, it is important to turn our attention to a variety of different approaches to the issue of local adaptation and response to tourism development

### 3.1.1 Tourism and Economic Dualism

Dual sector approaches to economic development are a product of structural change theories popular during the immediate postwar era, and reflect some of the dominant assumptions of modernization theories discussed earlier. The central notion of economic dualism rested upon the assumption that Third World economies could be divided into two mutually-exclusive sectors. There were several strands of the dual sector theory including the separation between an 'eastern' and a 'western' sector, referred to as a form of 'social dualism' by Boeke (1953) in reference to Indonesia:

the clashing of an imported social system with an indigenous social system of another style. Most frequently the imported system is high capitalism... (Boeke 1953, cited in Mehmet 1995: 13)

Lewis (1954) and Eckaus (1955) distinguish between 'modern' capital-intensive sectors and a 'traditional' subsistence sector. Central to their argument was the belief that 'unproductive' labour in the subsistence sector would be drawn into the capitalist sector as output expanded, an argument reflected in diffusionist studies of tourism's economic impact (see Chapter One: *Tourism as an Instrument of Economic Development*). Indeed the concept of a dual-sector economy reflects the functionalist tendencies within both neo-Marxist and modernization theories. The 'traditional' sector within local economies are thus viewed as an impediment to growth, or as functional to the reproductive requirements of capital in terms of depressing wage levels and sustaining an 'industrial reserve army' of under-employed workers (see Long and Richardson 1978).

The essential logic of economic dualism was to separate the economy into two opposing and relatively distinct circuits of activity, which came about partly as a result of the failure of modernization theories to explain the lack of economic take-off predicted in the emerging economies of the less developed countries (Smith, M. E. 1989: 300). However, as it became evident that the dominant assumption of labour-uptake in the capital-intensive sector did not correspond with the reality of economic experiences in many different parts of the Third World, later refinements to the model posited an instrumental relationship between the two sectors, which argued Hart (1973), complemented each other (Smith, M. E. 1989: 301). Hart (1973), a development anthropologist working in Ghana, distinguished between the characteristics of employment in the 'formal' and 'informal' sectors of Third World economies (as opposed to the traditional-modern dichotomy).<sup>1</sup> His main contention was that previous dual sector studies had ignored the characteristics of employment in the latter, which had a high proportion of self-employed workers and absorbed a 'sub-proletariat' increasingly marginal to the requirements of the urban labour market. Hart's model was also adopted by the International Labour Office (ILO 1972) in a study of Kenya, which emphasised the distinct characteristics of *enterprise* between a formal sector characterised by large-scale, corporate economic activities regulated by the government, and an unregulated informal sector



comprised of small-scale, family-owned enterprise with limited access to credit, technology and skills (ILO 1972: 6). Although there are contrasts between different studies of formal/informal sectors (see Cortés 1997), most agree that the formal sector is bolstered by the regulatory activities of the state and its disproportionate access to foreign capital and imported technology. Moreover, in contrast to modernization theories and the earlier dual-sector theories, this model recognises the linkages between both sectors, to the extent that much of the informal sector may provide valuable inputs into the formal sector and thereby does not inhibit development (Long and Richardson 1978: 180-181).

### *The Formal - Informal Sector Concept*

Although the formal-informal sector model was not formally applied to the study of tourism development until Wahnschafft's (1982) study of tourism in Pattaya, Thailand, it was alluded to in a number of studies of tourism in the Third World, where tourism facilities such as basic accommodation, food and drink were provided to 'drifter' tourists (e.g. Cohen 1972), or in terms of the 'family enterprise sector which, according to Davis (1978: 304), absorbs the majority of workers catering to the tourist industry. Wahnschafft's (1982) study adopts the ILO definition to differentiate between the formal and informal sector with particular regard to the scale of business activities, employment characteristics and the attitude of the state towards these sectors. In the former are included, 'international standard' hotels, restaurants, bars, clubs and souvenir shops situated predominantly in enclaves along the beach and in the 'amenity core' of the former village, and in the latter category, he includes self-employed street vendors, hawkers, craftsmen, prostitutes, rental facilities and pick-up truck taxis. His principal conclusion rejects the ILO's optimism regarding the mutual interdependence between the state and both formal and informal sectors. Thus he argues that tourism development policy in Thailand tolerates the informal sector as long as it does not impinge on the interests of the formal sector and turns a blind eye to informal activities which may indeed benefit this sector, such as gambling and prostitution. Overall though, the Thai government intervenes in favour of the formal sector in which many of its members have business interests and due to the significant contribution made by this sector to the country's foreign exchange earnings.

Kermath and Thomas (1992) adapt the dual-sector model to their study of entrepreneurial development in the resort of Sosúa in the Dominican Republic, which attempts to demonstrate the relationships between the tourism formal sector (TFS), characterised by the provision of regular wages and the acceptance of credit cards, and the tourism informal sector (TIS) in which self-employment is the norm. The study consisted predominantly of a survey of workers in the tourism sector in order to determine the type of enterprise they were involved in and the degree of movement between the two sectors. Furthermore they incorporate the informal sector into Butler's resort life-cycle in order to illustrate the differential growth dynamics of these two sectors (1992: 186). Their survey of informal sector vendors illustrates that after a period of early growth in the TIS during the initial stages of tourism development, the expansion of the TFS indicates that it will become more dominant and in the process displace the TIS both residentially and commercially, with government support. Unlike Wahnschafft (1982) who argues that both sectors emerged simultaneously, Kermath and Thomas argue that the TIS carries out a 'discovery function';



*“With the arrival of the first few visitors, or shortly thereafter, a few local residents begin to provide basic services and facilities, thereby creating an incipient tourist-related informal sector”* (1992: 178). This view is shared by Oppermann (1993), whose examination of the tourism informal sector is situated in a national context as opposed to specific resort sites, and is wedded to a model of spatial transformation (see Chapter One: *Models of Tourism Development*). He later adapts this model to an analysis of the interface between the spatial distribution of informal sector accommodation (described as small-scale, simple and low-budget) in Malaysia, and the internal travel patterns of *“lower circuit tourists”* (1998: 111).

In certain cases studies of tourism development have suggested that informal tourism enterprises, or simply small-scale enterprises, provide greater economic benefits to local entrepreneurs and may even hold a key to achieving sustainable economic development, particularly in developing countries (Dahles 1997a). Whilst Go (1997) argues that *“indigenous entrepreneurs”* in developing countries face numerous threats linked to the expansion of global markets and the competitive pressures exerted by transnational corporations, Echtner (1995: 123) suggests that smaller providers are often able to gain a competitive edge by supplying services which are ignored by larger bureaucratic enterprises. Rodenburg (1980: 190) attributes the survival of small-scale suppliers in Bali to the lower entry costs of *“craft tourism enterprises”*, while Milne (1987) attributes this to a lower import propensity amongst guest-house owners in the South Pacific. Thus Oppermann concludes:

Given the higher integration of the informal tourist sector enterprises into the local economic structure, it is capable of producing a higher multiplier effect on the local economy than the formal tourism sector. (1993: 544)

Crick (1995a) has also examined particular aspects of the tourism informal sector, although in this case the study is situated in an urban context in a Third World city. He focuses on the experiences of unlicensed, self-employed tour guides in the city of Kandy, widely known as the guest-house capital of Sri Lanka, and in particular their interaction with tourists and unlicensed guest-houses (1995a: 137). In a revealing analysis of the dynamics of interaction amongst actors in this under-researched area of tourism entrepreneurship, he sheds light on the manner in which tour guides mobilise ‘free floating’ cultural capital (*e.g.* knowledge of local languages, price levels and local customs) in order to eke out a living on the streets of Kandy despite the hostility of the authorities and certain shop-keepers and guest-house owners. Crick’s (1995a) concept of free-floating capital echoes the distinction made by Boissevain (1974) between ‘patrons’ and ‘brokers’, one which enables us to identify subtle yet substantial contrasts in the social nature of entrepreneurship. The former are seen as those individuals and groups with access to what are described as first order resources such as land, property and capital, whilst the latter derive value from their exploitation of social-personal networks and information (*i.e.* Crick’s ‘free-floating capital’). Boissevain’s conceptual distinction thus broadens our understanding of entrepreneurship in a way that the mere emphasis on ownership and economic capital cannot, and is particularly relevant where tourism is concerned given the importance of culturally-specific resources and knowledge (*e.g.* tour guides, artisans, beach vendors).



Whereas Crick (1995a) makes no attempt to integrate his findings into the wider social structure, Michaud (1991), who is critical of the narrow economism of the ILO definition, incorporates a number of sociological variables into an exploration of the structure and dynamics of tourism enterprise in Ladakh which correlates formal-informal sector enterprise with the place of origin and religious affiliation of entrepreneurs. The development of tourism in Ladakh has resulted in significant changes to the occupational structure characterised by a discernable congruence between specific types of enterprise and the origin of entrepreneurs. Formal sector enterprise is dominated by an educated metropolitan bourgeoisie, who are active in the management of hotels, travel agencies and souvenir shops. This sector also includes an endogenous landowning elite who have benefited from the leasing of buildings to the former. Informal enterprise on the other hand, is dominated by the more affluent segment of the indigenous peasantry, most of whom are Buddhist. Informal activities include the running of guest-houses, guiding and transportation as well as craft-related activities. There are also a number of exogenous entrepreneurs which comprise mainly of Tibetan merchants and self-employed guides from outside the area. In an otherwise sensitive analysis into the manner in which cultural identity overlaps with different types of tourism enterprise, Michaud (1991: 618) retains the dual economy distinction between the formal and informal sectors and indeed claims that the informal sector is being weakened by the activities of the formal sector, which is dominated by an alliance of local elites and exogenous entrepreneurs. Moreover the distinction between endogenous and exogenous tourism entrepreneurs is codified in a somewhat arbitrary fashion, based purely on the length of residence of respective entrepreneurial groups in Ladakh. Despite useful insights which draw on ethnic and religious divisions within the entrepreneurial classes, his allegiance to the dual-sector model thus inhibits greater insight into the social relations of entrepreneurship which transect this divide. Indeed Dahles (1997b) does highlight some of the shortcomings of the formal-informal sector approach and suggests we need to examine the manifold economic relationships that encompass both sectors. Several authors have nevertheless managed to reject such dualism by situating their analyses of entrepreneurial agency more firmly within the context of the socio-economic structures which mediate access to resources within specific localities.

### 3.2 Tourism Entrepreneurship and Social Stratification

There is a substantial body of literature which examines the relationship of tourism development at the local level in relation to the broader societal context, and which moreover, explores local configurations of tourism development in relation to social stratification and different modes of tourism development. On the whole, these studies refute both diffusionist and dependency perspectives which generalize at a large-scale of analysis, and are more ethnographically sensitive to local configurations of tourism development than is allowed for in the dualist interpretations discussed above. A common characteristic attributed to tourism entrepreneurs is that they are innovative and take risks, often struggling against the restrictive codes and practices of their own cultures in order to provide services for tourists (Go 1997). Indeed Nuñez (1989: 268) has argued that it is often the “*culturally marginal*” members of a community who are more likely to be innovative during periods of rapid change, and thus are often the first to exploit



commercial opportunities proffered by tourism. The reasons he suggests include the failure of conservative elites to push for change, particularly where this might destabilise existing community norms. In support of this claim, ethnographic studies of tourism development in southern Europe demonstrate how tourism has stimulated varying degrees of social mobility, particularly amongst the peasantry (Moore 1976a; Waldren 1996; Zarkia 1996). Waldren (1996: 22) describes how the arrival of the first foreigners in the rural village of Deia in Mallorca during the late nineteenth century, endowed newly formed peasant landlords with an increased source of income and status. Whilst in the Greek Island of Skyros, families from the poorest social stratum of the island were able to take up business opportunities to the changing circumstances of development precipitated by tourism (Zarkia 1996: 150).

A number of studies have focused on the manner in which resources are appropriated in the context of an evolving tourism economy. One such study, set in the context of tourism development in three North Carolina coastal towns, made an early attempt to differentiate the degree and nature of local involvement in tourism according to three sets of variables; the *rate and magnitude of change* and the *source of regulatory power* (Peck and Lepie 1989: 216). Their conclusions suggest that a slow rate of growth and strong local power base, correlates with a more favourable attitude towards tourism. Nevertheless their analysis is somewhat linear, as the three resorts are placed in a temporal position relative to each other, and furthermore, only passing reference is made to sociological variables such as class, ethnicity and gender. Oliver *et al.* (1989: 348) argue that the usurpation of local resources for tourism in Mijas on the Costa del Sol, was facilitated by the sale of land to foreign interests by traditional landowning classes, leading to the proletarianization of the rural labour force. Here it was the intervention of the state, in the form of the democratic, socialist-led council during the 1980s, which has enabled them to exercise a greater degree of control over the revenue generated through tourism, and thus to provide valuable public services for local residents (Oliver *et al.* 1989: 349). Van der Werff (1980) develops an analysis which attempts to integrate an examination of local tourism enterprise in Pescaia within the framework of a critical theory of underdevelopment. He differentiates between small-scale entrepreneurs (*piccoli*) whose enterprises are dominated by a non-capitalist mode of production, from the larger developers (*complessi*) in which the capitalist mode of production predominates. Van der Werff's (1980) study is one of the few analyses of tourism development which draws on a theoretical understanding of development premised on the study of the social relations of production (cf. Britton 1980), and as such provides a theorization of tourism entrepreneurship which transcends the limitations of dualist interpretations.

The examination of the role of return migrants in local tourism development has provided a more contextualised insight into the composition of tourism development agents and the internal stratification of tourism entrepreneurship. Some authors, including Kenny (1972: 127), Rhoades (1978: 143) and Mendonsa (1982: 640) have only made passing reference to the role of return migration in the activation of local tourism sectors (cited in King *et al.* 1984). However, King *et al.* (1984) demonstrate that the role of return migrants was a significant factor in the establishment of tourism facilities in a small village on the coast of Calabria. Kenna (1993) focuses on the role of returning migrants in the development of tourism in Anafi, a Greek island in the Cyclades. In particular, she describes how return



migrants activated local kinship networks in order to channel capital acquired through employment on the mainland, into land and property which could be converted into touristic use. She points out that although a few resident islanders had been able to rent out spare rooms to tourists during the early stages of tourism development in the mid-1960s, it was the superior knowledge and income of return migrants which enabled them to predominate in the tourism sector (Kenna 1993: 83-84). Nevertheless their success also depends upon the cultivation of mutually-beneficial cooperative links with long-term island residents to whom they are related through kinship ties.

### *Tourism, Ethnicity and Entrepreneurship*

A number of anthropological studies of tourism development have considered the interaction between tourism and local power structures by examining the relationship between tourism and ethnic stratification, and/or inter-ethnic relations. In a useful comparative study which draws on these themes, Din (1991) contrasts three different models of local entrepreneurial response in his examination of local involvement in tourism across four Malaysian island resorts. He is critical of diffusionist and evolutionary approaches which ignore the internal stratification of the 'host' community and thus the differentiated ability of 'locals' to exploit the opportunities presented by tourism. Although the extent of the data gathered is limited, and is restricted to the number of entrepreneurs from respective ethnic groups involved in tourism, he argues that the superior business acumen of a Chinese-dominated entrepreneurial 'class' has enabled them to monopolise control of tourist infrastructure in Penang, Pangkor and Langkawi, although in the latter case some Malaysian ownership was initiated by Malay businessmen from the capital city, Kuala Lumpur. In contrast, the prohibition of non-*bumiputra* (non-indigenous Malay) ownership by the federal government, was a significant factor which enabled the involvement of indigenous Malay islanders in the provision of tourism facilities on the island of Tioman off the east coast (Din 1991: 14). However, there is evidence to suggest that *bumiputra* participation in the hotel sector in general, has increased thanks to the intervention of various intermediate agencies. Nevertheless, he argues that the government does little to encourage *bumiputra* entrepreneurship in small-scale businesses due to the state's emphasis on luxury tourism (Din 1982: 462-463). Historical patterns of colonialism and immigration have also influenced existing patterns of tourism entrepreneurship in Nairobi, Kenya, where souvenir shops, restaurants and other places of entertainment catering for tourists were predominantly owned by Asians (Jommo 1987, cited in Harrison 1995: 23).

Uneven patterns of tourism entrepreneurship are also evident in Cohen's (1982b) study of tourism development in the islands of southern Thailand (Phuket and Koh Samui), in which he contrasts the nature of local involvement in the two locations, in relation to social and ethnic stratification. His analysis proceeds from a critique of previous studies of tourism development whose criteria (*e.g.* scale) confuse outward appearance with underlying regularities in the configurations of entrepreneurship (*e.g.* Rodenburg 1980). By relating the dynamics of entrepreneurship to local forms of stratification and wider socioeconomic conditions he demonstrates that despite the similarity of small-scale 'craft' tourism enterprises on both islands, control of tourism facilities is mediated by important distinctions in their



social structure. At the time of writing, tourism in Phuket, the larger and more economically diverse of the two islands, was dominated by an existing urban Chinese business class with ties to capital from Bangkok and who were already in possession of beachfront property. In contrast, tourism facilities on Koh Samui were still controlled by indigenous Thai entrepreneurs who were well integrated into local power structures and linked to each other through networks of kinship ties. In both instances Cohen is careful to point out how the relations of domination and economic control are predominantly articulated through “*regional business elites*”, in Phuket or in Bangkok, rather than foreign or metropolitan commercial interests (Cohen 1982b: 222).

The role of entrepreneurial ‘middle-men’ has also proved a fruitful arena of research and has provided further insight into the manner in which the complex dynamics of local adaptation to tourism are mediated by local forms of stratification, and in some cases, internal colonialism (Hechter 1975). In an earlier study, Cohen (1982c) relates forms of social and symbolic stratification which emerge between jungle guides and town guides in northern Thailand (both of whom are engaged in hill tribe tourism), to different modes of touring and tourist type on the one hand, and the internal social relations between guides and the formal tourism establishment, on the other. Whilst the latter are usually more educated and work for larger agencies, the former constitute a “*marginal occupational role*” with its own distinct sub-culture which distinguishes their values and norms of professional and inter-personal conduct from the latter (1982c: 258). Although Cohen does not elaborate much on the social and ethnic composition of the guides, other than to say that jungle guides are predominantly made up of northern Thais together with some who are of tribal origin, he goes on to illuminate the manner in which jungle guides distinguish themselves from the more urbane town guides through their relations with specific types of young and ‘adventurous’ tourists, bolstered by their superior knowledge of the highland interior (1982c: 240-242). Structural antagonisms between jungle guides and the state are also evident in their attempt to resist ‘professionalization’ by the Thai tourism authorities, which would deny them their “chief assets” of autonomy and uniqueness (Cohen 1982c: 259-260).

Van den Berghe (1980: 385) has illuminated such a relationship with respect to the role of *mestizo*<sup>2</sup> middlemen in Cuzco (Peru), who have capitalised on their traditional position of economic and political dominance and superior education and knowledge of English to monopolise a number of entrepreneurial roles which range from tour guiding, curio shop operators, taxi drivers, hotel and restaurant managers. Of particular interest to van den Berghe (1980: 381) is the manner in which tourism intervenes as a variable in the ethnic relations between ‘tourees’, members of poorer yet ‘colourful’ Indian groups, and *mestizos*, who as “*entrepreneurs in exoticism*” facilitate the consumption of the former by tourists. Similarly, an ‘ethnic division of labour’ has emerged in the context of tourism development in the town of San Cristóbal in the Chiapas region of Mexico (van de Berghe 1992). Here also, tourism has imposed itself on a pre-existing structure of ethnic relations between *ladinos* and Indians, which has enabled the former to benefit disproportionately from tourism:

Even though the Indians constitute San Cristóbal’s principal tourist attraction, the *ladinos* are the main beneficiaries of the tourist business. (van den Berghe 1992: 243)



Although some benefits have 'trickled-down' to the Indian groups, predominantly via the sale of textiles and handicrafts, the economic, political and cultural dominance of the *ladinos* ensures their privileged access to capital and the levers of power, and thus to the monopolisation of entrepreneurial opportunities. The structure of entrepreneurial involvement in tourism must also be seen in the context of state intervention, which may have significant implications for inter-ethnic and class relations (Wood 1984, 1997). Bowman (1995) illustrates how the historical legacy and ongoing conflict between Israel and Palestinians structures the involvement of both Palestinian and Israeli involvement as tour guides. Of particular relevance is the annexation of East Jerusalem by Israel in 1967, which had the effect of inhibiting existing Palestinian tour guides (who until then held Jordanian licences) from continuing their trade, and excluding many prospective Palestinian tour guides from entry onto Ministry of Tourism-sponsored courses (Bowman 1995: 131-132). In response, some of the Palestinian tour guides who continue to ply their trade, attempt to expose tourists to Palestinian areas and interpretations of the landscape and heritage. Both van den Berghe (1980, 1992) and Bowman (1995) demonstrate how ethnicity is often converted into a cultural resource within the context of tourism, in order to reinforce the boundaries of identity. However, as they and others have shown, this cannot be understood in isolation from political modes of domination and regional class structures.

In an examination of tourism amongst highland minorities in both Ladakh and northern Thailand, Michaud (1995) demonstrates that involvement in tourism may also be related to the policies of state intervention and their attempts to assimilate ethnic minorities into a dominant and uniform national identity. The implications of such a policy may be to increase the dependency of minorities on the wider economy, whilst bolstering their sense of ethnic identity in so far as it contributes to an increase in tourism to the region (see also Cohen 1989). In contrast, Ariel de Vidas (1995) explains how several Indian communities of the Andean cordillera have used trading relationships and the sale of handicrafts to tourists in order to resist assimilation and reinforce a sense of collective belonging to their respective ethnic groups. Significantly, Ariel de Vidas (1995: 80) points out that craft production rests upon pre-existing structures of production, which enables the commercialisation of crafts to occur whilst revalorizing their identities. In a broader analysis Evans (1995) draws attention to a contrasting legacy of colonialism in Mexico and New Mexico (USA), which has led to the ability of indigenous tribal populations in the latter to exert a greater degree of 'producer control' over the production of (ethnic) arts.

The phenomenon of hill-tribe trekking in northern Thailand has also been studied at length by Michaud (1997), whose focus is directed at the village level. In an ethnographically-sensitive analysis of the economic relationships which have brought Thai middle-men and Hmong villagers together, he argues that despite an increase in trekking to this region since the early 1980s, the Hmong villages included in the trekkers' itinerary have been able to incorporate tourism into their existing social structure without significantly altering the internal balance of power (Michaud 1997: 147-148). The provision of accommodation during the early stages of trekking tourism in the Hmong villages was provided by local clan members of relatively high status in the community, although Thai middle-men are the fulcrum around which the economic exchange between tourists and the Hmong hosts revolve, and as such



appropriate up to two-thirds of the income provided by this form of tourism (Michaud 1997: 139-142). Nevertheless, once their involvement in tourism began to inhibit the continuation of traditional agricultural activities, the earlier households retreated from their involvement in the tourism economy, allowing more marginal members of the community to enter the tourism business (Michaud 1997: 140-141). Michaud thus concludes that the experience of trekking tourism amongst the Hmong is atypical, given that many of the Hmong have resisted further integration into the monetary economy in order to protect traditional lineage-based systems of agricultural production which are central to the maintenance of their cultural distinctiveness.

### *Tourism, Gender and the Commodification of Household Labour*

Whilst many studies of tourism development have argued that in general, tourism reinforces or exacerbates an unequal gendered division of labour, which reflects local and transnational norms of “womens work” (Kinnaird *et al.* 1994: 14-17), there is a body of literature which demonstrates that womens’ opportunities in tourism are more ambiguous. In this respect Scott maintains (1997: 61) that womens’ involvement in tourism as workers or entrepreneurs should be considered in relation to other factors, including class, ethnicity and the specific mode of tourism development concerned. One of the unexpected advantages of tourism for women in Mexico, for example, is that tourist demand has focused largely on local handicrafts, which are produced and sold by women, thus increasing their independence from men (van den Berghe 1992: 244). However, although the production of ethnic arts for sale to tourists may increase women’s status within the household, it has done little to alter the balance of power within wider society (Swain 1995).

It has been commonly suggested that tourism creates entrepreneurial opportunities for women by allowing paying customers into the home, which constitutes an extension and partial commodification of their domestic labour (Bouquet 1987; Ireland 1993; García Ramón *et al.* 1995). Frequently these opportunities are manifest in the management of small-scale tourism business (Reynoso y Valle de Regt 1979), informal trading activities (Wilkinson and Pratiwi 1995), and tourism cooperatives (Castelberg-Koulma 1991), which enable women to gain an independent source of income within a pre-existing gendered division of household labour and responsibilities (Scott 1997: 61). The participation of women in the management of tourism enterprise has often occurred in the context of farm or rural tourism, where households may be forced to enter the service economy into in order to supplement declining incomes from farming (Shaw and Williams 1994: 236-239), or fishing (Ireland 1993). In some cases it has been the initiation of such activities by women, that has ensured the survival of family-based agriculture, for example in northern Spain (García Ramón *et al.* 1995). However the nature of women’s involvement in farm tourism is highly differentiated according to the nature of the farm economy (including the size of the farm and level of technology), the local economy, and local cultural norms (Shaw and Williams 1994: 238).



The outcome of womens' participation in the tourism economy are thus by no means inevitable or entirely advantageous, and may lead to an increased burden of work on women in the household, as studies of tourism in rural parts of southern Europe and the Mediterranean have demonstrated (Hermans 1983; Kousis 1989). In this respect Scott concludes:

Whatever the benefits to women of running their own accommodation business, it also entails an increase in domestic work, long hours, and a decline in social interaction with neighbours and kin. (1997: 85)

In the case of a coastal resort village in Northern Cyprus investigated by Scott (1997), despite an increase in employment opportunities for women in the larger hotels, their involvement in the management of small-scale tourism enterprises has been less significant than in other regions, and is still largely dominated by men. She attributes the lack of an established tradition of independent female entrepreneurship to the spatial proximity of family residence and guest accommodation, the rapid pace of tourism development and the nature of household pluri-activity (Scott 1997: 77-81). A combination of local cultural norms and prevailing economic circumstances have thus inhibited female entrepreneurship to a greater degree than in other regions. Tucker (1997) has also observed that the production of tourist experiences in the village of Göreme in Turkey, is dictated by the gendered environment of the 'host' community. The 'front line' of entrepreneurship, ranging from tour guides to the ownership of small tourism enterprises, is thus the domain of men whilst local women remain under lock and key (Tucker 1997: 113). Similarly, the movement of women through public spaces such as bars and cafes is often relatively restricted. Although, Moore (1995: 309) notes how younger women in a small Greek town, are increasingly able to enter establishments catering for Athenian tourists where they are beyond the gaze of local males who frequent the coffee-houses and tavernas. Waldren (1996: 38-46) has also discussed how conceptions of space in the village of Deia are mediated by gender, as well as age and nationality. One of the effects of the touristification of this village has been to expand the range of domestic spaces into which women are able to move, through cleaning activities undertaken in the homes of foreign residents and in hotels (Waldren 1996: 43).

In contrast however, Zarkia (1996) describes how tourism, through its commodification of certain aspects of family patrimony (in particular, houses which became converted into pensions) has created new sources of income for women (Stott 1973, 1996: 290-291), and led to the previously dominant status of men being challenged. However these changes are manifest in different ways. On the island of Skyros, women traditionally inherited houses and plots of land as part of their dowry, which were of little importance in the rural economy, whilst men monopolised productive agricultural land. The increase in the value of houses as a result of tourism has thus diminished the economic importance of the male inheritance, as well as increased the role of women in the economy through the renting out of rooms in their houses, a practice administered and controlled by many women (Zarkia 1996: 156). This is also evident on the Aegean island of Samos, where women have become the backbone of the tourism enterprise economy, particularly in the area of rented accommodation. Families have thus made large investments in houses for their daughters, in anticipation of their commercial potential in the rented accommodation sector (Galaní-Moutáfi 1993: 258-259). Yet on the island of Mykonos Stott (1973:



131-132) emphasises the decreasing role of the family as the provider of the dowry due to the fact that women are increasingly able to secure work in small commercial enterprises related to tourism and thus accumulate their own dowries. Tourism development has also impacted on women's lives in other ways. For example on the island of Mykonos the fact that tourism has allowed young women to seek paid employment in commercial enterprises has enabled them to broaden their range of social interactions beyond the supervision of their parents (Stott 1973). In a different context altogether, Mackun (1998: 267-277) demonstrates how the pre-existing equality of men and women in Emilia-Romagna, a region in Italy renowned for its prosperous small enterprises, social-business networks and enlightened government intervention, is reflected in the relative parity of men and women involved in managerial positions within the tourism industry.

Tourism thus has the potential to increase the range of social experiences of women outside the home (Ireland 1993) and legitimate their access to public spaces (Sinclair 1997: 4), and in particular to male domains such as bars and coffee houses. Certain modes of tourism development therefore challenge the structure and content of social relations between men and women, and may lead to a permanent reconfiguration of their relative socioeconomic position and prescribed social roles, both inside and outside the home. However, in many cases prevailing cultural norms with respect to gender roles and the organisation of production has inhibited the full integration of women into tourism economies on an equal level with men. Despite some evidence to suggest that tourism has improved the participation of women in some sectors of the tourism economy in Bali, Long and Kindon (1994: 114) concede that this may conceal continuing inequities of access to decision-making processes, a point also noted by Scott (1997: 86). However it is important not to view gender as an undifferentiated category (Scott 1997), but to conceptualise the interface between gender and the locally-specific circumstances which condition the ability of women to exploit the opportunities proffered by tourism to their advantage.

## Conclusion

From the preceding discussion, it is clear that a number of scholars have conducted research into a variety of local-level situations of tourism development in different societies, which shed light on the degree of entrepreneurial involvement in tourism. It thus appears that the proclamation by Shaw and Williams (1994, 1998) that there has been a general neglect of entrepreneurial processes in the literature on tourism is only valid if this is conceived in the narrowest of terms. Rather it is apparent that entrepreneurial processes are evident in much of the research, perhaps as a by-product of the central analysis but equally present nevertheless. A growing recognition of the contribution of other disciplines has meant that the analysis of tourism entrepreneurship is no longer the preserve of economists, but has been considered by geographers, anthropologists and sociologists also.

In general the critique of the formal-informal sector model focused upon its inability to conceptualise the mutual interdependence, or more specifically the subordination of the informal sector to the formal sector



(Smith, M. E. 1989: 307). However, the evidence presented here suggests that studies of tourism development situated within the formal-informal sector paradigm reflect a greater sensitivity to the articulation between different sectors of the economy at a local level than previous large-scale perspectives. Nevertheless there is still a tendency to under-theorize the nature of local power structures which condition entrepreneurial opportunities, and to assume a linear and functionalist relationship between the two whereby the tourism informal sector is inevitably subordinate to the formal sector. Alternatively, Marxist approaches to the analysis of tourism enterprise are scarce indeed, which is surprising given the rich vein of work bequeathed by economic anthropology to this line of inquiry (see Kahn 1978; Bloch 1975, 1983).

There are certain commonalities which emerge from the examination of entrepreneurial processes across different societal contexts. There is a general consensus that small-scale or informal-type enterprise enables greater participation of less powerful local inhabitants, such as women and certain ethnic groups, in tourism development. This highlights the relevance of indigenous 'cultural capital' as well as the importance of social and kinship networks in the ability of marginal groups to secure access to entrepreneurial opportunities in tourism. Thus, there is evidence to suggest that the multi-faceted nature of tourism as an economic activity alters the socioeconomic relationships within a particular community, and may lead to substantial social advancement amongst poorer groups in society. However, some scholars offer a more cautionary note, by suggesting that although tourism has unquestionably stimulated economic opportunities for certain subordinate groups, it is uncertain as to whether this leads to greater equality in a broader societal context.

It is clear then that there is no inevitable dynamic associated with tourism development and the entrepreneurial processes associated with it. A combination of structural constraints and prevailing cultural norms surrounding the role of ethnic groups and women are amongst some of the most important factors to be considered in the analysis of local level tourism development and entrepreneurship. These studies have highlighted the need to take into account the historical context of tourism development in relation to the locally-specific contingencies of place within the destination areas being examined. Nevertheless there is still considerable theoretical work to be done in order to deepen our understanding of tourism development processes at a local level. These and some of the weaknesses of the preceding approaches to the analysis of tourism development and entrepreneurship will be examined in the following chapters. Chapter Four will set out a critical theoretical framework as the basis for the study of tourism development in the resort which constitutes the focus of this study, while Chapter Five will elaborate on the methodological strategy and justification for this approach.



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<sup>1</sup> See Smith , M. E. (1989) for a fuller discussion of the 'informal economy', and in particular it's application in earlier studies of unregulated economic activities in planned economies as well as urban areas in the United States.

<sup>2</sup> The *mestizos* constitute one of the two main native groups in Peru, the other being the *indígenas* (Indians). They are scattered throughout the classes, although they make up the large proportion of the ruling economic and political elite, and are largely an urban group whereas the *indígenas* are predominantly from an agrarian peasant society (van den Berghe 1980: 382). A similar distinction exists in Mexico, between the dominant *ladino* elites and subordinate groups of indigenous Indians (van den Berghe 1992).



## CHAPTER FOUR

# Re-Orienting the Political Economy of Tourism towards the Micro-Level

### Introduction

It is clear from the review of the literature above, that research in the area of tourism development has often lacked a clear conceptual and theoretical basis from which to approach its examination of the relationships between tourism and social change in host societies. That does not mean to say however, that other scholars have not already raised such concerns (*e.g.* Allcock 1983; Nash 1996), but merely to suggest that there is still room to develop and refine our analyses of tourism development processes in this respect. Similarly, whilst models of tourism development lack an ethnographic grounding (Wilson 1993: 41), studies of tourism development ‘from below’ often fail to relate their findings to the changing political economic context at wider levels. Moreover, there is still a tendency to collect detailed ethnographic data at the expense of critical deductive reasoning and consideration of the interface between local and wider power structures. Hence, such studies remain entrapped in the immediacy of the empirical case study at the expense of linking these findings to a broader conceptual-theoretical framework.

The ‘local community’ or tourism destination area is fluid and permeable and thus cannot be defined as territorially-specific or culturally discrete entity (*cf.* Wood 1993, 1997; Selwyn 1994; Lanfant 1995a). In this respect tourism both reflects and reproduces the accelerated social mobility and the rise of consumption practices generated by processes of de-industrialization and advances in media and communications technologies since the crisis of Fordism in the late 1960s. The categories of ‘host and ‘guest’, or ‘local’ and ‘foreign’ are insufficient analytical categories and can no longer contain the myriad of meanings that have emerged on increasingly cosmopolitan terrains (Hannerz 1990), where tourists, workers and locals merge in a conceptual territory beyond the distinction between local and foreign (see Bianchi and Clarke 1998). Thus Picard (1995) has argued that the transformation of societies which become incorporated into circuits of tourism development be conceived of in terms of processes of ‘touristification’, and goes on to add that, “*tourism cannot be conceived of outside culture at all: it is bound up in an ongoing process of cultural invention*” (1995: 47). Processes of touristification have blurred the distinction between the very ‘ethnicities’ that they originally gave rise to, that is, the ‘tourist’ and the ‘resident’ (Jafari 1984), and therefore between the separate ontological status of culture and tourism themselves. In this respect Allcock (1995: 110) offers a useful analytic approach to our understanding of heritage tourism, in which culture rather than being seen as a static or organic entity, is considered as, “*a configuration of resources*” which can be appropriated in the context of the ideological construction of history and thereby, identity. The categories of host and guest or insider and outsider are themselves theoretically valid only if they are seen in relation to the social and cultural practices through which subjects’ symbolic “*worlds of experience*” are constructed (Waldren 1996), and I would add, the power structures which condition their material existence.



Few would disagree then that an examination of the factors which condition the emergence of tourism in a given locality needs to remain close to the empirical data yet be sensitive to wider explanatory frameworks (Selwyn 1996a: 29). Rather than reject any possibility of explanation which encompasses an holistic view of tourism, we must pay greater attention to the role and position of the “*specificities*” [of] “*localized formations*” within “*totalizing theorizations*” (Makdisi *et al* 1996: 10-11). Therefore, it is important to consider what Urry (1995: 69-73), elaborating on Massey (1995), refers to as the *contingent* relations of capitalist production, that is, the manner in which the *necessary* or broader forces of capitalist development are manifest in locally and culturally unique patterns of touristification. In this respect it is important to consider the nature of tourism as a commodity form, and the manner in which it appropriates space and creates specific conditions of change which may give rise to quite different configurations of development.

#### 4.1 The Nature of Tourism as a Commodity

Harvey’s assertion that industrialization, which once produced urban forms, is now being *produced by them* (cited in Soja 1989:76), is a process reflected in the logic of touristification which appropriates urban (and natural) forms as objects of consumption *sui generis*. The production and consumption of tourism experiences appropriates space and transforms landscapes, cultures and economies in a manner which can be distinguished from agrarian, industrial and other modes of capitalist development. Firstly, tourism does not derive its end ‘product’ through the extraction of raw materials from the earth in the manner of iron ore or timber (*i.e.* land as the ‘subject’ of labour), or invest labour and capital in order to cultivate produce on the land (land as ‘object’ of labour). Rather tourism extends production into areas with no “*intrinsic production potential*” (Husbands 1981: 50); its raw materials are thus particular combinations of social, cultural, natural and physical features which bear the imprint of human economic activity and processes of societal development in the receiving society itself.

Secondly, the consumption of the specific features of different touristic sites requires the movement of the tourist/consumer to the ‘product’ itself thereby converting space into the *object of consumption* rather than merely production (see Husbands 1981: 45; Santana Santana 1991: 29-32). The landscape is altered for touristic purposes only insofar as the provision of built infrastructure for accommodation and ancillary facilities are required in order to facilitate the consumption of visual attractions or participation in recreational activities (*e.g.* coastal tourism). The physical alteration or restructuring of space for the purpose of commoditizing touristic places tends to occur only in the case of *contrived* attractions (*e.g.* theme parks) which have little or no organic relationship to the landscape in which they are situated (see Cohen 1994). In this respect tourism is not as physically constrained by geographic and environmental features of the landscape, beyond of course the importance of the climate, as for example agriculture would be. For this reason tourism is often found in more remote and inaccessible areas of outstanding natural beauty and/or cultural exoticism (as defined by the Eurocentric mindset).<sup>1</sup>



Thirdly, a significant component of tourism constitutes the social interaction of visitors and locals, and as such is dependent upon the hospitality of 'hosts', and its commercialisation, in order to create an enjoyable experience. Thus the training and expertise required by tourism varies according to specific socio-cultural contexts and degree of similarity of destination areas with the cultural characteristics of the tourists themselves (Burns 1993). Extending this logic further it becomes apparent that there is a further dimension to tourism production than with other forms of economic activity. Adapting Wright's (1993) distinction between 'exploitative economic oppression' (where exploiters *need* the exploited, principally for their labour-power) and 'non-exploitative economic oppression' (where exploiters *do not require* the labour or efforts of the exploited for their material well-being, but rather for their land) it becomes clear that tourism gives rise to a third category of exploitative relations, *exploitative symbolic oppression*. Of course as in any predominantly capitalistic system of production, relations of direct exploitative economic oppression are prevalent (but not necessarily predominant) throughout the tourism productive system, in the institutions of service provision. However what is significant and unique is the degree to which the material well-being of tourism often thrives upon the exploitation of living human communities and cultures for their *image* (MacCannell 1976, 1992). Where elements of the host cultures and lifestyles are on view for tourist consumption, inhabitants may provide an important component of the destination's image, as do for example the Sami peoples in northern Finland (Saarinen 1998). In this regard some tourists are interested in living communities not only for their recreational value, but as signs of themselves, thereby transforming people, places and cultures into objects *sui generis* (Culler 1981: 127). Inhabitants may not even play a part in the provision of tourism services but may be coopted into the tourist gaze and "*condemned to struggle endlessly to be just like its image, pure surface*" (MacCannell 1992: 287). Residents and workers of tourist destination areas are located at the interface between production and consumption and are therefore simultaneously producers or providers of services as well as being part of the tourist consumption experience (Britton 1991: 458).

## 4.2 Conceptualising the Local Dynamics of Tourism Development

Certain scholars are adamant that tourism development should be examined in relation to capitalist development as a whole, and not as a series of isolated transactions within the context of a specific community (Britton 1991; Hall 1994a). However, the analysis of tourism development adopted here is less concerned with the political economy of tourism at a large-scale of analysis, than a micro-analysis of tourism which is directed towards an exploration of the different strategies of adaptation and response to tourism in a particular locality, whilst recognising the influence of the structural and institutional framework which "*set conditions for their action but do not determine their action*" (Blumer 1962: 152, cited in Ortner 1984: 146).<sup>2</sup> Although contemporary forms of global tourism development are underscored by the dynamic of capital accumulation which drives the global economy in its broadest sense, it is important to recognise that, "*the fundamental relations of capitalism developed historically under very different conditions*" across different social formations (Massey 1995: 16). Hence, it must be recognised that tourism is geographically differentiated according to the local distinctiveness of



capitalist development, and that furthermore a capitalism-centred view of the world may ignore different configurations of tourism production which exist at different scales of analysis (Milne 1998: 41).

Processes of tourism development are thus challenged and appropriated at different levels of society by overlapping networks of social action, in which individuals and groups are guided by a particular set of goals and interests. Nevertheless, although actors may be able to exercise a degree of autonomy with regard to their responses to development processes, social agency occurs within structural circumstances which are not of their own making (Marx 1977: 173). It is conditioned by the unequal relationship to different modes of surplus appropriation and political domination within any given social formation, which cannot be reduced to the economic structure alone (cf. Mouzelis 1995: 16). In this regard it is possible to adopt a less reductionist interpretation of power relations:

the capacity of social agents, agencies and institutions to maintain and transform their environment, social or physical. It is about the resources that underpin this capacity and about the forces that shape and influence its exercise. (Held 1994: 311)

To describe the social and economic changes associated with tourism development in terms of a linear progression through a sequence of 'tourism stages' (Butler 1980), ignores the multiplicity of linkages and relations of interdependence which bind a particular locality to wider levels of society and productive activity, and which help shape local patterns of development (Massey 1993: 145). A more creative theoretical approach is needed in order to transcend the "*false opposition*" between the 'global' and 'local' (Foster-Carter 1991: 11), in order to challenge the often schematic and generalized arguments concerning tourism development. An examination of the distinctive processes of local adaptation and response to tourism, therefore needs to be understood in the context of a locality's historical connections to wider socio-economic contexts:

A society, even a village, has its own structure and history, and this must be as much part of the analysis as its relations with the larger context within which it operates. (Ortner 1984: 143)

The spatial distribution of tourism development and the social organisation of its production in a particular locality are thus the result of multiple determinations, which transform the nature and intensity of a locality's linkages to wider socio-economic contexts, and its position within an interlocking network of destinations and flows of people, capital and cultures.

These linkages encompass separate yet inter-related social processes which include the *economic sphere* (different combinations of and relations between capital and labour); the *political* (modes of political authority; relations of power; institutional frameworks); the *cultural* (patterns of consumption; ethnic and cultural identities; ritual/religious practices); and the *social* (migration patterns; occupational structures; gender relations). Each of these different areas constitute forms of local activity which to varying degrees can be seen as a combination of layers linking local processes to a succession of wider spatial structures (cf. Massey 1995: 114). The task at hand therefore is to move away from the often atheoretical nature of tourism development models and normative approaches to the impact of tourism, which impose a single invariant logic of spatial transformation on tourism destinations, with little



forces of change. Given the uneven penetration of capitalist relations in southern Europe any examination of patterns of local response to tourism will have to take account of the relationship between different elements of labour-intensive production with capital-intensive forms of touristification (Giner 1985; Sapelli 1995). Thus it is necessary to consider the interface between local and regional structures of power and modes of economic development in an historical perspective, in relation to the specific nature of the touristic modes of development which take root in particular areas.

#### **4.2.1 The Social Configurations of Tourism Production**

Tourism is usually conceived of as a series of inter-related economic and social activities broadly encapsulated under the heading of a service economy (Urry 1995), and which for statistical purposes is seen as a coherent sector of economic activity. However the treatment of tourism as a discrete sector of economic production has led to many analyses which are based on a schematic differentiation between different 'tourism types', such as the distinction between 'mass' and 'alternative' tourism (Pearce 1994), and 'scales' of tourism activity, in relation to the size and nature of the firm (*e.g.* Rodenburg 1980; Oppermann 1993). Although these criteria may be useful in order to discern general patterns of tourism activity, as a mode of analysing configurations of tourism development these categories lack theoretical weight and are thus of limited explanatory utility. These rather descriptive approaches are formulated in accordance with the needs of classification, rather than responding to the locally and culturally unique manifestations of tourism development. In addition similar weaknesses can be found amongst functionalist analyses of tourism development and social change, which conceptualise tourism development in terms of the mechanistic outcome of external forces, whose impacts are logically derived according to the measurement of 'value-free' criteria, such as the prevailing level of 'social differentiation' within destinations (*e.g.* Loukissas 1977, 1982), which is not conceived in relation to the broader context of political economy and local power structures which mediate access to resources and entrepreneurial opportunities in tourism.

Similar shortcomings are present within the analyses of tourism based on the formal-informal sector model (see Chapter Three: *Tourism and Economic Dualism*). Studies which have adopted this framework limit their understanding of tourism entrepreneurship to the relatively functional articulation between two mutually exclusive sectors, and thus fail to conceive of the diverse configurations of tourism entrepreneurship which may arise within a locality, which illustrate the differential capacity of particular community segments to appropriate the opportunities made available through tourism. Furthermore, the linear conception of tourism entrepreneurship, as depicted in the work of Oppermann (1993), who argues that the tourism informal sector performs a 'discovery function', may be correct to suggest that the initial flourishing of tourism enterprise is 'organic' (Cohen 1979a). However there is little indication of the internal social stratification of the areas where tourism takes root, and the manner in which it reveals itself within the specific configurations of entrepreneurship.



Britton (1987b) has also argued that 'scale' and 'ownership' are meaningless in the absence of a theoretical framework of analysis. Thus he argues that, ownership is more than a juridical category but rather it should be considered as "*an economic relation to the means of organization of an enterprise and the distribution/appropriation of surplus generated by the enterprise*" (1987b: 183). Tourism enterprises which are similar in size and type, may vary significantly according to local cultural norms, the organization of work and what Massey refers to as their, "*orientation to production and investment opportunities*" (1995: 27). This therefore has important implications for our understanding of how patterns of entrepreneurship are linked to the distribution of power in a specific locality. Moreover there are significant degrees of differentiation within what are nominally referred to as 'family' or informal sector enterprises, a factor ignored by many studies of local level tourism development. In this respect the weakness of dualist analyses of the formal and informal sector lies in the fact that it categorises family-run firms entirely within the informal sector. Family enterprises may range from single bars or restaurants to more large-scale and possibly capitalised units of production which are characterised by a far greater degree of linkages to wider sources of capital, and other spheres of investment (e.g. land speculation).

Some of the shortcomings of Marxist analyses of the articulation between different modes of production, have also been highlighted (Long and Richardson 1978). Although these approaches offer a richer explanation of the complex relationships between different forms of production in the context of dependent capitalism, the Marxist perspective fails to adequately examine the degree of internal differentiation *within* non-capitalist modes of production, and the degree to which these processes serve to reproduce household economies (Long and Richardson 1978: 186-189). Indeed both approaches tend to obscure the internal variations within non-capitalist or non-formal sectors of the economy, and more significantly fail to conceptualise the nature of the inter-relationships which cut across these dualist categories. A particular household cannot be considered as a uniform socio-economic entity, and indeed there may be a variety of strategies of subsistence and accumulation which intersect within any one particular household, thus tying its occupants into a diverse web of social relations at different levels of activity. Goffee and Scase (1983) have attempted to develop a conceptual framework for the examination of entrepreneurship in the service sector which transcends the shortcomings of both dualist and/or reductionist Marxist analyses. In their examination of the entrepreneurial middle-class in the service sector in Britain they differentiate four sub-categories of entrepreneurs according to the relative mix of capital and labour employed in a range of enterprises: *self-employed*; *small entrepreneurs*; *owner-controllers*; *owner-directors*. What their argument shows is that the entrepreneurial middle-class is situated in a contradictory class location (cf. Wright 1993), in so far as they exercise varying degrees of control over the accumulation process and the work force, which has significant implications for social mobility.

An investigation of the dynamics of tourism development must therefore begin at the level of social interaction within the context of the local economy, if we are to uncover the social nature of economic development processes:



If production is a social process, then the social nature of capital is of fundamental importance when it comes to characterising a particular company. Descriptions based on apparently objective (because quantitative or formal) measures may completely miss all the important differences. (Massey 1995: 27)

A fuller understanding of the range of local responses to tourism needs to be conceptualised in relation to wider historical forces of social change, as well as the internal differentiation within non-capitalist sectors of the local tourist economy. Important factors to consider therefore include: the social composition of the entrepreneurial classes, the organisation and structure of enterprise, the form of labour relations, the nature and scope of linkages to wider domains (mediated by political allegiances, cultural-educational capital), the degree of integration/concentration of tourism capital/resources and the variation of entrepreneurial strategies amongst those nominally at the same point in the overall social relations of production.<sup>3</sup> Ultimately it is important to examine the substance of the connections through which social actors and particular households are tied into different structures of tourism enterprise, and furthermore, how this is manifest in specific spatial configurations of tourism development within the destination.

#### 4.2.2 Social Relations and Tourist Space

Tourism by its very nature embraces all domains of social life but has often been analysed either from a predominantly social perspective, emphasising the changing nature of social relationships and its 'impact' on the cultural identity and social institutions of tourism destinations (UNESCO 1976), or on the other hand by *a priori* tourism development models which fetishize space (Miossec 1976; Young 1983) which conceptualise the expansion of tourism through space with no reference to social processes and relations of power which construct it. In contrast it can also be argued that anthropological and sociological analyses of tourism have often emphasised the social and interactional domains of touristic activity at the expense of their relationships to specific structural and spatial forms, whilst positivistic orientations to the study of development and planning issues have ignored the social relations and power structures which constitute particular geographical configurations of touristic space and condition the varied modalities of human agency within it.

Space, as Lefebvre (1976) reminds us, is *political*, it "*has been shaped and moulded from historical and natural elements, but this has been a political process. Space is political and ideological. It is a product literally filled with ideologies*" (cited in Soja 1989: 80). This does not merely refer to the fact that it is an arena in which political conflict takes place, but rather it is constitutive of such relations of power. The nature of space needs to be integrated into analyses of social change and the manner in which it conditions the adaptation of particular groups to their environment and the competition for resources. Spatial change is thus constructed through social action which occurs *over* or *in* space (Massey 1995: 50-51). Hence, the significance of the physical environment for influencing particular structures of space and social organisation is only useful when seen in the context of the uneven development of productive forces and political struggle for resources (Padiglione 1979: 89). Indeed Saarinen (1998) argues that we need to conceptualise destinations in accordance with the manner in which different social constituencies, whether they are organised according to neighbourhood coalitions, social classes, ethnic groups, political alliances, or factions of capitalist investors, ascribe value and meaning to the landscape. Thus, for



example, heritage has a *spatial* as well as a *social* and *ideological* dimension, as demonstrated by the ideological battles embedded within the reconstruction of tourist sites and the borders of the 'nation' itself, in the Balkans (Allcock 1995). The intervention of these groups in the organisation and distribution of touristic space will vary according to their overriding values and historical relationship to that particular locality. Thus in order to better comprehend the emergence of tourism destinations and the different uses of spaces within them, we need to recognize the connections between the socio-cultural and ideological 'value' of space, and the economic and political actions which take place within it.

Tourism gives rise to the emergence of spatial forms which are conducive to the production and reproduction of its specific configuration in a particular locality, which differentiates it from other forms of industrial and commercial production. For instance, although comparative advantage in terms of cheap and productive labour is not as significant for the location of touristic enterprises in a particular locality as it is for manufacturing industries (Rodríguez and Portales 1994), it would be simplistic to assume that the emergence of tourism is reliant merely on the specificity of a location's unique environmental and cultural features. This approach reduces geography to a passive space over which touristic activities are distributed according to each region's locational attractiveness, or rather, "*supply-side comparative advantage in tourism*" (Bond and Ladman 1980: 232). It is precisely this sort of physical determinism which underwrites the normative conceptions of tourist area development in the literature. This is demonstrated clearly in Opperman's (1993) model of 'tourist space' in developing countries, which elaborates on the spatial diffusion of formal and informal sector activities in a social and political vacuum (see Chapter One: *Models of Tourism Development*).

These models merely describe the *consequences* of the social, economic and political processes which actively construct different tourism spaces, at the expense of examining the societal structures in which they are rooted. However it is important that the conditioning role of geography on the spatial variation of tourism production and consumption is also considered. The early production of tourism space in Spain focused predominantly on the coastal litoral and was accompanied by significant investment in fixed capital in the built environment along narrow coastal strips (Williams and Montanari 1995: 9). Consequently it left Spain vulnerable to fluctuations in market demand at the end of the 1980s when tourists deserted these areas in significant quantities (Jurdao 1992: 318-320). What is significant for an ethnographic analysis of tourism space however, is the manner in which different segments of the social formation are able to effect and respond to such changes. What has become evident is that large investors and governments are able to manipulate the cultural landscapes of tourism to a greater extent through marketing, promotion and diversification into other areas, and thus ensure their continued survival through the generation of new tourism activities, such as certain forms of rural tourism or the development of luxury golf course resorts in Andalucia (Jurdao 1992: Chapters 23 & 24). In contrast, less powerful collections of entrepreneurs or residents who merely consume the use values of space in which tourism exerts its presence, are only able to react to changes in the dominant mode of production and adapt their strategies of economic survival accordingly (see Harvey 1982).



Different segments of the social formation and entrepreneurial coalitions will thus vary in the nature of their relationships to community spaces. This relationship is characterised by Castells (1996: 425) as one between the “*space of flows*” inhabited by global elites, and the “*space of places*” in which inhabitants, bound by shared life experiences connected to a distinct locality, reside. Hence, the manner in which the owners of a local or family-run tourist enterprise in a particular locality relate to the spatial forms within a tourism destination, may contrast with ‘non-local’ investors or capitalistic enterprise which are more integrated into wider social and economic networks, and whose interests lie almost exclusively in the exploitation of the commercial touristic potential of the locality. Such contrasts are highlighted by Peck and Lepie (1989: 214), who describe how commercial and social conceptions of beachfront land became the subject of conflict between vacation home owners and resident islanders in a North Carolina coastal town.

Faced with competition from outside for scarce community resources, different groups *within* particular communities may unite in opposition to these external interests. However it is also important to examine the factors which structure and condition *intra*-community competition over resources. Powerful local actors situated both within formal decision-making bodies and informal networks of locally influential citizens, often mediate between outside investors in order to enhance the growth potential of the local area in question, which will have concrete implications for the appropriation of community resources (Molotch 1976: 311-312). In addition there is competition between local entrepreneurial factions for land and other resources which may usefully be exploited for touristic purposes. Residents or investors who are for example already disproportionately endowed with land, may lobby local government more aggressively for the appropriate *social overhead capital* (e.g. access roads, pavements etc.) which will enable them to exploit this capital more effectively. However their commercial interests may not only conflict (or compete) with the commercial interests of other local entrepreneurs and business persons (e.g. the construction of a new road may take potential customers away from the part of the locality where other enterprise is situated), but it may also lead to decisions which transform the spatial patterns of development thereby affecting long-standing *socio-cultural practices*.

This may occur via the sale of beachfront property to private developers thus restricting community access (Peck and Lepie 1989), or the conversion of historically symbolic buildings or gathering places into commercial use (Cockburn and Orbasli 1997), by governments or coalitions of private interests, who often attempt to exploit historic resources in a different manner (Odermatt 1996). Waldren also demonstrates the importance of integrating an analysis of tourism and socio-spatial change with an understanding of the changing *social composition* of different categories of local and non-local actors, and the manner in which different ‘local’ constituencies intervene in the tourism landscape. In her study of the village of Deia, Waldren (1996: 228-236) offers detailed ethnographic evidence to demonstrate the manner in which different conceptions of space amongst distinct categories of local residents became manifest in overt conflict in the context of the increasing modernisation and touristification of the village.



There are also parallels between processes of gentrification, urban renewal and tourism, which may not only emerge from a similar combination of socio-economic forces, but are often bound up with each other in specific examples of spatial reorganization (see Beauregard 1986). For example, the creation of new forms of urban leisure and tourism spaces is increasingly being seen as a mechanism of urban regeneration of inner-city areas in large Western cities and is driven by the search for new investment opportunities in a period of intensified territorial competition between cities, neighbourhoods, regions and states (Britton 1991; Hall 1994a: 155-167). Not only have hotels, marinas and other leisure-related properties become distinct segments of the property market, but the increasing significance of symbolic and cultural capital in relation to the valorization of space, has converted 'places' into commodity forms in their own right (Britton 1991; Zukin 1995).

However, socio-spatial changes associated with tourism cannot be reduced to either the functional dynamic of capital accumulation or the enlightened agency of innovative entrepreneurs. The spatial configurations of tourist space emerges from the interaction of a number of factors including the changing nature of leisure and tourism lifestyles; modes of consumption; economic restructuring and the spatial dispersion of different fractions of capital, which is often manifest in speculative property-driven accumulation. However underlying the intense competition for space by competing segments of capitalist classes and political alliances, are a variety of constantly shifting social constituencies whose relationship to the physical landscape of tourism is defined in the context of particular processes of development. In order to develop a more comprehensive analysis of the dynamics of spatial change we cannot ignore the nature and scope of social, economic and political agency which actively shapes existing configuration of space, and conditions the physical and cultural landscapes of tourism in specific localities.

### 4.3 The Problematization of 'Place'

Giddens (1991) points out that in many respects sociology (one could suggest the social sciences as a whole) has been preoccupied with bounded notions of society, when in fact 'modernity' acts as an inherently globalising force and in so doing destabilises the 'units' of society which have been the object of study for the social sciences. Such a conception is echoed by Pitt who considers this in relation to "social islands" which "may be simply defined as relatively small groups of people who consider themselves, and in important symbolic and behavioural indicators are indeed, separate from other groups" (1980: 1052). This he posits in contrast to the structural determinism of boundaries that "conceptualizes groups as closely integrated into a functional whole" (1980: 1052). A critical conceptualisation of 'place' is therefore integral to an ethnographic analysis of tourism development, which considers the manner in which space is conceived within processes of entrepreneurship. In order to clarify the relationship between the research setting and the theoretical outlook of this study, it is to this problematic that this section is concerned.



The analytical unity of the Mediterranean and its usefulness as an object of study has been a central concern for anthropologists since the immediate post-war epoch. Initial attempts to define a Mediterranean entity as a focus of study, were strongly influenced by British structural-functionalism and a preoccupation with studying small-scale and isolated rural communities (Boissevain 1979b: 82). In his celebrated study of a rural peasant society in Andalusia, *The People of the Sierra*, Pitt-Rivers (1971) identifies an essential sense of solidarity which transcends underlying social divisions within the *pueblo*. The *pueblo*, which denotes both 'village' and 'people', not only refers to the territorial limits of the village, but is also a powerful metaphor which provides the social, cultural, economic and political point of reference for its members, through which their interests are mobilised and defended against 'outsiders' (Carr 1982: 58-60). These works thus attributed to the Mediterranean region in general a shared set of values and a social system based on face-to-face relations and autonomous, small-scale (predominantly rural) societies (Goddard *et al.* 1996: 7). However from the 1970s onwards several scholars, notably Boissevain (1975; 1979b), Davis (1977) and Gilmore (1976, 1980, 1982), have subjected the conceptual premises upon which anthropological studies of Europe and the Mediterranean had been built, to critical scrutiny:

The underlying unity of the Mediterranean region does not devolve from a single inventory of shared traits. (Gilmore 1982: 200)

Much of the criticism was directed at the predilection for studying isolated peasant villages which were furthermore conceived of as bounded units of study, ignoring the larger social processes in which these societies have long been embedded (Gilmore 1982: 182-183). Moreover, the intimacy described by Carr and observed by Pitt-Rivers, is often mistaken for the non-existence of class and other social divisions, when in fact the *pueblo* "is fiercely egalitarian - but shows class" (Cohen 1992: 112). Cohen suggests that these misconceptions stem from a flawed epistemological and methodological stance which pays disproportionate attention to the visible form or 'structure' of a community rather than the symbolic practices which give meaning to and constitute the structural contours of a particular community (1992: 28-38). This was all the more ironic given that these views were held at a time when much of southern Europe was undergoing dramatic social, economic and political transformations, uprooting agrarian populations, fuelling urban growth and intensifying linkages to global markets, not to mention the expansion of tourism! In a particularly stinging attack, Llobera argues that part of this weakness stems from the fact that Mediterranean anthropology is the creation of the Anglo-Saxon anthropological imagination, underpinned by their monopoly of the "knowledge-product" (1986: 30).<sup>4</sup>

One of the principal weaknesses identified by Boissevain (1975) was the inappropriateness of translating the methods and concepts of analysis elaborated in the context of non-Western, tribal societies into the European context. Giner (1985) however suggests that there are certain consistencies in relation to their historical evolution, modes of political domination, nature of economic development and class structures which allow a cautious macro-sociological generalization. Nevertheless beyond certain broader similarities between southern European social formations, both Giner (1985) and Gilmore (1982) are critical of the linear view of history exemplified by the 'world systems' approach (Wallerstein 1974;



Seers 1979b). In particular they are critical of the fact that it ignores the diversity of economic development experiences across southern Europe, which are linked to the intra-regional variations of class relations, political institutions, ethnic and cultural systems which mediate their integration into wider structures of trade and development. It is thus more appropriate to examine the manner in which these macro-sociological processes are defined and transformed in specific regional/local contexts. In a similar vein, Davis (1977) does suggest that the emphasis on small isolated villages characteristic of much Mediterranean anthropology, has ignored the extent of cultural and economic exchanges that have existed for centuries within and between different levels of Mediterranean society (see Wolf 1982: Ch. 4). This point is clearly illustrated by Serrán Pagán's incisive critique of Pitt-River's functionalist conception of internal village cohesion:

Un pueblo no es una entidad estática, monolítica. Es preciso analizarlo dentro de un contexto nacional e internacional, de una red de intercambios culturales, sociales y económicos. (1980: 89) <sup>5</sup>

It would be simplistic to conceive the nature of place as the result of an internalised, static identity handed down through the ages. It is rather an ongoing process "*constructed out of a particular constellation of social relations, meeting and weaving together at a particular locus*" (Massey 1991: 28). In this respect Gilmore (1982: 185-190) has questioned the assumption of social solidarity often ascribed to the inhabitants of the isolated rural villages of southern Spain, which have ignored important concerns of class and other forms of social stratification. Studies of social transformation at any scale need to incorporate an analysis of how the boundaries of place are socially constructed through the actions and experiences of its diverse constituents (Cohen 1992; Saarinen 1998). In this respect Massey postulates an interesting distinction between 'community' and 'place':

On the one hand communities can exist without being in the same place—from networks of friends with like interests, to major religious, ethnic or political communities. On the other hand, the instances of places housing 'single' communities in the sense of coherent social groups are probably..quite rare. (1993: 28)

It is therefore more useful to conceptualise places as "*imagined worlds*" or as a series of cultural landscapes which are experienced and constituted by human agency (Appadurai 1990). With respect to the analyses of island communities, Pitt (1980) argues that misleading oppositions (*e.g.* island-mainland) has often obscured the existence of "*social islands*" whose boundaries are constituted socially and symbolically rather than geographically. A place is therefore not congruent with a geographic reference point, but is defined by the interactions of the diverse *social constituencies* that intersect within it. Castells (1996) offers a definition of place as a space of lived experiences in contrast to the "*space of flows*" constituted by elites:

A place is a locale whose form, function and meaning are self-contained within the boundaries of physical contiguity. (Castells 1996: 423)

Unlike Massey (1991, 1993), he provides less analysis of how the two are intertwined, and indeed how the agency of geographically distant elites may be a crucial component of the identity of place (*e.g.* the role of the Disney Corporation in Orlando, Florida). This is not to discard entirely the influence of physical and environmental factors on the formation of place, however it is suggested that we must consider the nature of social relations which give meaning to spatial patterns of development and are in



turn moulded by them. Not only are different segments of a particular social formation bound into wider contexts through what Wolf refers to as “*multiple external connections*” (1982: 387), but spatially dispersed social groups are also bound together in asymmetrical relations of power through these linkages, neatly defined by Massey as “*power geometries*” (1993). Social actors are therefore endowed with unequal capacities to engage in and benefit from tourism development in a specific locality, depending upon where they are situated in relation to these flows. Given that the appropriation, allocation and use of resources in the context of tourism, is a heterogeneous process often characterised by a combination of different modes of production (van der Werff 1980), a processual and non-bounded analysis of place can be integrated into an examination of the material forces of production and political modes of domination which underpin these social relationships, in order to provide a clearer understanding of tourism’s role in processes of social and spatial change.

Of equal importance is to challenge the physical determinism which suggests that physical isolation (insularity) and geographical isolation inevitably lead to peripherality. In this respect Selwyn (1980) is critical of the notion that islands represent a useful category for comparison purely on the grounds that they share common features of geographical insularity or what he terms, “*islandness*”. In this regard it is their validity as an *analytical* concept which is questionable. It is not their *islandness* or *geographic peripherality* that condition the development experiences of island regions, but rather the nature of their linkages to wider sets of social relations and structures which transcend physical boundaries. In particular what is relevant is how the material forces of production are organised in order to appropriate the resources of a specific locality.

Schneider *et al.* (1972) claimed nearly three decades ago that anthropologists and sociologists had long recognised the limitations of the bounded community study, a claim which has been borne out by recent theoretical directions in anthropology (see Ortner 1984; Clifford and Marcus 1986; Friedman 1994), and studies of tourism and socio-economic change in a variety of Mediterranean localities (see Boissevain 1996a; Godard *et al.* 1996; Waldren 1996). Brandes (1979) however, argues that the critique of the ‘village study’ has been exaggerated, and is only valid where it has been regarded as representative of a wider social whole. Moreover there is still a degree of work to be done with regard to analysing the manner in which tourism intervenes in the social and spatial landscapes of destination areas, and in particular, the relationship between different social constituencies and the material forces of change in which tourism plays a role.

The issue to be considered in an ethnographic study of tourism development and entrepreneurship is not simply whether the community under study represents a valid ‘unit’ of study, but rather to discover the manner in which different conceptions of space underpin the processes of tourism development being examined, and the identity of place itself. Tourism destination areas are not bounded and seamless wholes, with coherent and unified identities as depicted by functionalist typologies of the tourist system (*e.g.* Leiper 1979; Mathieson and Wall 1982), but are forged in the context of social change which link them to distant localities. Furthermore the touristic identity of a place cannot be conceived as either an



inevitable or spontaneous phenomenon. It is the result of the spatial diffusion of capital and specific political strategies which allocate touristic functions to a particular locality, combined with the more complex and varied patterns of socio-cultural consumption which are underpinned by the power to define authenticity and what is deemed of 'touristic worth'.

## Conclusion

The approach adopted in this study is therefore constructed in relation to a particular research problem and related set of questions which arise from it. It is therefore not the aim of this thesis to elaborate a comprehensive historical study of tourism development in Playa de Mogán but rather to examine the role of local agency in relation to patterns of tourism entrepreneurship in this locality. This study thus raises questions concerning the relationship between the specific configurations of tourism development within particular destination regions and their relationship to processes of social change in wider contexts. It has been argued that it is not sufficient to merely fit empirical data gathered at a local level to a particular model or conceptual framework, but to use the ethnographic data in dialogue with theoretically derived concepts relevant to our understanding of tourism development. In addition, it has been emphasised that what is proposed is not merely a matter of matching *external* processes of tourism development at a macro-level to certain identifiable *local* manifestations which are *internal* to the social formation, but rather to re-conceptualise notions of tourism and social change which sets them in the context of a locality's linkages to a range of diverse social constituencies at wider levels and the uneven development of geographic space.

It has been emphasised that local patterns of tourism development and entrepreneurship, can be better understood if the uniform assumptions regarding the social categories of enterprise and entrepreneurship are rejected in favour of a sociological approach which recognises the diversity of local capitalist formations and the social forces of change which constitute them. The key to understanding local modes of response to tourism lies in a conceptualisation of the social structure in tandem with the social organisation of tourism enterprise, the role of state agency and the diverse nature of tourism consumption. It has also been demonstrated that space is not only the arena in which conflict between individuals and social groups over the control of tourism resources takes place, but that it also forms the basis upon which antagonisms may appear within the social formation. In this respect our understanding of the relationship between the forces of tourism development and social transformation can be enhanced through an examination of how such processes become manifest in specific geographic configurations of tourism development and enterprise. It is argued that tourism destination areas can be conceptualised as spaces of production and consumption, in which different social groups contest the appropriation and use of both material and symbolic resources, in accordance with their needs and values. The next chapter will discuss the merits of a critical ethnography for the analysis of the complex social dynamics of tourism entrepreneurship in relation to tourism and social change in this context.



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<sup>1</sup> Although non-European cultures (*e.g.* Japan) have also been fascinated by the 'exotic', it has not underpinned an economic, political and cultural hegemony on the unprecedented scale achieved by the dominant Western powers (Mouzelis 1998).

<sup>2</sup> There are a number of recent publications devoted to the discussion of 'post-Marxist and/or non-reductionist approaches to the political economy of development: see, Evans and Stephens (1988), Sklair (1988), Vandergeest and Buttel (1988), Mouzelis (1988, 1990), Booth (1993), Burnham (1994), Strange (1994), Wilkin (1996), Makdisi *et al.* (1996).

<sup>3</sup> It is recognised however that not all of these factors may be examined to the same degree of detail, and indeed the emphasis will vary according to the method of enquiry. For example, given the methodological approach adopted in this study no attempt was made to ascertain detailed economic data regarding the investments of particular entrepreneurs. It became evident early on that entrepreneurs were unwilling to divulge this data, and that any further attempt to do so would have jeopardised the wider aims of the study (see Chapter Five: *Applying Ethnographic Fieldwork in the Resort Setting*).

<sup>4</sup> See the Afterword in Behar (1986) for an eloquent reflection on the relationship of anthropologists to the past in the social formations they study.

<sup>5</sup> "A village is not a static and monolithic entity. It is more appropriate to analyse it within a national and international context, embedded within a web of cultural, social and economic transactions."



# CHAPTER FIVE

## Towards a Critical Ethnography of Tourism Development

### Introduction

Given the theoretical concerns central to this thesis, outlined in the Introduction and discussed further in the previous chapter, this chapter will evaluate the relevance of an ethnographic methodology to the analysis of processes of touristification in the chosen research area. In contrast to the tendency of earlier studies of the impact of tourism on destination areas to treat the 'community' as an all-embracing unit of society enclosed by mechanistic boundaries, the approach adopted in this study is not focused on a fixed geographic conceptualisation of place, but rather adopts an analytic definition of "case" as outlined by Miles and Huberman (1994: 440). The focus is therefore on the particular problematic which questions normative analyses of tourism development and their intellectual presuppositions from the perspective of local experiences of tourism development and their responses to the social forces of change that are generated and affected by the process of touristification which have emerged in Playa de Mogán.

It is beyond the scope of this chapter, and indeed this thesis to consider in full the application of qualitative, and in particular ethnographic approaches to the study of tourism.<sup>1</sup> Indeed many of the issues have already been covered in the overview of the different approaches to the study of tourism development (see Chapters One - Three). However it is worth dwelling briefly on some of the principal applications of ethnographic methodologies to the study of localities which constitute the setting for touristic development. This section provides an overview of ethnographic fieldwork in studies of tourism and in particular tourism development, in relation to the origins of ethnographic inquiry as a whole. The principal tenets of a critical ethnography are then outlined in relation to its particular utility in the field of tourism development. Finally the author's own experiences in relation to the fieldwork are discussed with a view to establishing both the parameters of inquiry as well as some of the limitations of this particular approach.

### 5.1 Tourism and Ethnographic Inquiry

The origins of ethnography are commonly associated with the European colonisation of 'primitive' non-Western societies and the study of these areas via the systematic collection of data by professional anthropologists in the field. However, rich and varied accounts of human cultures and societies can be traced back to Greek and Roman times, in the writings of Arab, Chinese and Indian explorers and scholars, and are found in the travel journals of early European traders such as Marco Polo (Hill and Hitchcock 1996: 17), and European colonists in Africa and America (Harris 1968: 16-18; Pratt 1986).<sup>2</sup> A more systematic and scientifically grounded approach to the collection and analysis of ethnographic data, informed by specific sets of anthropological concepts and theories did emerge during the period of



European expansionism and the establishment of colonial rule (in particular British) from the early eighteenth century until the second half of the twentieth century (Hill and Hitchcock 1996: 19). Whilst the relationship between anthropologists and colonialism was far more complex than one of mere complicity on behalf of the former, their very presence in these societies was facilitated by the forces which underpinned colonial domination as a whole. Moreover, the evolutionary anthropologists of the 19th century were concerned with the classification of human societies along an evolutionary sequence from *primitive* to *modern*, using a mixture of historical and ethnographic data (Vidich and Lyman 1994: 25-28). Indeed evolutionary theories formed the backdrop against which 19th century travellers documented the customs and traditions of rural peasant populations in southern Europe, thus stimulating a wider interest in the region (Brettell 1986: 164-165). Indeed Waldren (1996: 19-23) notes how the writings and ethnological collections of the 19th century aristocrat and traveller, the Archduke Luis Salvador, still constitute a valuable catalogue of resources for the study of Mallorquin natural, social and archeological history.

The scientific basis of anthropological fieldwork was heralded by the cultural anthropologists led by Boas who insisted upon detailed and systematic study of primitive societies in context (Friedman 1994). The importance of particularist ethnographies was further emphasised in the works of Malinowski and Radcliffe-Brown, who emphasised the primacy of concrete empirical investigation, operationalised through the practice of ethnography using *participant observation* (Harris 1968: 170). Despite the positivistic underpinnings of their attempts to construct detailed and 'objective' ethnographic monographs of 'primitive societies' based on directly observable traits, they introduced the notion of *the researcher as research tool* which is still a vital and central pillar of an ethnographic strategy of inquiry. There has been disagreement concerning the distinctive features of ethnography, ranging from descriptive tool of social life to that of philosophical paradigm (Hammersley and Atkinson 1983; Atkinson and Hammersley 1994).<sup>3</sup> Nevertheless it can perhaps best be described as a social research technique defined by an interpretive approach to the analysis of society, summarised by Hollinshead as, "*the behavioural, institutional, and processual context of a society, as seen from the actor's point of view*" (1991: 654).

Unsurprisingly certain areas of anthropological and sociological study have often been accused of placing disproportionate emphasis on marginal areas and/or peoples, in both a *cultural* and *geographic* sense (e.g. the 'noble savage'), as well as in *socioeconomic* terms (e.g. the urban proletariat),<sup>4</sup> thus pre-determining or emphasising the peripherality of the phenomena under study (Altheide and Johnson 1994: 486). Furthermore these analytical constructs have often been underpinned by both explicit and implicit concerns to 'develop/civilize' or 'liberate/emancipate' these marginal subjects (see Hobart 1993). This intellectual orientation has also been present in the work carried out on 'isolated peasant villages' in southern Europe, conducted by the 'Mediterraneanists' during the 1950s and 1960s, which has since been subject to extensive critique (see Chapter Four: *The Problematization of 'Place'*). In particular, their tendency to tribalize rural societies was conspicuous in their failure to consider key social variables internal to these societies, including class consciousness and social conflict (Gilmore 1976).



Many of the early anthropological and sociological studies of tourism continued the legacy of studying in locations peripheral to the large metropolitan centres although their normative outlook for the most part was one of empathy with their subjects in contrast to the paternalism of previous generations of anthropologists. This was partly due to the fact that during the 1950s and 1960s international tourism had begun to take root in the former colonial dominions and other parts of the 'Third World' precisely because they were perceived to be 'isolated' and 'exotic' by early visitors. More significantly however, the conclusions arrived at by these scholars embodied a shift in consciousness which owed much to the emergence of dependency theories and related critical literature on tourism which "*challenged the identification of modernity with development*" (Wood 1993: 54). The development of tourism as a legitimate field of anthropological and sociological inquiry was however hindered at an early stage due to the initial reluctance of academic institutions and funding agencies to take such research seriously, as well as the disinclination of researchers to be involved in an area perceived by some, as frivolous or implicated in exploitative forms of conduct (Nash 1996: 2-3). Indeed Nuñez (1989: 265) emphasises that initial incursions into the field were often incidental discoveries of tourism's effect on host societies by anthropologists working on more 'traditional' anthropological concerns to do with cultural contact/change in areas such as Malta (Boissevain 1977) and the Basque country (Greenwood 1976). Alternatively, insight of an ethnographic nature into the early effects of tourism in the Mediterranean can be found in travel literature (Lewis 1984), or else, anthropological research on tourism has been undertaken after an initial period of vacation by anthropologists in the area being studied (*e.g.* Halpern and Halpern 1972).

A substantial proportion of early investigations into tourism focused on tourist motivation and behaviour using a variety of qualitative approaches, of which the work of Boorstin (1964) and MacCannell (1973, 1976) represent defining moments in this area. Although criticised by Cohen (1988: 34) for its "*unsystematic*" and "*informal*" data collection methods, few dispute the importance of MacCannell's work on the tourist quest for authenticity, for precipitating a number of empirical studies which sought to test his theoretical concepts from a more rigorously applied *emic* perspective, which were more sensitive to the tourists' point of view. Moreover by situating his work within the mainstream of sociological theory it can be argued that MacCannell's most significant contribution has been to provide a theoretical framework for the examination of tourist experiences, which has since been further refined and examined by a number of scholars (*e.g.* Smith 1978; Buck 1978, Cohen 1979b, Gottlieb 1982).

Early ethnographic studies of tourism development can be traced back to the early 1960s (Nuñez 1963), and in particular to a variety of studies dedicated to unearthing the effects of tourism on host societies published in the 1970s, exemplified by Smith's seminal collection of case studies, *Hosts and Guests* (1978, revised 1989). As discussed in Chapter One, their predominant concerns were centred around the effects of cultural contact, and in particular the potential effects of tourism on cultural change in native (less developed) societies. Methodologically speaking, much of the work during this period was strongly infused with the empiricist tradition of Anglo-Saxon ethnography (Selwyn 1994, 1996a), and often contained little explicit discussion of theoretical concepts. De Kadt's (1979) edited collection of



development-oriented case studies was important in many respects, not least because it shifted the focus of inquiry into the domain of “*resort tourism*”, in contrast to the more culturally-orientated settings of the former collection. Although these studies revealed important insights into the relationship between tourism and a range of issues from planning and development, economic benefits, social welfare, the effects of host-tourist interactions and arts and crafts, few of the studies included involved the application of a truly emic ethnographic perspective on development despite the contribution of anthropologists.

The past two decades have witnessed the publication of numerous field research studies in tourism which have combined ethnographic and other strategies of inquiry to focus on tourist development at the local level. Perhaps in response to his own recommendation that “*research in the sociology of tourism should become more processual, contextual, comparative and emic*” (Cohen 1979a: 31), Cohen has led the way in attempting to develop a theoretically-informed examination of tourism development through a series of ethnographic investigations into entrepreneurship and tourism enterprise in Thailand (1979c, 1982b, 1982c). Similar work has been carried out on the structure of tourism enterprise in Thailand (Wahnschafft 1982), the Dominican Republic (Kermath and Thomas 1992) and Greece (Loukissas 1982; Tsartas 1992) which have however employed survey methods, often analysed in a quantitative manner. Although the evidence revealed in these studies reveals a number of interesting characteristics regarding broader patterns of tourism development, they rely on conventional categories of analysis in order to classify economic activities related to tourism.<sup>5</sup>

In light of recent critiques of the ethnographer as ‘privileged observer’ (Clifford and Marcus 1986), certain tourism ethnographers have questioned the epistemological distance that ostensibly exists between tourists and anthropologists (Crick 1995b). Crick (1995b) goes so far as to suggest that both activities involve practices which overlap, and are framed by similar socio-political circumstances. Nevertheless, Errington and Gewertz (1989: 46) disagree with his proposition on the basis that a critical sensibility differentiates the motivations of anthropologists from those of tourists. A number of studies have begun to integrate ethnographic strategies of inquiry with theoretical concerns, which display an awareness of power and its manifestations through touristic processes. In his long-term research into tourism development in Ladakh and Northern Thailand Michaud (1991, 1997) has begun to explore the interface between ethnic identity, social stratification and entrepreneurship. Similarly, other detailed ethnographic investigations into the local level dynamics of tourism development, have also revealed a more complex pattern of adaptation and response, using a combination of ethnographic methods in conjunction with theoretical insights (see Chapter Three: *Tourism Entrepreneurship and Social Stratification*).

This review is by no means exhaustive, rather it has sketched out the parameters of ethnographic inquiry which have been established and which continue to be developed within the literature on local tourism development.<sup>6</sup> Despite such advances it is this author’s contention that there remains considerable work to be done as regards the relationship between detailed ethnographic case studies within particular localities and theoretical explanations of social change which are able to connect local strategies of



response to tourism with underlying structural processes at wider levels. In this respect, the following section will therefore outline the parameters of a critical ethnography and a justification for its application in this particular research setting.

## 5.2 Tourism Development: a Critical Ethnographic Approach

...any anthropological approach to tourism must be based on a thoroughly empirical research strategy which seeks hermeneutic understanding in terms of the knowledge possessed by the participants themselves - their definitions, goals, strategies, decisions and the perceived consequences of their actions (intended or otherwise). (Wilson 1981: 477)

Not only was the notion of a traditional or primitive society grounded in the history of an illusion (Kuper 1988; MacCannell 1992), but by extension of this reasoning, the study of social phenomena within metropolitan 'core' societies is just as significant a focus of sociological and anthropological research. The now long discredited notion of the traditional community study in anthropology should however also be reflected by a rejection of any conception of tourism destination regions as hermetic, culturally bounded 'host societies'. Hence the selection of a research setting for this study is based upon a set of questions with wider theoretical relevance, rather than a fixed concerns with mapping the 'impacts' of tourism in a particular village. The study is carried out *in* this locality not as an end in itself, but as the vehicle with which to explore the processes of touristification experienced here, and what they are able to tell us about tourism development given the presence of certain sociological conditions.

It is important therefore to disentangle the conventional association of ethnographic fieldwork with the study of bounded social units, whether defined as traditional societies, peripheries or marginalised regions, and thus to avoid conflating the need to define a relatively coherent 'research setting' with the conceptualisation of 'place' as constituted through the social networks and structural forces which bind actors into wider realities. A social formation is a fluid and dynamic entity whose boundaries are constantly changing and redefined by social action in the context of wider structural changes. In this sense the village of Playa de Mogán is conceived of as a space of human agency constituted within a web of social relations and geographic constraints, rather than an immutable socio-geographic entity. Such shortcomings have been identified by Wilson (1993) who argues that Buck's (1978) account of tourism and boundary maintenance amongst the Amish obscures the broader transactional processes which have brought the Amish into contact with a wider arena of socio-economic experience; firstly as a result of increasing contact with tourists searching for the 'real' Amish, and secondly due to the growing pressure on the Amish to enter into the monetary economy geared towards the exploitation of their own 'touristic features'.

Interpretative strategies of inquiry have at times emphasised the interpretation of cultural meaning at the expense of social action (Marcus 1986). Such 'post-modernist' approaches have found particular resonance in studies of the construction of tourist identities and in relation to the notion of 'authenticity'



(Cohen 1994, Rojek and Urry 1997). A critical ethnography however locates the interpretation of meaning within a theoretical awareness of the modes of development through which subjects' lives are structurally defined (Marcus 1986). Paul Willis's seminal study of class consciousness amongst working class youth is one such study which demonstrates the degree to which identity is forged within a structurally-defined context, however few attempts have been made to carry out a similar approach in the context of tourism development.<sup>7</sup> Contrary to some authors' claims regarding the necessary unity between theory and practice (Greene 1990; Hammersley 1992) a critical approach quite simply argues that it is not sufficient merely to interpret expressions of cultural identity, but also that one should endeavour to reveal the underlying structural conditions which mediate subjects' existence and experience. That is not to say that this will *necessarily* lead to the emancipation of subjects towards an imminent political goal, rather that the material conditions of social life constitute subjects' experiences in ways that may not be immediately apparent to them (Callinicos 1989). A critical ethnographic strategy of inquiry grounded in the everyday experiences of informants, thus examines the manner in which wider forces of tourism development are challenged, appropriated and interpreted by local inhabitants, whilst remaining sensitive to political economy (see Marcus 1986; Booth 1993; Miller 1995). It is thus able to reveal the material responses to and effects of tourism at the local level and the manner in which relations of power are revealed through different touristic processes.

The relative power of different agents and groups in relation to particular tourism strategies is however not directly observable in what Lukes refers to as "*actual behaviour*" (1974: 21), but emerges in the context of the material conditions under which social actors negotiate access to resources. It is therefore through the *act* of participation that access to the *relations of power* within a locality can be negotiated, and through interpretation that the submerged values and meanings ascribed to particular actions by different actors can be uncovered. This study is thus rigorously ethnographic in its attention to the manner in which actors receive and adapt to different processes of tourism development, yet at the same time it does not lose sight of the manner in which social actors are constituted by their relation to wider structures, and in particular their access to specific resources. Social change is a contradictory rather than an evolutionary or unilinear process which involves conflict over resources and results in uneven outcomes. A critical approach to ethnography therefore adopts a dialectical mode of thinking as a means to uncover these antagonisms and not as a law of social development (Sherman 1987). The consideration of specific processes of tourism development can thus be guided by the broader theoretical perspectives of political economy yet also be empirically grounded in the excavation of different responses to touristification at the local level, in order to "*uncover the processes that produce and reproduce particular structural forms*" (Booth 1993: 57).

In contrast to positivist methodologies which emphasise the collection of data in an 'objective' and detached manner, a study of processes of tourism development which is grounded in an ethnographic strategy of inquiry is able to challenge theoretical constructions 'through the eyes' of social actors, otherwise referred to as an *emic* perspective (Cohen 1979a, 1988). The flexibility of a critical ethnography allows 'sensitising' concepts to be continuously re-formulated during the fieldwork. These



‘ideal-type’ categories are framing devices which help construct an analytical approach to the fieldwork in contrast to a completely open-ended ‘naturalism’ which would leave the researcher unable to deviate from directly observable phenomena. This was particularly significant in relation to tracing the contours of entrepreneurial experiences which needed to be couched in the vocabulary of informants, yet at the same time it was necessary to assess these accounts in relation to concepts of stratification and theories of development. The ethnographic approach adopted here draws on Geertz’s notion of “*thick description*” which attempts to reconcile the tension between deductivism and inductivism by filtering theoretical constructs through empirical observation which is therefore freed from the “*immediacy of its own detail*” (Geertz 1993a: 24). It should not however be confused with particularist ethnographic accounts gathered from case studies considered as ‘microcosmic’ representations of the whole, from which generalizations are drawn *across* cases. Rather a critical ethnography presupposes the maintenance of a critical distance between experience and theoretical work *within* the case (Geertz 1993a: 26), which therefore enables “*the whole [to be] conceived through the parts that actualize it and the parts [to be] conceived through the whole that motivates them*” (Geertz 1993b: 69).

Through a critical ethnography the researcher can endeavour to gain an ‘insiders’ perspective with regard to the manner in which processes of *touristification* are experienced, constituted and forged by a multiplicity of actors with, “*more or less power to shape the nature of touristic transactions and therefore, their consequences*” (Nash 1992: 219), and thus present a view of tourism development based upon Weber’s notion of “*historico-interpretative specificity*” (Schuurman 1993: 15). Although a number of data collection methods were employed during the fieldwork, given the nature of the research aims an ethnographic approach centred on participant observation constituted the most feasible and effective strategy of inquiry in this context.

### ***Subjectivity and Social Phenomena: Questions of Validity***

There is insufficient space here to devote to a full consideration of validity and ethnographic research. However, given that qualitative methodologies have often been accused of being insufficiently rigorous and overly subjective (Walle 1997), it is felt that some justification is warranted in the context of this study. At its most general level positivism can be distinguished from interpretivism by the belief in a fundamental distinction between *facts* and *values*, and secondly, that there can be no knowledge independent of experience (Hughes 1990: 20-21). In order to generate knowledge, positivist methodologies thus seek correlations between isolated variables derived through the construction of hypotheses, which are then tested via the empirical study of social phenomena. Validity is thus derived from the ability to generalise evidence across the whole in order to construct universal laws. Many have been critical of particularistic ethnographic case studies, suggesting that they are of limited use for generalization (Van Doorn 1989; Smith 1991). Indeed Van Doorn goes so far as to question their intellectual worth and accuses them of “*pretending worldwide validity*” (1989:89). This however clearly demonstrates one of the limitations of positivist-oriented research which can be blind to the social nature



of supposedly 'value-free' knowledge production, and moreover is ignorant of the underlying theoretic purpose of ethnographic research.

Although quantitative approaches may follow a systematic and rigorous process of statistical sampling and testing used in isolation, they strip social phenomena of their situated context and thus detract from their relevance (Guba and Lincoln 1994: 106). Social phenomena are multi-dimensional and constantly changing, yet a positivistic approach only provides simple correlations that reduce human experience to a single dimension. In contrast, an interpretive approach to the analysis of social phenomena seeks to establish the underlying meaning and purpose of social action, and thus derives validity from, "*the cogency of theoretical reasoning*" and contextualisation, rather than representativeness and the ability to derive universal laws from empirical observation (Mitchell 1983: 207). The fundamental distinction between an interpretive understanding and positivist attempts to construct general laws, lies principally in the 'theoretic purpose' of inquiry, and the Weberian (1978: 4-26) distinction between two levels of understanding; *direct observation* through which intention is observed, and *explanatory understanding* which involves the interpretive understanding of the *meaning* attached to a particular action. It is therefore not the actual *doing* of ethnography (or rather methods of application) that distinguishes an ethnographic approach to inquiry, but rather its underlying epistemological orientation which underpins the former.

In this respect this study is not concerned with universal generalization, but is sensitive to the Weberian notion of *adequate causation* whereby social phenomena are explained in relation to a series of antecedents and consequences and understood with respect to the particular conditions and circumstances within which they occur (Hughes 1990: 93-4; Miles and Huberman 1994: 441). Hollinshead defends the ethnographic study of tourism from accusations that it is insufficiently 'scientific' as follows:

In ethnographic research it is the explanations which interviewed or observed individuals ascribe to cultural forms that matter, not the supposed arbitrary or quixotic nature of the cultural event itself (and the frequency and diversity of these host population explanantions can be measured). (1991: 657)

In this respect the approach adopted in this study seeks a theoretically-informed understanding of the conditions and circumstances under which particular patterns of tourism development have emerged at a village level, articulated through the subjective experiences of different social actors and agents involved in these transformations.

The notion of 'objectivity' has been the focus of many debates amongst social scientists regarding the validity of research findings. Yet if we consider the concept of power, the weaknesses of a 'objectivist' approach become apparent. The survey method for example, based on principles of objectivity and generalizability, assumes that the locus of decision-making in a particular social setting is known. The evidence suggests that this is often not the case, particularly as the internal power structure of social groups is rarely displayed to the 'outsider' (Cohen 1992; Hunter 1993). In this respect Hall (1994a) has criticised the pluralist approach to the study of tourism planning which emphasises the visible or concrete dimension of the decision-making process at the expense of the hidden, 'irrational' side of power



which informs policy-making processes. Despite the claims of objectivity, this approach inevitably reproduces the existing bias of the system under study (Lukes 1974). Ultimately however, it is the style of reasoning or structure of logic, translated through a particular set of analytical tools, upon which the objectivity of claims to know and represent reality are founded (Rabinow 1986: 237).

For this reason it was felt that a critical ethnography was best suited to the 'theoretic purpose' of this study. The target population, or rather its 'powerful' and/or relevant members could not be known in advance, and moreover are constantly changing in composition. Thus relevant social actors and groups will not be 'visible' to the researcher nor can social relationships be taken as 'given', but rather have to be established, as Terray has illustrated with respect to the assumed unity of kinship groups (cited in Clammer 1978: 11). It is not only necessary to establish the existence of certain relationships but also the significance that they have for the actors involved. When dealing with social phenomena, what constitutes meaningful criteria emerges within the context of the social encounter itself.

However, ethnography's commitment to multivocality and thereby "*to obtain the members' perspectives on the social reality of the observed setting*" (Altheide and Johnson 1994: 490), has been questioned by Nash (1996) who argues that anthropological research into tourism has often ignored the 'voices of the powerful'. In the context of this study this claim can be countered from both an epistemological and pragmatic perspective. Firstly, the very act of incorporating the views of developers and politicians merely because they are nominally 'powerful', would amount to a *deus ex machina* that goes against one of the key strengths of ethnography itself, that is, the ability to uncover the manner and social processes through which actors become 'powerful' or are attributed a similar status of superiority by informants. To merely assume that elected officials or tourism developers represent powerful interests is to accept an avowedly pluralist definition of power as postulated by C. Wright Mills (see Bottomore 1971: 32-33), which ignores the opaque and hidden dimensions of power as well as the mediated connections between the different domains in which it is exercised (*i.e.* social, cultural, economic and political). Secondly, an interpretive strategy of inquiry assumes that the 'appropriate' questions cannot be known prior to a social event or the moment of interaction, nor does it assume that decision-makers are in possession of 'relevant knowledge'. Survey methods are constructed according to the priorities and language of the researcher, when in fact, "*questionnaire schedules are often inappropriate because the exact questions are unknown*" (Cheater 1989: 39). In contrast an ethnographic approach attempts to situate the study in the vocabulary of the informants and the meanings used to define it, allowing informants a relatively uninhibited range of expression within the everyday context of social interaction.

Once interaction becomes formalised in an interview, categorisations of reality as informants perceive and construct it, are harder to assess. This problem is compounded by the fact that the interviewee may evade probing questions and reply with 'officially-sanctioned' answers, or 'playing to the camera' (Hammersley and Atkinson 1983), a problem encountered during periods when the researcher needed to gain access to official sources of information. Tourism attitudinal research suffers a similar weakness on the basis that it is often unable to distinguish between 'expressed attitudes' and 'actual behaviour' (Pearce



*et al.* 1996: 24). Secondly, the trajectory of the ethnographer through the research setting is determined by their ability to negotiate access through different social networks, which in turn are mediated by the personal and behavioural characteristics of the ethnographer. This should not however be seen as a problem. Internal patterns of stratification and the classification of informants' social standing in relation to each other as well as the researcher, should emerge in the process of participation/observation itself. It is not for the researcher to pre-determine who the powerful or relevant actors are, and nor is it to be expected that social hierarchies are such that they will only have access to those 'at the bottom' or the most marginalised in a particular community. The patterns of social stratification will vary from one locality to another and the ethnographer will have varying degrees of access to different membership groups, some more powerful than others. The reflexivity of ethnography is of significant value in that the act of being excluded from one particular social network may reveal as much as being allowed access to another. Further to this, an ethnographic approach to the study of tourism may lead to unexpected insights (*e.g.* Hartmann 1988), which in the context of this study include social networks and patterns of entrepreneurial activity that would be otherwise difficult to ascertain from direct observation or interviews.

### **5.3 Applying the Principles of Ethnographic Inquiry in a Tourism Resort**

As in any ethnographic study, long-term immersion into the social context of the field setting is a necessary precondition in order to gain intimate knowledge of the community through a period of systematic and in-depth interaction with local residents:

It is not until they (the researcher) have been in the society long enough to fit into one of its better-defined roles that they can 'tap' a valid communication system and hear the kind of messages that the others in the culture hear. (Benney and Hughes 1984: 223)

However, prior to the commencement of the fieldwork in the village itself, a certain amount of preparatory groundwork was necessary. During the initial stages of the fieldwork, this preparation included a period of familiarisation with the language and culture of the island through a brief period of residence (October 1993 - January 1994) in the capital city of Las Palmas. The importance of language and sensitivity to the nuances of expression peculiar to the regional version of castilian spoken in the Canary Islands cannot be over-emphasised with respect to ethnographic inquiry. Such fluency was a fundamental and necessary means of enabling the researcher to process verbal information in the field, as well as to gain the respect and assistance of local academics and public officials acting as 'gate-keepers' to relevant archives and documentation centres. During this time the researcher was also able to establish regular contact with academics from the two principal regional universities in Gran Canaria and Tenerife. This was significant in terms of informing them of my intention to undertake fieldwork in their 'backyard', and enable a dialogue to be established with a number of locally acknowledged experts in a number of areas related to the thesis. Moreover it also facilitated access to valuable published material and anthropological monographs relevant to the study.



The principal focus of study during this time was first, to conduct background research into the historical development of capitalism in Gran Canaria, second, to identify any published sources of research regarding the local patterns of development in Mogán, and third, to examine the sociological characteristics of tourism development in Gran Canaria, and more specifically, to conduct a search for any relevant material devoted to the study of tourism in Mogán and Playa de Mogán in particular. Whilst there is a relative abundance of literature related to the political economy of the region and studies of a macro-economic nature, which provides much of the background material, there are few anthropological and sociological studies related to local aspects of development. This deficit is mirrored by a similar lack of ethnographic studies of tourism development, which despite the efforts of a small number of committed academics, is not an area of research which is generally regarded as worthy of funding or support by regional institutions and policy-makers.<sup>8</sup>

The period of participant observation in the village itself, the principal strategy of inquiry employed by the researcher, took place over an uninterrupted period lasting approximately seven months between late January 1994 and the end of August 1994. This extended period of residence in the locality was followed by four subsequent visits to the village approximately a year apart, until January 1998. During these visits further secondary research was carried out (principally in statistical and/or documentation centres), in conjunction with follow up periods of participant observation in the village itself which lasted between three to four days and one week. Time and finance constituted particular constraints particularly during the return visits; however upon each subsequent visit the researcher's relationship with key informants was strengthened and more relaxed. This facilitated the researcher's ability to clarify areas of doubt or missing information which had emerged during the writing, with existing informants, as well as opened new avenues of communication with other inhabitants with whom the researcher had previously had less contact. This did create a small dilemma in so far as it was not possible to establish in-depth relations with these 'new' informants during the latter stages of the research, however they did provide a further check on existing data as well as embellished the qualitative impressions of local responses to tourism.

Primary data related to the social history of the village was collected at several intervals during the period of residence in the village, principally in the local government archives and the land registry. It is important to note that neither of these institutions are situated in the village itself. This was significant in terms of maintaining a degree of social separation between the role of researcher and that of participant observer. It enabled the researcher to consult the land registry (located in a village on the windward face of the island) free from the gaze of inhabitants who might have become uneasy or suspicious about the researcher's intentions, and thus inhibit access to informants. The location of local government archives closer to Playa de Mogán in the nearby village of Mogán did however present more difficulties, as did the fact that some inhabitants and/or their friends and relatives, were employed by the municipal government. In order to minimise the risk of 'being seen' and any attendant problems that may have arisen from this, consultation of local government archives was carried out towards the latter stages of the fieldwork once field relationships were already well established.



This also applied to seeking formal interviews with both official personnel and persons mentioned during conversations with different informants, particularly where access to them was relatively difficult using participant observation alone.<sup>9</sup> Much of the research involved inquiring into the business concerns and social networks amongst powerful local actors, many of whom have links to or are directly involved in local government. Thus attempts to gather this information also had to be tempered by a sensitivity towards the manner in which the role played by the researcher mediated his access to different informants and sources of data within the setting. For example, a number of local entrepreneurs hold prominent positions in the local council and in some cases are linked to both prominent local families and powerful external business interests. To have approached these members of the local community with a view to conducting formal interviews at such an early stage during the research would have had a direct bearing on the ability to construct long-term field relationships with informants and perhaps jeopardised access to fertile sources of information. On the one hand 'less powerful' members of the community may well have been unwilling to divulge information to someone who appeared to have a close relationship with local elites, while on the other hand these particular elites may well have become more guarded during my presence in the village. The limited value of the formal interview also became apparent even at a later stage when attempts were made to interview two prominent local entrepreneurs. Questions such as, 'how did you become involved in tourism?', tended to solicit their opinions about tourism in general rather than reveal details of their life histories and their personal experiences in connection to tourism. Moreover, despite being briefed on the nature of the research, they often remained suspicious and were evasive towards any direct questions concerning their business interests.

### ***Participant Observation***

Consequently, the predominant form of data collection within the research setting, was that of participant observation, whereby the researcher *is* the methodological tool and, "*it is the fact of participation, of being part of the collective contract, which creates the data*" (Evans 1988: 208). Participant observation is a systematic and logically structured process in which the observation, recording and interpretation of behaviour, events and forms of social interaction within the social world(s) of the subjects is carried out simultaneously within the research setting. Prolonged immersion in the research setting, was essential in order to gain access to domains of social experience that would otherwise have been inaccessible using quantitative survey techniques or formal interviews. Participant observation therefore provided an effective means of gaining access to informants' experiences and views of tourism through a series of regular encounters and informal conversations within the setting. In this respect the construction of a series of field relationships with informants provided a number of flexible modes of inquiry which enabled the researcher to minimise the evasion of specific questions or deliberately misleading answers, which although cannot be eliminated altogether, are more likely to occur in the context of a formalised encounter. Indeed, in her study of tourism and family change in Crete, Kousis (1989: 320) was forced to abandon formal interviews as it made informants uneasy. Similar reactions were experienced during this study, particularly during one-to-one encounters with informants who were wary of being 'watched' or being seen to divulge information by other local residents. As a result



observation, informal conversations and the act of participation in day-to-day activities were the principal strategies whereby information was collected throughout the locality at different times of day and night.

In some cases, once a rapport had been established with certain key informants and in some cases where they had also become more familiar with the nature of the research, it was possible to carry out a more overt and direct process of questioning with them. This was however restricted to a small collection of close informants and at particular times of the day, as will be discussed in more detail below. Participant observation allowed the researcher to respond to each particular situation and question informants in less formal manner regarding their experiences at a time which was suitable for them and on their own territory. It also allowed the researcher to reformulate questions 'on the spot', or to prompt the informant into qualifying the answers they gave. Proprietors of bars and restaurants were particularly difficult to interview due to the consistent demands on their time as well as the fact that they were often wary of any information being divulged to rival entrepreneurs in the village, despite assurances to the contrary from the researcher. Nevertheless, the reactions of different entrepreneurs to either direct questioning or merely the presence of the researcher within the setting, provided vital clues regarding the local power structure and the social relations of entrepreneurship. Additional information on this theme was sought through a variety of methods, including consultation of council records (to confirm opening dates/owners of particular enterprises for example, where available), asking similar questions to other informants, and asking a particular informant to confirm what they had said about a particular event or topic at a later time.

On several occasions informants would open up and divulge personal anecdotes to the researcher without being prompted, whereas at other times they were more taciturn. This required the researcher to develop an awareness of the situational context of each encounter, which although never perfect, gradually enabled the process of data collection to become more effective. For example, during the early evenings elderly women would often gather on the doorsteps adjacent to the pension where the researcher was staying, in order to gossip, and in summer, to escape the heat of their small and cramped houses. Their husbands would sometimes join in briefly once they had awoken from their *siestas*, or later upon their return from the bars, however these are predominantly female spaces which constituted an extension of the domestic household (cf. Waldren 1996: 50). The researcher (although male) became accepted by this group through his acquaintance with the elderly female owner of the pension, facilitated by the fact that he presented no threat to them as might be perceived in the presence of younger women from the village. Conversely during one particular incident, the researcher was ignored by an elderly informant whom he knew quite well, when approaching him in a popular meeting place where men would gather to play cards and discuss the issues of the day. Whereas the former space of interaction was situated within the narrow alley-ways of the local residents' quarter, the latter took place in full view of the public square and many bars and restaurants and thereby increased the informant's reluctance to be seen talking to the researcher in the presence of his peers.



Thus throughout the period of participant observation the author was simultaneously performing a mutually reinforcing role of actor and observer, summarised on a continuum from *total participant* to *total researcher* by Gans (1982: 54). A reflexive understanding develops in this way through a combination of 'involvement' in and 'detachment' from the daily life of informants, which allows the researcher to 'step-back' at various times during the fieldwork in order to allow theoretical reflection and analysis of the data (Hammersley and Atkinson 1983), a process which usually occurred late at night inside the protective walls of the pension. Simmel's description of the researcher's 'marginality' seems appropriate in this respect:

Because he is not bound by roots to the particular constituents and dispositions of the group, he confronts all of them with a distinctly 'objective' attitude an attitude that does not signify mere detachment and non-participation, but is a distinct structure composed of remoteness and nearness, indifference and involvement. (Simmel 1971: 145)

Nevertheless the balance between participation and observation adopted by the researcher, coupled with the degree to which the inquiry was 'overt' or 'covert' (cf. Fielding 1993: 158-159), varied during particular moments according to the context of each encounter. The character of field relationships was thus dependent upon the time of day at which the encounter took place, the number of informants present, their composition, and the particular context of the encounter itself. Thus according to the criteria elaborated by Gans (1982), the role of *total researcher* applies to those occasions when research was carried out in local archives and during more formal questioning and/or interview situations, whilst the role of *researcher participant* relates to more social situations, for example in bars or peoples' homes, when the researcher would sometimes attempt to steer the topic of conversation towards areas of interest for the study. It could be argued that the third category, that of *total participant*, applied to moments when the researcher was invited to gatherings of an entirely social nature or when engaging in a casual conversation with a shop-keeper. However, despite being accepted into the community the researcher was never part of it, moreover as the example of 'gossip sessions' below indicates, even the most seemingly trivial social encounters revealed qualitative impressions of community life which were of value to the research.

As demonstrated by the example of the encounter with a fishermen in a public space, it was usually inadvisable to take notes or ask questions to certain informants in an overt manner as this tended to disrupt the flow of conversation and sometimes made the informant feel uneasy. This practice was also in danger of arousing suspicion, and more significantly intimidated individual informants who did not wish to be seen to be talking about potentially controversial topics in the 'public domain' (e.g. who owned which bar). Suttles (1990, cited in Hunter 1993), an ethnographer researching land-use elites in Chicago, experienced similar difficulties and moreover did not begin to make systematic notes until one year into his research, or divulge his real intentions. Once he disclosed his intentions to certain members of the target group he was not invited back to sit on a local planning committee, a key source of data (Hunter 1993: 45). Much valuable information was gleaned in passing and during casual encounters with informants at bus stops, purchasing groceries or just having a quick coffee in a café. This made it far too cumbersome and impracticable a task to spell out the objectives of the research to each and every



informant present. As a consequence the researcher's precise intentions were kept as vague and mentioned only when asked, so as to keep the encounters as 'natural' and unencumbered as possible. Moreover, Burgess (1984: 199) remarks that the line between covert and overt research is often blurred in ethnographic fieldwork, and thus it is difficult to distinguish the precise moments when the research is 'in progress'. Even when attempts were made to clarify the research aims to certain informants, it neither facilitated interaction nor did it appear to interest them. After a time the researcher was often referred to by several informants as, the 'person writing a book about Mogán'.

### *Through the Village 'Gates': Gaining Access*

Once in the field setting one of the most problematic and frustrating aspects of an ethnographically based fieldwork is the ability to locate and gain access to relevant informant groups. Equally, once this has been achieved it is of paramount importance to gain their trust, as well as the acceptance of those who may not necessarily become key informants but are present in the setting all the same. An apparent social egalitarianism in many southern European societies and superficial cordiality amongst fellow villagers borne of relative isolation may indeed conceal deeper "*sublimated hostilities*" and thereby create particular difficulties of access for the researcher (Gilmore 1982: 189). Furthermore White warns of the dangers that lie in wait for the unsuspecting observer who may succumb to the "*tendency to accept statements that 'we are all equal here' as objectively true*" (1980: 3). Prior to taking up residence in the village itself an opportunity arose to make contact with an important 'gate-keeper' in the village. General inquiries regarding the research area with colleagues in the university, revealed the existence of an academic born in the village, and whose brother ran a well-known bar and pension. Thus '*Santiago*' (a pseudonym) and his family became the first and subsequently most valuable informant in the field setting, to the extent that I became regarded as a friend of the family by many villagers. However care had to be taken not to become too closely identified with them, as many would be suspicious as to why a friend of his would be asking so many questions regarding their personal histories and experiences of tourism. The total number of informants varied throughout the duration of the study as well in terms of the quality of information they divulged. Altogether there were approximately fifteen to twenty key informants most of whom were fully aware of the researcher's agenda, if not its precise content. Of these, six included *Santiago* and members of his immediate family, although other members of the family as well as their friends were spoken to on a more irregular basis.

Once in the field setting a strategy of "*systematic lurking*" (Dann *et al.* 1988: 25) was adopted in order to familiarise oneself with the daily comings and goings of village members, without being overly conspicuous, as a means of expanding the range of informants and picking up anecdotal information. This often began took place around *Santiago's* bar itself, as this provided useful opportunities to be introduced to other members of the village to whom access would have been difficult or taken longer had it been attempted independently. Once the author was more familiar with the patterns of daily interaction amongst villagers and better able to anticipate where particular sources of information might be gathered



and at which time of day, this strategy became gradually more and more systematic and efficient. This was assisted by an increasing familiarity over time with the local vernacular and social norms which governed day-to-day behaviour, and the 'snowball effect' of being introduced to a wider network of informants via *Santiago* and his family.

The negotiation of access to other networks beyond those linked to *Santiago*, involved the performance of various roles within different spaces and at different times during the fieldwork period. These had to be consistent yet flexible enough to allow for ongoing renegotiation and variation at any stage of the fieldwork, according to the changing context of social interaction in the research setting. During the fieldwork the researcher was constantly observed by local residents, which required a sensitivity to the manner in which he was being categorised in relation to other social groups (*e.g.* tourists; see below) and how then his own appearance or any action on their part might influence informants reactions to him (see Evans 1988). Failure to clarify one's role early on during the fieldwork can inhibit access to the social group(s) or community being studied, as encountered by Blau (1964) in his ethnographic study of bureaucracy (Burgess 1984: 16). Similar challenges to the role and identity of the researcher arose in the context of day-to-day interaction with a variety of informants, particularly amongst those who were unaware of the specific intentions of the researcher's presence.

It was also necessary to avoid quick assumptions or be guided by ones own presuppositions regarding the significance of a person or to attach oneself to the first friendly person with whom one comes into contact, as they too may be marginal to the locality (Evans 1988), particularly where their status in relation to the target group of the research may be unclear or even antagonistic. There is also a danger of attributing disproportionate significance to an informant who may merely be more adept at negotiating encounters with 'outsiders' than other members of the community. It was thus important to be sensitive to the context of interaction and attempt to 'triangulate' data wherever possible from competing perspectives:

While listening to native erudition from an informant who has been identified to us as 'the one who knows', we must also watch his or her local listeners for the quizzically raised eyebrow and the slightly distended cheek. (Cohen 1993: 41)

These problems came to light at different times during the research and were compounded by the diverse and fluid composition of the village which increased the difficulty of identifying 'significant' actors or 'target groups' within the social formation. The researcher's age, appearance and cultural background (often seen as an urbanite from Las Palmas by most villagers) made it easier to befriend local men between the ages of approximately 20 and 30, as well as groups of foreign travellers (many of whom were staying in the same pension) with whom the researcher spoke English when out of earshot of local residents. In the case of the former this resulted in being invited to drunken gatherings on the beach and other public spaces, which on occasion led to the uncomfortable situation of the researcher being present during moments when young local men pestered female tourists. This often revealed certain insights into local attitudes towards tourists but did not facilitate further access to significant networks of entrepreneurs or power-brokers. This was due to the fact that many of these young men, particularly those who were



not from the village and who had come from nearby towns to find work, were regarded with hostility by many of the more established local residents and proprietors of tourism enterprises. Alternatively, some useful information regarding strategies of employment amongst foreigners and their relationships with locals, and on occasion, even access to some foreign entrepreneurs was facilitated by contact with foreign visitors. However attempts were made to limit this contact once it became evident that it limited access to potentially significant social networks amongst 'indigenous' residents and entrepreneurial groups.

The spatial proximity of different social groups caused particular problems in one of the more circumscribed spaces of interaction between researcher and informants, a local bar popular amongst male residents of all ages as well as foreign tourists and entrepreneurs (male and female). It was one of the few spaces of close physical proximity between insiders and outsiders in the village, and one where young men in particular from the village would gather to survey and on occasion attempt to seduce female tourists. Although it was a useful place to meet and befriend locals and tourists alike as well as to collect information, at times it was best not to enter as the presence of the different groups made it difficult to perform a consistent role with respect to each informant. On one occasion a conversation with the owner of a local pension who had been introduced to the researcher by his principal informant, was interrupted by a young German tourist who had come to socialise, whereupon the researcher's contact with the former ceased. A similar difficulty with respect to constructing his 'anthropological identity' was noted by Crick (1995b: 216) during his study of tour guides in Kandy (Sri Lanka), when he was addressed as a 'hippie' by one informant. This presents an interesting corollary to Crick's (1995b) depiction of the partial overlap of the identities of anthropologists and tourists. Here, the researcher needed to maintain a social as well as physical distance between himself and tourists, not out of some patronising dislike of the latter, but in order not to jeopardise access to valuable informants and social networks from the locality.

However there is a point at which the researcher has to decide which of his informants is going to be of the greatest utility in terms of accessing relevant social networks and information, in a manner achieved by Whyte (1981) and Liebow (1967) via their relationship with their respective "gate-keepers", 'Doc' and 'Tally'. Sponsorship by one particular individual and their close contacts will inevitably lead to exclusion from certain other social groups. Demarcations of power exist within all social groupings throughout the social hierarchy, hence it is important to recognise this and furthermore to interpret how conceptions of the powerful are constituted by the informants themselves. Over the course of the fieldwork a balance was therefore adopted between the closer more familiar environment to which the researcher had access via *Santiago* and a wider but more superficial network of informants that had been acquired through regular daily interaction in a number of public domains, including bars and cafes, supermarkets and social events. Interaction with tourists and most outsiders was restricted to the inside of pensions and late at night when there were few villagers around.



## *Interrogative Techniques*

During daily encounters with informants there is a temptation, particularly during the early stages of the fieldwork, to probe for answers and thus lead informants into revealing information to which the researcher believes they have access, by asking direct questions. In this respect Frankenburg summarises the dilemma facing the researcher in the field:

A central paradox of the participant observation method is to seek information by not asking questions. (1982: 50)

Not long after the fieldwork had commenced, it became clear that such an approach was too direct and also ran the risk of arousing suspicion of the researcher's intentions or at worst alienating the informant altogether. In such circumstances the ability to prise out relevant information from an informant rested on the ability of the author to interpret the underlying context of the encounter and assess the degree to which more overt questioning could be carried out. For instance interaction with employees of bars and restaurants was inhibited by the fact that during most of the day they were too busy (particularly those in the marina area) and that further, many commuted from outside the village making it impossible to speak to them outside working hours. It was also difficult to talk to workers in the presence of their site managers, many of whom were themselves hostile to even the most general questions.<sup>10</sup> Similarly, other informants (particularly those less well-known to the researcher) were often unwilling to review past events which may have painted the village in a negative light. It became apparent that few if anyone wished to discuss the controversy which surrounded the construction of the marina which thus forced the researcher to gather this information in a more covert manner through casual conversation in combination with the study of municipal records and newspaper archives.

A further shortcoming of an excessively inquisitive approach, relates to questions which may be beyond the informants domain of experience and capacity to respond, and may lead to their potential embarrassment. Furthermore the encounter will become researcher-led and perhaps lead the more passive informants into confirming the researcher's expectations rather than disagree. One of the themes which concerned the researcher was to discover how and why particular locals had become involved in tourism, and to understand the social context which had framed their experience. It became evident that informants were on the whole unwilling to talk about their own experiences when asked directly, often because they interpreted the questions as an inquiry into whether or not they were pro or anti-tourism. As a result information had to be gathered using indirect questions about the origins of tourism and anecdotal stories regarding their life histories and experiences in a more general manner.

Only with those with whom the researcher became most acquainted was it possible to ask direct questions on a more regular basis. Even then it depended very much on the particular circumstances of the encounter (*i.e.* in public, in a bar, on particular social occasions etc.) as to whether they were willing to talk about the matter concerned. It was also essential to be aware of the time of day at which questioning could be seen as appropriate which depended upon the context of the daily routine. Whereas restaurant staff could not be seen to be chatting idly during the peak lunchtime hours (12pm-4pm) this was often a



useful period in which to talk to some of the older retired (male) members of the village who would congregate in bars or in particular public places to discuss the topics of the day prior to the afternoon *siesta*. Once again though it was essential to be aware of the social context in which these interactions were taking place, and whether or not any questions would have been considered an intrusion, as referred to in the incident with the elderly informant above.

Once a greater level of contact was established with key informants and the researcher became more familiar with the norms governing social encounters with particular groups, information could be required in a more subtle manner by merely prompting the informant(s) or at times merely participating and listening. This facilitated unprovoked access to informants' knowledge on a number of issues, many of which would be of relevance to the study in some way. Moreover, at this point informants would also provide reassurance to others that the researcher was 'okay', and in so doing would open up access to other social networks and potential sources of data. Also the fact that the researcher himself became more comfortable and self-assured in the presence of locals, particularly with those of a similar age, meant that it was possible to engage in general conversations which were not specifically related to the study but which often led onto unanticipated areas of relevance. What is significant about these situations was the fact that the researcher's presence became an accepted part of the informants' daily routine without however become fully involved in or identifying with their life world, or what is referred to as "*going native*" (Delamont 1996: 13).

In addition much of the time was spent listening to large amounts of daily gossip about areas that may not have been (or appeared to have been) directly relevant to the specific areas of interest. However this information should not be ignored. Far from being unimportant, daily gossip contains local knowledge regarding a number of different subjects which are central to the lifeworlds of informants, ranging from anecdotes in which perceptions of local politicians emerged, to factual information regarding who had just purchased or sold a particular plot of land or bar. Often the researcher's presence on the periphery of conversations or "*gossip sessions*" (Hunter 1993: 48) amongst informants themselves were far more useful than one-to-one conversations between researcher and informant which despite the absence of a tape recorder or even a notebook, often made informants feel too self-conscious. Moreover, these snippets of anecdotal information also helped to define and continuously refocus the direction of the research as particular patterns emerged regarding informants' involvement in ongoing processes of tourism development.

## Conclusion

This chapter has attempted to demonstrate the relevance of critical ethnography to the analysis of local responses to the structural changes induced by tourism development in a Canary Island fishing settlement. Specifically it is distinguished by the application of an ethnographic approach to uncovering the experiences of people who inhabit and give meaning to the processes of tourism development in this



locality, whilst simultaneously employing a deductive framework drawn from political economy and a wider sociological and anthropological tradition, with which to endow the empirical data with a deeper analytical and explanatory significance.

It has been maintained that studies of local level tourist development have ignored the full capabilities of an ethnographic methodology and consequently have often fallen back on rigid classifications derived from pre-determined functional categories. Moreover these studies have failed to link their methodological strategies to a wider theoretic purpose, thus they have tended to remain at the level of description rather than offer a fuller explanation of the social forces which may have led to the manifest configurations of tourism development.

Although some might raise ethical concerns regarding the often covert nature of data collection, such criticisms can be countered from both theoretical and pragmatic perspectives. First, survey methods or overt interviewing techniques give the appearance of honesty and openness, however this is no guarantee that the researcher's intentions are honest ones. We should thus also be concerned with the *theoretic purpose* of analysis in tandem with the *use* to which the data is put rather than merely the method of its collection. Moreover the sources are cited anonymously and discussed in relation to points of theoretical interest rather than for the purposes of ideological or personal attack. Second, as discussed above, access to the lifeworld of the informants, limited as it may be, could only have been achieved via long-term residence and regular interaction in the context of the daily routines of the village residents. Much of the relevant data was uncovered through casual conversation and gossip, which would have been unknown and inaccessible to formal interviews or survey approaches.

There are however tensions that will be present within any academic endeavour and this study is no exception. It is nevertheless the opinion of this researcher that any commitment to a deeper theoretical and critical understanding of the complex manner in which tourism is received by the various segments of a tourist destination area, must retain recourse to a position of critical authority, albeit one which is transparent and open to constructive criticism. The degree to which informants' 'voices' can be heard within the thesis are limited by the constraints discussed in this chapter, and furthermore have been filtered through the researcher's own interpretive faculties and critical theoretical framework. However, despite the fact that events are for the most part summarised in the words of the researcher rather than presenting a series of 'vignettes' or verbatim stories, this has not diluted the essential epistemological and methodological orientation of the study. The critical ethnographic examination of tourism development therefore adopts an approach which is considered to be most appropriate to the research questions outlined in the Introduction to the thesis. Above all it is rooted in a consistency and coherence between theoretic purpose, methodology and data gathering techniques.



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<sup>1</sup> For a fuller analysis of theoretical and methodological approaches in the anthropology and sociology of tourism see Dann *et al.* (1988), Crick (1989), Nash (1996), as well as the numerous special editions of the *Annals of Tourism Research*, in particular Cohen (1979a), Graburn (1983) and Dann and Cohen (1991).

<sup>2</sup> I am grateful to Professor Michael Hitchcock for his helpful comments on this issue.

<sup>3</sup> See the debate between Hollinshead (1991) and Dann *et al.* (1991) concerning 'the scientific nature of anthropology'.

<sup>4</sup> For example, the Chicago School of Urban Ethnography devoted much of its research towards examining the "underside of society" (Silverman 1985: 19).

<sup>5</sup> For example Wahnschafft (1982) and Kermath and Thomas (1992) base their analyses on an uncritical adoption of the informal/formal sector model of economic development which reveals little about the social and economic organization of production beyond these categories and the power structures which give rise to different structures of enterprise.

<sup>6</sup> For a more detailed discussion of both theoretical and methodological advances in tourism research see Selwyn (1994, 1996b); Wood (1997).

<sup>7</sup> See Marcus (1986) for a full analysis of Willis's (1977) methodological approach to his seminal study of attitudes to work amongst working class boys.

<sup>8</sup> Personal communication to the author by Agustin Santana Talavera.

<sup>9</sup> These were often 'gate-keepers' to official sources of information such as local government officers. In other cases they included key community figures, such as the head of the local neighbourhood association and secretary of the fisherman's cooperative.

<sup>10</sup> In 1994 the Spanish government liberalised existing labour legislation (*Reforma de la Ley Laboral*) to encourage the creation of part-time contracts and facilitate the dismissal of staff at short notice (see *La Provincia* 5/12/93).



# CHAPTER SIX

## The National Context: Tourism Development in Spain

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At the time of Franco's death in 1975, Spain was still relatively isolated from the international political and economic order that had emerged after the Second World War. The economy was highly protectionist and oriented towards self-sufficiency through state intervention, to the extent that the Industrial Law of 1939 proclaimed that the import of exotic products should be discouraged, and that where possible, goods should be produced inside Spain regardless of the cost (Carr 1982: 734). In political terms Spain was excluded from membership of key supra-national institutions, including the European Community, the Council of Europe and NATO (Alonso and Castells 1992: 206). Prior to Franco's death it was tourism which arguably played the most profound role in laying the foundations of increasing economic integration with global trade, and at the level of lived experiences, it was the catalyst which brought about massive changes in the underlying social and cultural fabric of Spanish society. It is therefore important to look briefly at the historical context in which tourism was introduced into Spain, in order to appreciate the distinctiveness as well as some of the broader similarities of the changes associated with it.

### 6.1 Tourism in Spain: The Reconquest of the Periphery ?

Tourism has played an enormously significant role in the development of a modern capitalist economy in Spain, particularly in formerly agrarian regions such as the Canary Islands, the Balearic Islands and the coast of Andalusia. Not only has Spain experienced a dramatic shift from an autarchic and interventionist economic policy to a market-led and liberalized one in less than three decades, tourism has also enabled the economy to progress from a high dependence on agrarian and extractive activities to an integrated and diversified service sector (Bote Gómez 1996). Although tourism is still heavily weighted towards the coastal regions, it nevertheless contributes 7.9% to Spain's total employment and 9.3% of GDP (Medina Muñoz 1997). However, tourism and in particular domestic tourism, had already been in existence for some considerable time in Spain when coastal development began to expand massively in the late 1950s (Barke and Towner 1996). State intervention in the tourism sector began in earnest under the dictatorship of Primo de Rivera (1923-1930) who channelled finance into the improvement of the transport network and tourism promotion overseas (Naylon 1967). However early attempts to create the conditions for tourism in Spain were cut short by the Civil War (1936-39) and the Second World War, when tourist arrivals virtually ceased. A significant turning point both in terms of the external macro-economic environment and internal political attitudes towards tourism, came towards the end of the 1950s as the internal contradictions of Francoism became increasingly pronounced, precipitated by the appointment of Opus Dei technocrats to key government ministries in 1957 (Casanova 1983a). They proceeded to undertake a series of far-reaching administrative reforms culminating in the *Plan Nacional de Estabilización* (National Stabilization Plan) in 1959, which reconstituted the nature of Spanish capitalism itself and facilitated the transformation of the structural foundations of Spanish society. In particular the technocrats dismantled previous policies of autarky, through the liberalisation of the



economy which opened the door to foreign investment and stimulated a surge in foreign visitors (see Table 7.2: Chapter Seven). Franco saw tourism as the most effective way of alleviating the nation's severe balance of payments crisis, thus he created what is claimed to be one of the first ministries in the world to incorporate tourism as one of its specific areas of responsibility, the *Ministerio de Información y Turismo*, headed by a cabinet minister (Newton 1996: 141). The results were immediate and far-reaching; by setting in motion policies which resulted in the increasing integration of Spain into the world economy (Tamames 1994), it also profoundly shifted the basis of power within the state apparatus itself. Franco's heavy handed political system, based on the substantive rationality of patrimonialist authority (which among other things detested 'foreign' influence, or 'Europeanization'), was progressively undermined by the introduction of a more formal and calculating approach to development which required the dismantling of the cumbersome structures of corporatism that acted as a hinderance to the flourishing of a modern capitalist economy (see Carr 1982: 726-38). The political edifice which Franco had constructed underwent a radical transformation which would culminate in the end of the dictatorship after his death in 1975.

Although central control over all aspects of tourism policy was comprehensive, the substance of state intervention in the development process was limited to granting credits to developers and creating a stable fiscal environment via the provision of a favourable exchange rate and price controls (Newton 1996; Pearce 1997). Regulatory and legislative measures were limited to the largely ineffective *Ley del Suelo* (Land Law) passed in 1956, which did little more than to allocate parcels of land to developers, and the designation of resort enclaves known as *Centros de Interés Turístico Nacional* (CITN) in 1963, which benefitted from generous state subsidies and credit facilities; the hotel credit scheme introduced in 1942 enabled developers to receive an advance of up to 70% on construction costs (Newton 1996: 142). The result however was a massively uneven spatial dispersion of tourism to the extent that by the late 1970s the islands and coastlines accounted for 90% of Spain's tourism destination areas (Cals 1974: 49-50). Casanova's (1983a, 1983b) detailed analyses of the transition to an advanced capitalist economy in Spain, demonstrates that the *laissez-faire* approach to economic development (exemplified by the tourism sector) was not however seen by the government as incompatible with the authoritarian and oligarchic structures of the Franquist régime. However, such was the significance of the Opus Dei technocrats who came to occupy key positions in the Treasury, Ministries of Commerce, Foreign Trade and Planning in 1957, that their role as "*the organic intellectuals of capital*", was to create the conditions for an irreversible liberalization of the economy and the democratization of the polity (Casanova 1983a: 956-958).

Despite a continuing emphasis on increasing foreign visitation in order to boost foreign exchange there have been significant shifts in the rationale behind central government tourism policy at a macro-level. The first period of 'Fordist' development, characterised by the almost unconstrained construction of tourism *urbanizaciones*, was characterised by a peculiar mixture of supply-led stimulus with little state interference in the arena of planning. After the economic downturn of the 1970s, an even more aggressive period of unrestrained development took place between 1983 and 1988, although it gradually became tempered by government concern for the social and environmental impact of tourism in resort



areas, particularly after several celebrated health and pollution scares in well-known resorts. Over the past decade, the goals of improving competitiveness through 'quality' has been combined with the search for sustainable solutions, much influenced by the 1992 Earth Summit and the subsequent Agenda 21 proposals (see CEC 1996).

However it is important to recognise not only the temporal changes in Spanish tourism policies, but also the extent of regional variation, in accordance with the distinct political composition of regional and municipal governments (Pearce 1997). This has become particularly significant since the transferral of a considerable degree of autonomy to the regional governments (*gobiernos autonomos*) in the areas of tourism and planning over the course of the last two decades, as prescribed in the 1978 Constitution (Aguilo 1996). In response to the 'crisis' in Spanish tourism at the end of the late 1980s, during which time income from European tourists fell by 28% between 1988-1990, there has been a shift towards increasing supply-side regulation of tourism in contrast to the previous era of demand-led growth in coastal areas instigated by Franco (Pearce 1996). At a national level this approach has been enshrined in numerous pieces of legislation, including the 1988 revision of the *Ley de Costas* (Coastal Law) which granted the state increased powers over the protection of coastal areas from further encroachment of construction, via the prohibition of any building within 100 metres of the shoreline.

Some regions have been more proactive than others in the implementation of national tourism policies as well as in the elaboration of tougher regional planning legislation. The new found autonomy of regional governments in the early 1980s spurred many to publish a series of white papers - including Cataluña (1983), the Balearic Islands (1987) and the Costa del Sol (1989) by the government of Andalucía - outlining a regionally distinct set of guidelines for the development of tourism (Aguilo 1996: 14). The region of Valencia was one such community which set out the need to regenerate its tourism infrastructure and adopt measures to conserve its cultural and natural heritage in a white paper on tourism in 1990 (Pearce 1996: 126). However the most far-reaching attempts to intervene in the tourism development process have arguably been carried out by the regional government of the Balearic Islands (*Govern Balear*), which has emphasised the control of urban development and upgrading of infrastructure rather than promotion (see Gamero and Bianchi 1992; Pearce 1996). The *Govern Balear* has enacted several laws to this effect, including, the *Ley de Espacios Naturales* (Law of Natural Spaces) passed in 1991, which has protected one third of the surface area of Mallorca from future urban development, although some measures have since been relaxed slightly by the ruling conservative party who are more amenable to the interests of the private sector (Hughes 1994: 29); the *Plan de Ordenación de la Oferta* (Plan for the Restructuring of the Tourist Product), passed in 1995, which coordinates tourism and town planning and sets minimum building standards and density criteria for construction, following on from the earlier Cladera Laws (named after the Minister of Tourism who initiated them), and the *Plan de Esponjamiento* (Decongestion Plan) which put into effect the elimination of obsolete buildings (see Hughes 1994; Polmar Piña and Palmer Socías 1996; Pearce 1996).



The regional authorities in the Canary Islands, whilst less interventionist, have also begun to adopt new measures to improve the 'quality' of the region's tourism infrastructure (see Cabildo Insular 1992b). Numerous measures have been adopted in order to improve competitiveness through more effective marketing, diversification and the upgrading of physical infrastructure. These include, implementing the provisions of the Plan FUTURES (MCT 1994),<sup>1</sup> the embellishment of tourism zones under the auspices of the *Excelencia* program initiated in the early 1990s, and the use of subsidies to encourage the development of rural tourism, outlined in the *Ley de Ordenación del Turismo* (Law of Tourism Regulation, Law 7/1995).<sup>2</sup> At a municipal level, it is the local council which presides over the area of dense tourism concentration in Calviá on the island of Mallorca that has taken the lead through the implementation of a General Plan (1991, revised 1997) restricting urban development, in conjunction with a strategic plan of social and economic improvement, the *Calviá Agenda Local 21* (Ajuntament de Calviá 1995), following the provisions set at the Earth Summit in Rio in 1992. This has meant that, "tourism development in Calviá is now as closely planned and regulated as it was unrestrained in the bonanza days of the 1960s" (Hughes 1994: 29).

The association of tourism with 'progress' and all things modern had a powerful impact on what at that time during the early sixties was still a predominantly agrarian country, culturally isolated from the rest of Europe by Franco's autocratic rule. In fact Franco's interest in stimulating the development of tourism had little to do with any concern for regional development or how tourism might affect particular localities, but rather the contribution it would make to *Spain*, both economically and politically as a source of economic growth and political prestige (Jurdao 1990: 140). Franco had little time for social reform or the specific circumstances and needs of the different regions. Tourism was to be good for *all* segments of Spanish society, illustrated here by this early quote:

Just as in previous years the European economy was saved by the 16,000 million dollars of the Marshall Plan, so was the Spanish economy *saved* by the phenomenon of tourism. (comment by a Spanish newspaper in 1973, cited in Turner and Ash 1975: 114) [emphasis added]

During these early stages of development there are clear parallels with processes of tourism development in less developed countries, particularly with respect to the contrasts in wealth and social values (see Davis 1978; Harrison 1995: Chs. 1-2). Indeed Spain at that time had one of the lowest standards in living in Europe and a population which ate more frugally than anywhere else in Europe apart from the Balkans and southern Italy (Carr 1982: 400). In this respect Jurdao, in his comprehensive study of tourism development in Mijas, emphasises the contradiction of a country which in the 1960s opened its doors to foreign tourism while at the same time continued to deny its citizens many basic democratic freedoms:

España, durante la década de los sesenta, cuando se desarrolla la zona residencial de Mijas, es una cárcel para los españoles y un país abierto para los extranjeros... El inversor colonizador es bien recibido en la España 'desarrollista'. (1990: 303)<sup>3</sup>

Mouzelis (1978: 479) ascribes the persistence of a repressive political apparatus in southern European social formations to the historically specific development of peripheral capitalism. Weak and uneven industrialization increased the dependence of the region on inward investment by foreign capital to varying



degrees of intensity after the Second World War, thus reinforcing the repression of popular dissent. Although the opening up of Spain's economy in the late 1950s was accompanied by the relaxation of repressive industrial relations (Sapelli 1995: 82), what is interesting in the case of Spain is the persistence of the zeal with which successive post-dictatorship governments have pursued tourism development, regardless of ideological persuasion (Valenzuela 1988). Few politicians are overtly critical of tourism beyond the concern for improving the 'competitiveness' and 'quality' of the tourist 'product', most notably in recent years under the auspices of the *Plan de Excelencia* program, which focuses on the regeneration and embellishment of coastal resort infrastructure (Pearce 1997: 164). In addition, despite the 'liberation' of Spain from the long years of isolation and political obscuritanism in 1975, the continued weight of the past had instilled within most Spaniards a combined legacy of fear, submission and apathy, which may partly explain a reluctance to criticise tourism:

Political repression, combined with the apathy induced by a struggle to survive, left no time for protest. (Carr 1982: 742).

More significantly though, the emergence of tourism is strongly associated with the breakdown of the moral conservatism of Franco's regime and the beginning of an era of prosperity hitherto unimaginable to most ordinary Spaniards who had endured two decades of misery and economic hardship prior to the 1960s. Tourism was an important catalyst for other far-reaching changes whose impact on Spanish society cannot be underestimated, a point emphasised by Pi-Sunyer:

Psychologically and culturally, this has done a great deal to end decades of peripheralization; politically, democracy has meant not only elected central and autonomous governments, but an important measure of administrative decentralisation. (1989: 188)

Although it would be simplistic too suggest that tourism alone was responsible for the diffusion of new ideas and the erosion of Spain's isolationism,<sup>4</sup> the affluence it created laid the foundations for an alternative youth culture which was however denounced by some as merely "*apolitical consumerism*" (Carr 1982: 760). Given the distinct nature of authoritarian rule instituted by Franco, based as it was on a mixture of traditional patrimonialism and conservative Catholicism, rather than the conventional structures of totalitarianism, the proliferation of an alternative youth culture in the 1960s which found expression in the conspicuous consumption of foreign clothes, music, magazines and films constituted an outpouring of dissent which related specifically to the Spanish context.<sup>5</sup> Nevertheless, as Raymond Carr forcefully claims, this expression of symbolic protest was restricted to the urban middle-classes whose "*alternative culture of protest found little resonance among rural and working class youth*" (1982: 762). The decline of the agricultural sector<sup>6</sup> and the concomitant expansion of the service sector did however begin to draw large sections of the working classes into the world of nascent consumerism, often fuelled by their close contact with foreign tourists. Tourism itself thus became the embodiment of the regime's policy of *desarollismo* and the emergent consumer society in post-Franco Spain (Jurdao 1990: 124). Indeed, there is a broad parallel here with the recent political changes in Eastern Europe, in that market reform and civic freedoms were seen as mutually reinforcing, in contrast to more militant forms of student and worker radicalism in France and Italy, for example.



Although the industrial working classes comprised 37% of the active population in 1975 and industrial unrest reached an all time high in 1976 when 150 million working hours were lost through strikes (Camiller 1994: 235), much of it was restricted to the large cities in the north and Madrid, away from areas of tourism development. Thus beyond the large industrial centres of Madrid, Bilbao and Barcelona, collective action on the factory floor was displaced by the satisfaction of individual desires through the acquisition of an increasing supply of consumer goods. Low worker militancy is exacerbated by the high incidence of part-time and casual employment as well as the fact that over 50% of the Spanish workforce is employed in enterprises of fewer than fifty employees (Campo García 1995: 211). In areas of high tourism concentration, both casual employment and small enterprises are found in larger numbers, given its seasonal nature and the fragmented structure of production which revolves around bars, restaurants, accommodation facilities of varying sizes and transport services, a fact which makes tourism hardly conducive to worker mobilisation. During the general strike on the 27th of January 1994, sparked by the Socialist (PSOE) government's introduction of a new law to increase the flexibility of the labour market (*La Provincia* 5/12/93), there were few walk-outs amongst tourism workers which reflects the low levels of union membership and politicisation amongst this sector of the workforce.<sup>7</sup>

In some regions however such as the Balearics, one of the most significant tourist-receiving areas, political protest against tourism's impact on society and the environment has, in recent years, been galvanised by well-organised pressure groups (Selwyn 1997), although this has largely been the preserve of the professional classes and middle-class radicals. In the Basque country, where the interface between culture, politics and the economy is intensely politicised, plans by the Basque Government to establish the Guggenheim museum in the capital Bilbao, have been met by fierce opposition from Basque intellectuals and activists (MacClancy 1997). To an extent this illustrates that in circumstances where tourism and leisure practices become enmeshed within the conflicting cultural discourses of a particular region, a likely occurrence given the diversification of the Spanish tourism 'product' into the arena of culture and heritage (Pearce 1997: 172-173), it has a far greater capacity to mobilise political attention around different sets of concerns and grievances. However with regard to questions concerning the nature of tourism development in general, increasing urbanization, employment conditions and other perhaps more 'abstract' political and economic concerns, there tends to be less overt opposition to the dominant thrust of tourism policy and development practice across the regions.

It is tempting to suggest that the dominant classes across Spain have engineered a hegemonic consensus amongst the population around the need to promote tourism to ensure Spain's very survival as a modern democratic state and the continued material well-being of the general population. On the other hand such a conclusion ignores other factors including the significant contribution tourism has made to the socio-economic development of peripheral regions such as the Canary Islands, where it contributed between 23% and 28% of the regional GDP in 1997 (Medina Muñoz 1997), and the Balearic Islands who, thanks largely to tourism, enjoy a per capita income approximately 35% higher than in Spain as a whole (Hughes 1994: 18). It also fails to account for the sophisticated and varied strategies of resistance and adaptation to tourism (Boissevain 1996b), or ways in which touristic events have been re-appropriated



and used as an expression of regional identities (Greenwood 1989). These issues raise some very serious concerns for the analysis of tourism development and indeed constitute fundamental questions which ultimately need to be tackled from a firm epistemological grounding if we are to begin to unravel the differentiated local and regional configurations of tourism development across Spain.

From an academic perspective, a number of Spanish scholars have been severely critical of tourism development, predominantly from a neo-Marxist perspective (Gaviria 1974; Cals 1974, 1986; Jurdao 1990). On the whole they share the common belief that the processes of tourism development which have been experienced in Spain, particularly during the period from 1959 to the end of the 1980s, have exhibited a pattern of neo-colonial domination. Gaviria's (1974: 18-19) seminal publication on the characteristics of charter tourism in Spain, describes how the dynamics of this industry, were underpinned by the warm climate, easy access to large stretches of undeveloped beaches (facilitated by cheap credit and favourable fiscal regime mentioned above),<sup>8</sup> the eagerness of local hoteliers and entrepreneurs to build facilities and above all the abundance of cheap, predominantly agricultural, land. As a result large expanses of Spanish territory along the coast and isolated peasant villages in the interior, from which much of the labour supply was drawn, became integrated into a wider global economic system which subordinated Spain to a particular niche in the international geography of tourism production. Areas which had previously been socially, geographically and economically separated from each other - *El Arenal, Lloret de Mar, Benidrom, Torremolinos, Costa del Sol, Maspalomas-Playa del Inglés* - soon became part of an internationally recognised hierarchy of resort areas integrated into the control mechanisms of northern European tour operators. Gaviria reserves particular criticism for the large tourism *urbanizaciones* in particular, such as Maspalomas-Playa del Inglés in Gran Canaria, which epitomise what he refers to as "*la estrategia neocolonialista y expansionista*",<sup>9</sup> which has left large areas of the Spanish coastline in foreign hands since the 1960s (1974: 277).

According to Oliver *et al.* Mijas has been transformed in less than a decade from a state of semi-self sufficiency to an "*all but exclusively capitalist mode of production with a fully proletarianized labour force*" (1989: 348). At times the analysis often evokes a rather pastoral image of pre-tourism society in Mijas, characterised by the "*known risks of peasant farming*", despite having described the life of the small-holder as one of constant misery due to their dependence on periodic wage-work on the large estates when their own surpluses were insufficient to satisfy the subsistence needs of their families (Jurdao 1990: 80-30). Indeed, despite the richness of its ethnographic data Jurdao often collapses his analysis into simplistic claims with regard to the loss of local autonomy, an argument he shares with Gaviria (1974):

El capital financiero es apátrida, pero el territorio tiene patria. Es más la tierra es la patria. (1990: 469)<sup>10</sup>

Although Oliver *et al.* (1989) are correct to suggest that the development of tourism on the coast of Mijas has essentially been driven by the needs of international financiers and local political cliques, they appear to hold to a rather sentimental attachment to the former agrarian way of life. Even prior to the advent of tourism different segments of these so-called 'isolated' peasant communities of the Mediterranean were tied through trade and migration into wider social formations (*e.g.* see Blok 1974:



Gilmore 1980; Wolf 1982), something which Jurdao somewhat overlooks in his original study. Nevertheless, given that a significant proportion of tourism development in Mijas consists of large-scale residential urbanizations, financed predominantly by foreign investment (although generous tax breaks have in effect been a form of public subsidy), and with few linkages to local economies, then the accusations of neo-colonialism do contain some validity. Indeed ever-deepening EU integration means that the increasing concentration and control of tourism resources in the hands of a few large tour operators continues to undermine the democratic participation of large sectors of local communities in tourism development planning.

Other commentators however have criticised the relevance of the dependency thesis to Spain's experience during this period:

The fact that the interests of the technocrats often coincided with the interests of foreign capital, the fact that they wanted to integrate the Spanish economy into the capitalist world system does not make them into the representatives of a 'comprador bourgeoisie'. (Casanova 1983a: 956)

In addition, it would be unwise to exaggerate the degree of 'local control' over resources across Spain, prior to the arrival of tourism. Part of the problem stems from an uncritical and mechanistic analysis of the different constituents which make-up the 'local' and which thus attributes an inordinate amount of social solidarity to the 'local community'. This has been a common characteristic of much southern European anthropological research that has been extensively criticised elsewhere for ignoring the internal structures of community stratification (see Chapter Four: *The Problematization of 'Place'*).

Spain of course did not stumble into tourism through mere circumstance, nor was it the inevitable outcome of the increased leisure time afforded the northern European working classes, facilitated by their new found prosperity and the social democratic project of post-war Europe. These factors certainly played an important part in creating a latent propensity to travel and constituted a wider macro-economic and social context in which tourism emerged. However tourism destination development across Spain needs to be examined in relation to the agency of different state actors, in conjunction with different factions of capital and dominant local and regional cliques. Specific configurations of tourism development were the outcome of bargaining not only between classes, but just as significantly, between regions and the different coalitions of economic and political power within them.

## Conclusion

This chapter has provided a brief introduction to the wider social context in which tourism became a leading instrument of development in Spain. Furthermore, it has drawn attention to the fact that in general, studies of the development of tourism in Spain have paid insufficient attention to the regional variation of touristic processes and the specificity of local capitalist formations. Furthermore, the agency of different social groups is largely absent in these studies, or else reduced to rigid and one-dimensional categories such as 'foreign investors' and the 'local community', which leaves the analysis



at a 'concrete' or 'directly observable' level of decision-making, thus obscuring insight into the social composition of localities and the network of actors who define its development outcomes. Concrete ethnographic investigation of specific situations and experiences of tourism development may however reveal varied patterns of response to tourism and resultant changes in the social alignments between different interest groups, as exemplified by recent anthropological studies of tourism in southern Europe (Boissevain 1996a; Waldren 1996). Indeed these recent studies bear witness to a more diverse and varied tapestry of local adaptation and response to the continuing appropriation of space and other resources in the context of different touristic processes across Spain and southern Europe.



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- <sup>1</sup> Orden de 1 de agosto de 1997, *Consejería de Turismo y Transportes* (Boletín Oficial de Canarias núm. 115, miércoles 3 de septiembre 1997: 10906-10912).
- <sup>2</sup> Anuncio de 3 de febrero de 1997 de la Dirección General de Ordenación e Infraestructura Turística, *Consejería de Turismo y Transportes* (Boletín Oficial de Canarias núm. 29, lunes 3 de marzo de 1997: 2383-2395)
- <sup>3</sup> "Spain in the 1960s, when areas such as Mijas were being developed, was 'money for grabs' for the foreign investor, whereas the Spaniards were totally restricted...The colonising investor was well received in 'developing' Spain."
- <sup>4</sup> Several factors including rising worker militancy once collective bargaining had been legalized in 1958, the expansion of higher education and the increasing exposure of predominantly middle-class students to radical ideas, particularly from Paris, increasingly challenged the regime 'from below'.
- <sup>5</sup> In a similar manner, Hooper (1995) ascribes the success of the current affairs magazine *Interviú*, which emerged during the transition to democracy, to the close parallels which were often perceived between sexual and political liberation in Spain at that time; it provided readers with two of the principal things denied the general population under Franco - uncensored political commentary and photographs of naked women. The new social movements unleashed by the combination of sexual freedoms, political liberation and rampant consumerism which accompanied the demise of the dictatorship in Spain, are often referred to as a whole as, *la Movida* (Behar 1986: 336).
- <sup>6</sup> The percentage of the Spanish workforce employed in agriculture declined from 41% in 1960 to 23% in 1974 (Shubert 1990: 208). In a country of 30 million, approximately 1 million people abandoned agriculture between 1960 and 1968, of whom 80% were rural labourers and smallholders (Giner 1971: 131).
- <sup>7</sup> Union membership in Spain is amongst the lowest in the industrialised countries of Western Europe, fluctuating between 12 and 17% of the workforce (Campo García 1995: 211), compared to an average of 32% in the 'big four' countries (Germany, France, UK and Italy) and 71% in the Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden) (Therborn 1995: 308-309). [NB: these figures offer only an approximate comparison as they are derived from distinct sources].
- <sup>8</sup> A decree was passed on the 17th of June 1959 allowing foreigners to gain up to a fifty % stake in Spanish companies and facilitating the repatriation of profits (Jurdao 1990: 129, fn. 2)
- <sup>9</sup> "the strategy of expansion and neo-colonialism."
- <sup>10</sup> "Although the investment need not belong to any country in particular, the land does. What's more, the land is the country."



## CHAPTER SEVEN

# 'Peripheral Capitalism' and the Origins of Tourism in Gran Canaria

### Introduction

Although certain historical consistencies characterise the societal development of the southern European states of Spain, Portugal, Italy and Greece, there are clearly limits to a linear political economy which ignores the local variations of development beneath the commonalities perhaps evident at a wider level (Giner 1985). The conceptualisation of these Mediterranean states as exemplars of a transitional phase between pre-capitalist agrarian society and a fully-developed industrial capitalist stage of development characteristic of the European 'core' defined by Seers as, "*suppliers of capital and technology; centres of political, military and cultural dominance; providers of tourists and absorbers of migration*" (1979b: 8), conceals significant internal variations. The notion of 'periphery' or more precisely 'semi-periphery', the category in which Wallerstein (1974) situates southern Europe, is derived from their position within a generalised system of commodity exchange, rather than comparative micro-level analyses of the range and variety of capitalist development across Mediterranean societies (see Wolf 1982: 22-3):

In underplaying the importance of local class systems, the world-systems approach neglects the role of community stratification in the generation of group perceptions and collective consciousness. (Gilmore 1982: 182)

Similarly, the tendency for analyses of the political economy of the Canary Islands to lay the blame for the contemporary 'underdevelopment' of the region at the door of external actors, at the expense of concrete historico-comparative analyses of internal structures of power and class formation, has also obscured a more comprehensive analysis of the structures of tourism development at different levels across the region. Although there are superficial similarities between the uneven pattern of tourism development on Gran Canaria and the plantation model of tourism described by Weaver (1988) in Antigua, and by Britton (1980) and Hall (1994b) in Fiji, many of the studies which have followed this paradigmatic approach to the study of tourism in the Canary Islands do not advance our understanding of the diverse interactions between social, economic and political spheres which underpin the structure of tourism development, beyond generalised accusations of metropolitan 'control':

El caso de Canarias, en que unas 20,000 hectáreas de las mejores playas están *en manos de extranjeros*, y en las que los españoles sólo hacen labores de arquitectura y albañilería, es un ejemplo fehaciente de la amplitud y extensión de este fenómeno. Los beneficios derivados de la especulación con el espacio potencialmente turístico han encubierto la venta del país en parcelas, originando un *neocolonialismo* auspiciado a su vez desde los países de procedencia. (Perea and Jaime 1986: 206)<sup>1</sup> [emphasis added].

There is undeniably a significant degree of foreign capital involvement (although precise figures relating to tourism are hard to locate) and a great deal of influence exerted over the tourism sector by the large north European tour operators. This conclusion however reduces regional classes, which in any case transcend geographic boundaries, to passive actors and moreover, precludes a fuller investigation into the variation of tourism development outcomes within specific localities, even in areas supposedly saturated by *turismo de masas* (mass tourism) as argued by certain scholars of tourism in the Canary Islands

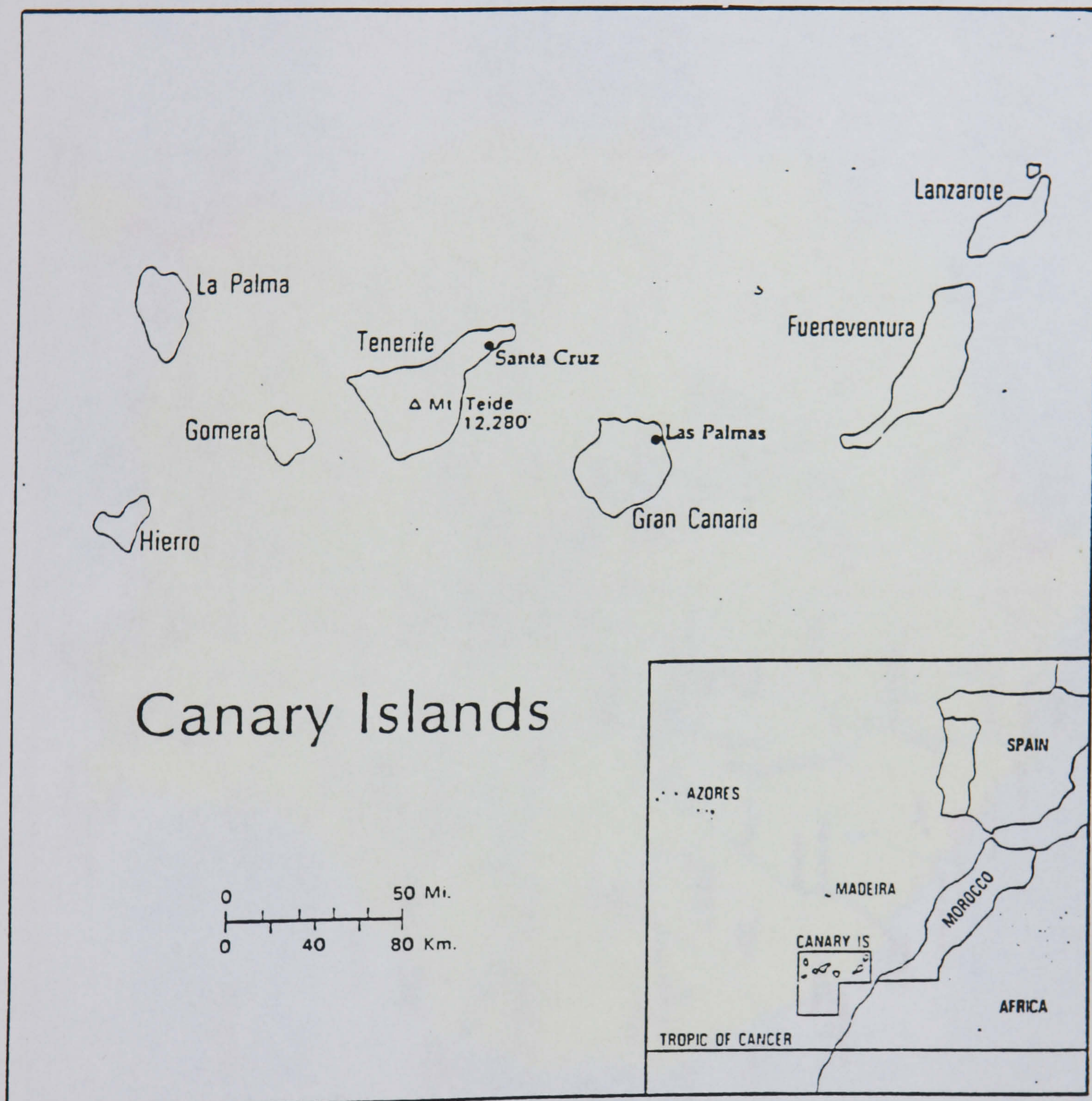


(Barbor and Artiles 1978). Mechanistic notions of peripherality and underdevelopment defined in a geographical sense, therefore simplify and reduce the regional character and specificity of socio-economic and political structures of domination in which processes of tourism development are situated, to a functionalist reflection of macro-structural conditions.<sup>2</sup>

Recent work on the impact of tourism in the Canary Islands, demonstrates both modernization and neo-Marxist inspired viewpoints, which obscure the varied nature of regional and local responses to tourism development. A recent study by Fariña Rodríguez (1994) on the effects of tourism on a rural village in the interior part of Tenerife (Canary Islands), posits a confrontation between putative notions of 'traditional Canary values' and the invasion of foreign influences precipitated by tourist development on the south coast of the island. Alternatively, Cubas Valentín (1991) argues that tourism has been a positive force of change on a rural agricultural settlement in Gran Canaria which provided much of the workforce for the construction and tourism sectors in the first large urban tourist resort enclave (*urbanización*) to be built in the south, *Maspalomas-Playa del Inglés*. However he shares the former's conceptualisation of a 'traditional' society in opposition to the 'modern' values brought by tourism, and in a manner similar to McKean's (1989) study of tourism and cultural change in Bali, claims that tourism has led to a process of cultural revival amongst the local population who, "*toma conciencia de su identidad a raíz de las transformaciones propiciadas por el turismo*" (Cubas Valentín 1991: 583).<sup>3</sup> However, a study conducted by TEYDA (*Taller de Evaluación y Diseño Ambiental*) is critical of both the sentimental lament over the loss of local community identity (which in any case never existed as a static and homogenous entity), as well as the neo-Marxist claims of authors such as Gaviria who seem to imply that the exploitative mechanisms of tourism can exist only between countries and not within them. In contrast they argue that, "*Poco interesa, para la clase de los trabajadores, la carta de naturaleza del capital*" and that what is required instead is "*estudiar las variadas formas e existencia que se da al capital en el turismo*" (TEYDA 1991: 533).<sup>4</sup>

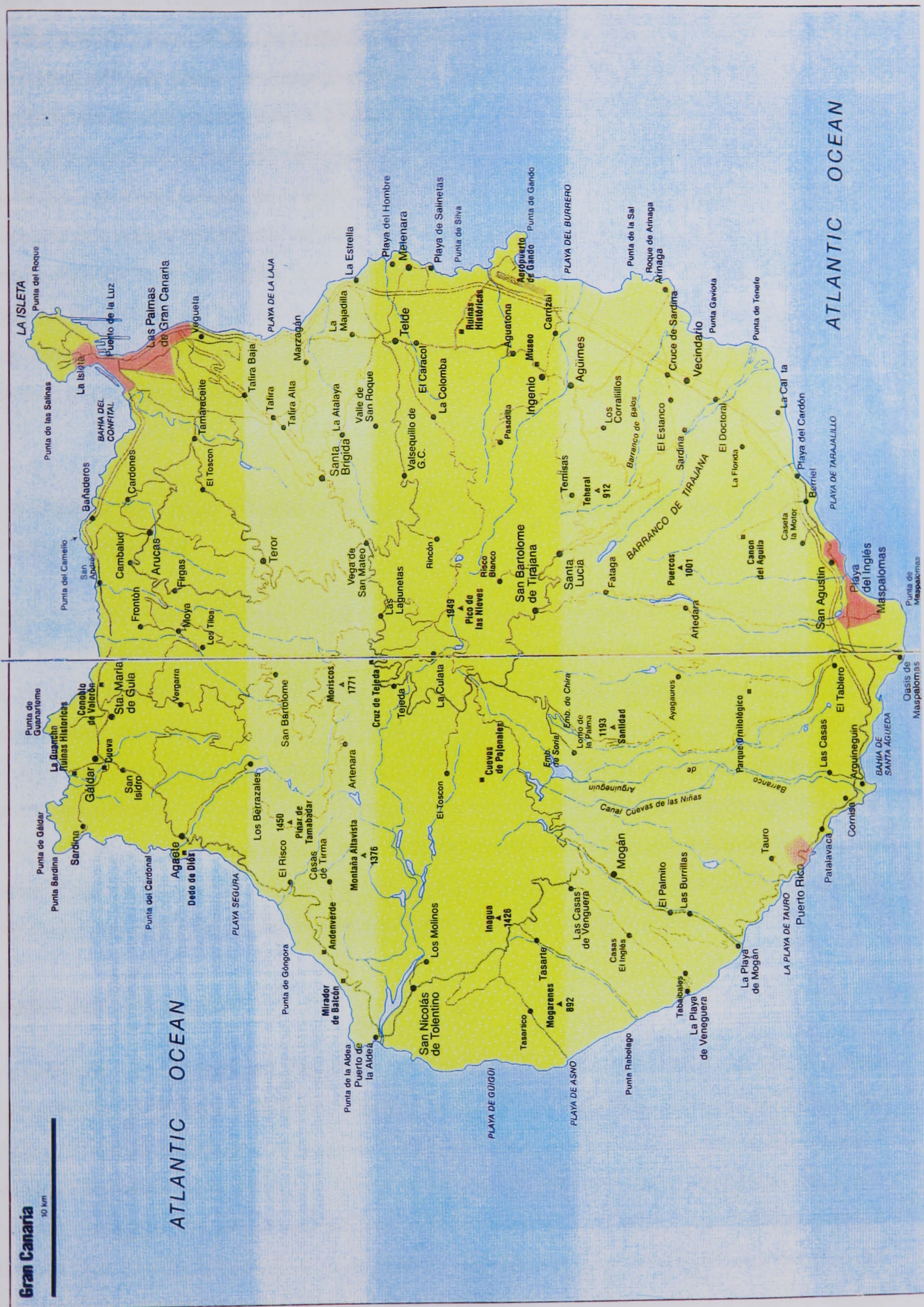
In the case of Gran Canaria also, there have been few attempts to examine the structures and processes of tourism development at different scales of analysis, beyond generalised accounts of its historical evolution (e.g. Parsons 1985). There is even less examination of the relationship between socio-spatial configurations of tourism development and locally-specific class structures and patterns of political intervention. Although Nadal and Guitián's (1983) well-researched and pioneering study of the development of the extensive tourism *urbanización* of *Maspalomas-Playa del Inglés* provides a detailed and descriptive historical account of the transition from plantation agriculture to large-scale 'enclave' tourism development, including a detailed case-by-case analysis of changes in land use, phases of construction and demographic changes, there is little contextual examination of the social composition of the different agents of development, and their relationship to specific configurations of capital and modes of tourism development. Moore's (1976a), anthropological study of tourism and socio-cultural change during the early phases of touristification in a rural settlement on the island of Tenerife, contains detailed ethnographic depictions of change due to tourism, but reveals little of the wider societal structures in which these processes are embedded, and lacks theorization.





**Figure 7.1:** The Canary Island Archipelago (Source: Parsons 1985)





**Figure 7.2:** Gran Canaria (Source: Insight Guide. A. Eames (ed) 1989).



Many of these studies therefore fall short of an analysis of the societal circumstances in which tourism came to be a dominant component of productive activity at different scales within the region, and the historically specific nature of the inter-relationships between local social structures and the agencies of change within different phases of touristification. An examination of the spatial expansion of tourism infrastructure should also therefore be set in the context of the social and political forces which actively shape it. Before proceeding with the ethnographic analysis of the dynamics of touristification in Playa de Mogán in the following chapters, this chapter will provide an outline of the broader processes of tourism development and change which have transformed the social and economic landscapes of Gran Canaria, situated in the context of the uneven development of capitalism in this region. Thus the examination of tourism is interwoven with an exploration of the specific modes of capitalist development and interlocking networks of social relations which have bound different segments of the island's population into distant processes of social change.

## **7.1 Tourism in Gran Canaria from the Age of Imperialism to Fordist Mass Tourism**

The name *Las Afortunadas* (Fortunate Islands), used to identify the islands in ancient Greek and Latin texts,<sup>5</sup> would appear to be a fitting one for an archipelago so well-endowed with a natural beauty and warm yet mild climate cooled by the tradewinds; the average annual temperature of 21.7 degrees centigrade varies only slightly between 17.8 degrees in January and 24.2 in August (Machado Carrillo 1990: 64). From this one might suppose that merely its physical endowments and geographical location in the proverbial 'south' were the principal reasons why they (in particular Gran Canaria and Tenerife) have become one of the leading tourism destination areas in the world, whose attractions are summed up by Herrera Piqué as; "*un turismo atraído especialmente por el templado clima invernal de Gran Canaria, por el paisaje y por la generosa y admirativa hospitalidad del isleño*" (1984: 315).<sup>6</sup>

### ***Conquest and Settlement***

The foundations of contemporary society<sup>7</sup> in the Canary Islands are inextricably tied into the interlocking networks of exchange and material forces of change which helped shape the social and geographic landscapes of the Mediterranean, as indeed they did for the other islands of the 'Mediterranean Atlantic', Madeira and the Azores (King 1993: 27). The strategic position of this archipelago (approximately 1,500 kms south of the Spanish mainland, and 100 kms from the west coast of Africa) on the 'frontier' between the Old and New Worlds facilitated their incorporation into the expansion of Europe from the fifteenth century onwards, precipitated by Spain's colonial ambitions and the forces of primitive capital accumulation which brought explorers, traders and mercantile interests to these shores and beyond (Wolf 1982: 24).<sup>8</sup>



The conquest and settlement of the Canary Islands itself, was carried out in two phases of distinct juridical character. Firstly, the manorial conquest (*conquista señorial*), was undertaken by feudal lords mainly from the Iberian peninsula and France, who succeeded in establishing control over the islands of Lanzarote, Fuerteventura, La Gomera and El Hierro. Their success in subduing the indigenous populations was to act as a precursor to the more extensive and direct royal conquest (*conquista realenga*) of Gran Canaria, La Palma and Tenerife, which were of greater economic importance to the Crown of Castile due to their size, terrain and climate (Alvarez 1980a: 13). The manorial conquest was thus dictated less by the political imperatives of the Crown and had more to do with the entrepreneurial ambitions of the military overlords who subsequently imposed their own authority on these islands. It also served as a platform from which the royal conquest was launched (Suárez Acosta *et al.* 1988: 40-45), and was carried out by colonists (*conquistadores*) in the name of the Crown of Castile who subsequently authorised the distribution of land and water amongst the settlers, known as the *repartimiento* (Repartition), and imposed direct rule through a governor by royal decree in 1480 (Jiménez Sánchez 1940).

The claim by the Crown of Castile over the archipelago was sealed in the Treaty of Alcaçovas-Toledo in 1479, which left Madeira, the Azores and Cape Verde in the hands of the Portuguese (Suárez Acosta *et al.* 1988: 40). The successive periods of invasion and settlement which had lasted nearly a century, finally came to an end with the subjugation of Tenerife in 1496, which signalled the end of the 'indigenous' society as the Crown of Castile imposed an entirely distinct set of social, economic and political institutions and structures across the islands.<sup>9</sup> The Repartition of land amongst the *conquistadores* of the *realenga* islands thus established a highly unequal structure of land ownership, which was to constitute the fundamental basis of wealth in the islands for centuries to come:

..estos repartos de tierras fueron el fundamento y más firme puntal de la riqueza agrícola de las Islas, pues permitieron no sólo el fomento de cultivos nuevos y espaciales, como los de la caña de azúcar, de la vid y otros frutales traído de España y de la isla de Madeira, sino que al propio tiempo originaron un emporio comercial extraordinario. (Jiménez Sánchez 1940: 6)<sup>10</sup>

Land (together with water and the right to own slaves) was distributed by the Crown to faithful *conquistadores* and financiers in return for their participation in the conquest, with the rest falling under the jurisdiction of the Crown and Church. The uneven distribution of land ownership remained largely unchanged until the liberal reforms and the expansion of the agro-export economy during the 19th century which set in motion the breaking up and sale of Church and Crown lands.

Land, particularly in the more fertile lowland areas, was monopolised by an agrarian oligarchy (comprised of Castilian, Andalucian and Galician nobles and their descendents) whilst trade was controlled by foreign merchants who often financed agricultural production and controlled the export of agricultural products through their commercial links to northern European markets (García Herrera 1987: 26). Portuguese, Genovese and Flemish merchants were involved in the commercialisation of sugar cane exports, while the English controlled the export of wine to England, the principal market at that time. Until the disentailment legislation (*desamortizaciones*) of the 19th century outlawed the practice of primogenitor



(*primogénito*), the nobility secured the undivided succession of their property by means of the *mayorazgo*.<sup>11</sup> The foreign mercantile classes were instrumental in forging the trading relationships which saw the Canary Islands incorporated into a triangular network of trade which linked the northern port cities of London, Amsterdam and Plymouth, the Atlantic ports of Lisbon and Cádiz-Seville and the Atlantic archipelagos of the Azores, Madeira and the Canaries (Morales Lezcano 1971: 102). The presence of foreign mercantilist classes in Gran Canaria (and Tenerife) since the 16th and 17th centuries, was greatly facilitated by the conflict between the Canary Island producers and the monopolistic practices of the Crown of Castile which imposed heavy tariffs on the export of Canary Island wine to South America (García Herrera 1987: 27). Merchants from the powerful mercantile centres of the Dutch Netherlands and England thus became particularly influential over the Atlantic trade routes until the end of the 18th century (see Wolf 1982: 114-25), by which time a new phase of political and economic development, precipitated by the French Revolution, was set to transform the nature of capitalist development in the Canary Islands and the emerging landscape of tourism on the two principal islands.

### *The Emergence of Tourism in the 'Fortunate Islands'*

Since the 1950s, the number of tourist arrivals to Gran Canaria alone have risen from 7,000 tourists a year to approximately two and a half million in 1996, over three times the size of the island's population which currently stands at 714,131 (Istac 1997a) (see Table 7.2). However, the Canary Islands have long been an object of fascination for explorers, travellers and scientists since they first appeared in classic chronicles of ancient Rome and Greece. During a more recent historical period, the archipelago has been visited by many well-known historical figures, not least Christopher Columbus whose influence does not require further elaboration, but also James Cook, Charles Darwin (although he did not disembark) and the celebrated naturalist and explorer Alexander von Humboldt (Herrera Piqué 1987). Vivid and detailed descriptions of the cultural and natural attributes of islands can be found as far back as the 16th century (see Herrera Piqué 1984: Appendix II), however it is during the 19th century that the archipelago began to appear more regularly in the travel literature of this period, including a well-known account by Olivia Stone, *Tenerife and its Six Satellites* published in 1889, in which Lanzarote and Fuerteventura are described as existing 'beyond civilization' (Riedel 1973). The title of the publication itself indicates the degree to which Tenerife, and in particular the resort of Puerto de la Cruz on the north of the island, was the epi-centre of tourist visitation during the 19th century. This was also related to the prevailing structure of commerce and trade, in particular the fact that the port of Santa Cruz de Tenerife monopolised trade to the Americas since being declared the only port of exit in 1725, and that the Valle de Oratava in which Puerto de la Cruz was situated, constituted the dominant centre of agricultural production. It was here that the grandiose British-owned *Hotel Taoro* was built in 1890, to which travel could be arranged via steamship agencies in London, including Thomas Cook (Morales Lezcano 1992: 181). Until the 1870s transport services to Las Palmas from Tenerife were poor and accommodation was limited to one hotel in Las Palmas and houses which could be rented near the village of Santa Brigida in the foothills outside the city (Riedel 1973).



Although during the 18th century the island of Madeira was already a well-established 'colony' for long-term British visitors recuperating from respiratory diseases, the publication of the first guidebooks on the Canary Islands in the late 19th century provided significant impulse for the arrival of tourists to this archipelago. The title of one such book entitled, *Madeira, Canary Islands and Azores. A Practical Guide for the Use of Tourists and Invalids*, published in 1889 by A.S. Brown, demonstrates quite clearly the type of visitor at which it was aimed. In 1885 between 300 to 400 (mostly English) 'invalids' travelled to the Canary Islands, most of whom stayed in Puerto de la Cruz, although a small number did also travel to Gran Canaria (Riedel 1973). A survey of visitor arrivals in 1900 revealed that a total of 4,227 foreigners visited the region, amongst whom were 2,085 English, 610 Germans and 582 French (Riedel 1973: 505). Until the 1920s visitors still came to the Canary Islands predominantly for reasons of health, by which time the arrival of cruise liners in Las Palmas confirmed the growing touristic importance of Gran Canaria.

### *Tourism in a Peripheral Capitalist Formation*<sup>1 2</sup>

The development of the earliest tourism-related facilities and infrastructure in and around Las Palmas at the turn of the century, was inextricably tied to the expansion of trade associated with the cultivation of commercial crops for export, which was nourished by the injection of British investment capital into the construction of the port of Las Palmas (*Puerto de la Luz*) initiated in 1883, and expansion of ancillary services during the period 1885-1910 (Macías Hernández 1983; Morales Lezcano 1992). The take-off of British commercial involvement in the Canary Islands was also however dependent upon the internal structure of class relations, and in particular the emergence of an acquisitive agrarian bourgeoisie which had amassed large quantities of land during the disentanglements of the 19th century (Bernal 1981: 28). They were active in the promotion and enactment of the free trade decrees between 1856 and 1869, as well as the abolition of the obligatory 1% tariff on all commercial goods entering the port in 1900, factors which greatly facilitated the influx of British capital into the islands (Bernal 1981: 33).

Heightened competition between the northern European industrial powers during the 'imperial phase of capitalism' (Larrain 1989: 6-10), stimulated British interest in the region, who required coaling stations for their steamships and a location for the implantation of a new instrument of capital accumulation, the commercial agricultural plantation. The improvement of transport technology and the desire amongst members of the local agrarian bourgeoisie for new sources of income since the crash of cochineal markets between 1877 and 1889 (Macías Hernández 1983: 285), precipitated the emergence of enclaves of agricultural production (bananas and tomatoes), situated on the estates belonging to the agrarian bourgeoisie, which dramatically transformed the geography of production on Tenerife and Gran Canaria. As noted by Morales Lezcano (1971), the cultivation of crops for export, not only marked the beginning of a new phase of capital accumulation on Gran Canaria, through which geographically isolated parts of the island became integrated into a network of production, but significantly, cemented Gran Canaria as a popular holiday destination for the Victorian leisure classes. Gran Canaria thus exemplifies the structures of peripheral capitalist social formation described by Mouzelis (1978), one based on a "*feudal-imperial*



*alliance*” (Munck 1985: 234), between a landowning bourgeoisie and foreign mercantilist classes, who controlled the conduits of export trade, whilst much of the population was still closely connected to non-capitalist modes of production in the agrarian, fishing as well as artisanal forms of production in urban and rural areas (Brito 1989b: 28-37).

The dominance of British capital in tandem with the inter-connectedness of their commercial and recreational interests, is underlined by a quote from Brown’s (1889) guide book, cited by Riedel:

Gracias a ellos se completa la cadena que hace de las Islas Canarias un puerto donde se suministra carbón a los barcos ingleses, un jardín donde se cultivan verduras para las mesas inglesas y un lugar de recreo o sanatorio construido y mantenido por los ingleses. (1973: 507)<sup>13</sup>

The development of the port cemented the economic superiority of Las Palmas as the productive centre of the island and the archipelago, and had a significant effect on both the spatial configuration of production across the island as well as in the city itself. Urban expansion around the port saw the influx of migrants from the depressed rural interior rise dramatically, to the extent that between 1887 and 1910 the population of Las Palmas had risen from 19,000 to 63,000, of whom 10,000 were clustered around the port alone, many of whom filled the ranks of an emergent urban proletariat (Brito 1980: 30). Initially, the city began to grow around the new urban growth pole as the port became the focus for all manner of economic activities associated with shipping and the export of agricultural products. Within the space of a decade, the British capitalist classes began to channel surpluses into the development of an infrastructure specifically for tourism, as the steamship lines brought in an increasing number of recreational visitors alongside the cargo which they carried to and from the islands. This led to the consolidation of an impressive array of commercial interests in the hands of the foreign mercantile classes in alliance with powerful landed interests amongst the Canary Island island oligarchy, which reinforced the structures of a peripheral capitalist formation.

During the last decade of the 19th century 46 steamship companies were making the journey to Las Palmas of which 22 were British-owned (Morales Lezcano 1992: 113). However, visitor arrivals to Gran Canaria did not surpass Tenerife until the post-WWII period and the rise to prominence of Las Palmas as a recreational beach destination in the 1950s. By the turn of the century several large hotels had been built near the port area and in the old sector of the city, bringing the total number constructed during this period to around fourteen. The first of these was the impressive Hotel Santa Catalina built in 1890, followed by the Hotel Metropole, both of which were built by a British company that controlled significant quantities of steam trade and commerce in the islands. They were built in the area of land between the port and the old city which at that time still consisted of open fields and orchards, but soon became an important focal point of British residences and hotels, thus earning the name the “*Barrio de los Hoteles*” (Herrera Piqué 1984: 313). Alternatively, those with a preference for landscape and a milder climate stayed in hotels such as the German-owned Hotel Santa Brigida (now an hotel school - *Hotel Escuela de Santa Brigida*) situated in the foothills outside Las Palmas, an area which has traditionally contained a high concentration of estates and sumptuous residences belonging to the island nobility and middle classes, as well as a permanent population of British merchants due to the cooler temperatures.



The new use of space which had been initiated by the port and sustained by the commercial activities introduced by British capital, was thus crucial in providing the early impetus for tourism development, and creating an urban hierarchy of recreational space centred around the port of Las Palmas and the beach of Las Canteras.

During this period there was little social interaction or inter-marriage between the Canary Islanders and the predominantly British 'settler' population who had also built their own club and golf course in Las Palmas at the beginning of the century. Nor did their leisure habits coincide much with those of the Canary Island elite classes who tended to frequent several small spa towns situated on the windward face of the island, or visit their summer residences around the town of Agaete which had also been an important port for the export of agricultural produce although on a much smaller scale. This territorial contrast in leisure practices also reflected the division of commercial interests amongst the island's dominant classes. Whereas the British controlled much of the commercial activity related to the port, the island's agrarian oligarchy controlled the land and indeed owned many of the large estates in the fertile valley of Agaete (Galván Tudela 1987: 44-45).

At the turn of the century tourism began to be recognised as a valuable economic activity by the state, which set up the first tourism board (*Junta de Turismo*) in Las Palmas in 1910, responsible to the *Comisión Nacional de Turismo* within the *Ministerio de Fomento* (Ministry of Development) which had been founded in 1905 (Newton 1996). Its primary function was to promote various tourism-related activities in the capital, regulate the standard of tourism facilities (*e.g.* parks, health and safety) and to act as a ticketing agency (Herrera Piqué 1984: 319). However a more concerted attempt at an interventionist policy towards tourism was initiated during the inter-war years by the government of Primo de Rivera (1923-1930), who as a precursor to Franco pursued a policy of economic growth and modernization within a centralist state apparatus. His main concern was to improve Spain's impoverished transport and accommodation infrastructure and promote to Spain on an international scale. Thus in 1928 the *Patronato Nacional de Turismo* was set up, with a provincial office in Las Palmas, in order to undertake this task, and in 1929 organised an exhibition in Seville in which Las Palmas was represented. It also put in place an important accommodation infrastructure, with the help of the hotel credit scheme later expanded by Franco. Perhaps the most renowned legacy of this scheme is the chain of state-run hotels (*paradores*) spanning the country, which often involved the rehabilitation of abandoned castles and aristocratic residences. The first of these to be built in Gran Canaria was situated in the centre of the island in Tejeda and opened in 1949, in an attempt to attract visitors away from the capital and into the mountains and valleys of the interior. Interestingly, one of the members of the *Sindicato del Turismo*, which superseded the role of the Patronato in 1934, was the celebrated painter Néstor Martín Fernández de la Torre who gave impulse to a number of initiatives which were to underpin the promotion of Gran Canaria's touristic identity. As a leading figure in the "*indigenista*" movement which looked to the region's indigenous past for its artistic inspiration, he saw tourism as a vehicle for expressing the uniqueness of the Canary Island's identity. One such project was the creation of the *Pueblo Canario*, an open-air ethnographic museum dedicated to the preservation and display of Canary Island arts and crafts



which also served as a venue for music and traditional dance performances. It was built adjacent to the Hotel Santa Catalina which had fallen into disrepair and was rehabilitated (by his brother and well-known architect, Miguel Martín) and adorned with a traditional Canary Island architectural vernacular, in particular its ornate carved wooden balconies. Much of this work had been financed by the *Mando Económico de las Islas Canarias* and the island council (*Cabildo*), and was responsible for the well-developed accommodation infrastructure which provided a foundation for the post-war expansion of tourism in the 1950s (Naylon 1967: 32). As an aside, another lasting legacy of this artistic movement of this period, is the slogan “*Gran Canaria, continente en miniatura*” [“Gran Canaria, the miniature continent”], which still adorns promotional literature today.

This early period of tourist expansion was largely brought to a halt by the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939) and WWII (1939-45). Moreover, the advent of oil-fired ships led to the demise of steamshipping and the eventual closure of coaling stations in Las Palmas in 1930s, which marked the end of the British period of dominance in Las Palmas. The volume of tourist arrivals did not significantly rise again until the immediate post war period whereupon Las Palmas became the focus of Scandinavian mass tourism, given their relative wealth amongst northern Europeans and the arrival of the first charter flights in the years 1957-58 (Odouard 1989:153). This period witnessed the construction of a narrow strip of hotels and apartments along the main beach of Las Canteras, behind which lay a maze of streets flanked by bars, nightclubs, restaurants and pavement cafes, here described in an eye-witness account from the 1960s:

Las Palmas is spread along the waterfront in a five-mile long ribbon less than a mile in width, and is suffused with the cosmopolitan colour of a floating population which is renewed from month to month, from week to week, and even, in the case of the great liners and cruise ships, from day to day. (Myhill 1968: 75)

Although Gran Canaria’s airport had already been built in 1930, approximately half way down the east coast of the island, during the 1950s the majority of visitors still arrived on liners which docked in the port, separated from the beach of Las Canteras by the narrow isthmus, thus consolidating the dominance of Las Palmas as the epi-centre of tourist activity. By 1961 the number of tourists arriving by sea had dropped to one-third and by 1971 this figure had fallen further to between 4% and 5% (Odouard 1973: 157). Nevertheless in 1969, 80% of all tourist activity in the Canary Islands remained concentrated in Las Palmas, and in Puerto de la Cruz in Tenerife (Odouard 1973: 161). However, whereas tourism was relatively evenly spread between different points on Tenerife, Las Palmas monopolised tourism activity on Gran Canaria, considerably helped by the fact that it was equipped with a far superior harbour and accommodation infrastructure, and was endowed with the magnificent golden beach of Las Canteras which was the centre of attraction for the sun-seeking Scandinavians. Despite this fact, 55% of arrivals were Spaniards in 1957, who were enticed by an element of exoticism offered by the islands. For many peninsular Spanish visitors it was seen as Spain’s Atlantic ‘colony’, as well as a source of cheap duty-free goods, which also brought in a minority of visitors from Africa. By 1969, the Spanish and Scandinavians each made up 24% of the market, although the latter visited mostly during the period



December-March whilst for the mainland Spanish, Gran Canaria was and continues to be a predominantly summer destination (Odouard 1973).

Whereas in 1950 Tenerife received approximately 8,000 tourists and Gran Canaria 7,000, seven years later the balance of arrivals had shifted in favour of the latter, with the province of Las Palmas (which includes Lanzarote and Fuerteventura) receiving 22,595 visitors in comparison to 17,364 registered arrivals in the province of Santa Cruz de Tenerife (which includes La Gomera, La Palma and El Hierro) (Cáceres 1988). From 1955 to 1965 the number of tourists received by the province of Las Palmas increased tenfold from 19,190 to 191,663, most of which were concentrated on Gran Canaria given the almost complete lack of a touristic infrastructure on the other two islands in the province; Fuerteventura and Lanzarote (Nadal and Guitián 1983: 77). With the era of British commercial dominance well and truly over, the period of tourism development in Las Palmas during the 1950s and 1960s witnessed the construction of accommodation infrastructure with investment provided principally by resident Canary Island and Spanish capitalist classes (Gaviria 1974: 339). Hotels which had been built with British capital had either been closed down or were purchased by Canary Island investors, such as the Hotel Santa Catalina and the Metropole (Myhill 1968: 84). Towards the end of the 1960s the infrastructural deficiencies of Las Palmas's tourism supply were becomingly increasingly evident, to such an extent that the urban congestion and environmental degradation provoked by the unplanned hotel construction would have made the regeneration of this area costly and most likely unattractive to developers (Cáceres 1988). However the spatial reorganisation of tourism infrastructure away from the capital in the north to the dry and arid regions of the south, hitherto unexploited for tourism, was not an historical inevitability. Although it is true to say that as the principal focus of touristic attention shifted towards sea and sun, there was little doubt that the south with little rain and virtually all-year round sunshine in comparison to the more temperate windward face of the island, would become a major concentration of tourism development. It was contingent upon prevailing macro-economic conditions in several European countries in conjunction with the technological advances in transport and communications, as well as the intervention of a collection of economic and political actors which linked the dominant classes within the regional social formation, to those of international capitalist interests, in particular those connected to the emerging international tour operators (Díaz Rodríguez *et al.* 1985: 322).

## 7.2 The Industrialization of Tourism in the South

Tourism in and around the capital Las Palmas, reached its peak during the mid-1960s. The transformation of the territorial distribution of tourism production over the course of the 1960s, was manifest in the spatial polarization of supply along the predominantly uninhabited coastal litoral of San Bartolomé de Tirajana, which subsequently spread into the neighbouring municipality of Mogán (see Chapter Nine), whose incorporation into the expanding mass tourism system was inaugurated by the construction of the resort enclave of Puerto Rico, approved in 1967. By 1971 the epi-centre of touristic activity had already begun to shift decisively away from the capital, where approximately 30% of



accommodation capacity was situated, towards the south, where it increased to 70% (Odouard 1989: 155). The relative distribution of accommodation continued to shift in favour of the south, to the extent that by 1986 nearly 80% was concentrated here, spurred by the continuing dominance of sun and beach tourism and the availability of cheap and relatively flat land near the coast in these areas. In 1974 the number of bed spaces in the south equalled those of Las Palmas, and by 1986 the south contained double the accommodation capacity of the north (Cáceres 1988: 65), bringing the total figure for Gran Canaria to 103,478 (see Table 7.1).

**Table 7.1** Evolution of Total Accommodation Capacity (Bed Spaces): Canary Islands, Gran Canaria and Tenerife

	1971	1982	1986	1990	1993	1996
Gran Canaria	57 178	94 525	103 478	142 030	133 641	126 179
Tenerife	41 419	64 270	75 400	122 758	120 079	117 819
<b>CANARY ISL.</b>	<b>102 574</b>	<b>177 391</b>	<b>211 493</b>	<b>364 272</b>	<b>337 975</b>	<b>328 254</b>

Source: (1971, 1982, 1986) *Consejería de Turismo y Transportes*; (1990, 1993, 1996) *Istac* (1997c)

Although overcrowding and urban congestion in Las Palmas was partly to blame for the growing emphasis on developing the south for tourism, the prevailing imperatives of a new phase of capital accumulation, in particular the increasing market dominance of integrated tour operators, demanded a geographical space in which a dense and uninterrupted configuration of tourism facilities and infrastructure could be built on a large-scale, in order to accommodate a high volume of tourists. A significant factor was the economic slump produced by the energy crisis of 1973 which resulted in the closure of 21 hotels and 24 other tourism-related buildings in Las Palmas during the 1970s, leading to the loss of 1200 jobs (Rodríguez Martín 1985: 247). The rapid expansion of the large-scale *urbanizaciones* in the south, which intensified towards the end of the 1960s, exerted further competitive pressure on hoteliers in Las Palmas and signalled the terminal decline of all but the largest hotels (Gaviria 1974: 298). Pressure by investors and tour operators to maximise the extraction of surpluses from the tourism infrastructure, whilst maintaining prices sufficiently low for the mass market, thus precipitated both the spatial reorganisation of tourism, as well as a transformation in the *type* of accommodation infrastructure. Whereas tourism in Las Palmas and the traditional tourist areas of Tenerife (Puerto de la Cruz and to lesser extent Santa Cruz de Tenerife) were largely based on hotel accommodation, the new phase of tourism production saw a massive rise in the number of self-catering, apartment and villa-based developments, which only required 0.1 employees per bed space in contrast to 0.5 employees per bed space in a hotel (Cáceres 1988: 66). Moreover, according to Cáceres, given the dominance of Las Palmas since the post-war expansion of a mass tourism infrastructure, the effects of the recession during the 1970s were more severe, and as a result led to an even greater emphasis on non-hotel accommodation during the new phase of expansion, which facilitated higher short-term profitability.



Thus the preponderance of non-hotel accommodation in Gran Canaria (3:1) has become more pronounced than for Tenerife (2:1) (Cáceres 1999).

### *The Urbanization of Maspalomas - Playa del Inglés<sup>14</sup>*

The development of a large-scale tourist infrastructure was initiated in 1962, by the construction of a series of extensive tourism resort complexes, or *urbanizaciones*, in the municipality of San Bartolomé de Tirajana, under the auspices of development company known as Maspalomas-Costa Canaria, which was presided over by the dominant landowner in this area, the *Conde de la Vega Grande*. These *urbanizaciones*, the largest single expanse of tourism space in Gran Canaria, stretch across nearly 1000 hectares of land which extends into the fragile eco-system of the Maspalomas Dunes and along nearly 10 kilometres of coastline (see Figure 7.2). Indeed it is in the Canary Islands and the south of Gran Canaria in particular, together with the Costa del Sol, where the large integrated urban tourism resort complex known as *urbanizaciones*, first appeared on such a large scale (Gaviria 1974). These extensive sprawls of urban tourism spaces consisted of enclaves in which speculative property development went largely unchecked by the broader concerns of civic-oriented development and public sector intervention.

**Table 7.2** Tourism Arrivals: Spain, Canary Islands and Gran Canaria.  
(x 1000)

	Spain	Canary Islands	Gran Canaria
<i>Year</i>			
1950	-	15	8
1955	2,522	39	19
1960	6,113	69	36
1965	14,251	316	191
1970	24,106	821	466
1975	30,123	2,011	906
1980	38,023	2,521	1,022
1985	43,236	3,736	1,448
1990	52,044	5,460	1,972
1995	57,594	7,972	2,592
1996	60,654	8,007	2,602

Source: *Istac* (1997d); *Consejería de Turismo y Transportes*; *WTO* (1992, 1998)

In San Bartolomé the process of tourism development was in some ways similar to that experienced on the Costa del Sol, and was also conditioned by the locally-specific class structure and pattern of land tenure. For example, the development of *urbanizaciones* in Mijas on the Costa del Sol, which is distinguished by a more fragmented pattern of land tenure, resulted in a rather variegated patchwork of urban spaces. They either corresponded to the boundaries of large estates belonging to large landowners (>100 Ha.), or grew out of the amalgamated sale of land by a collection of small (< 5 Ha.) and medium-sized (5-100 Ha.) landowners (see Jurdao 1990: 179-186). Apart from the scale of development there are also significant contrasts in both the nature and historical timing of tourism development on the coast of San Bartolomé de Tirajana and the eastern half of Mogán and that which occurred in Playa de Mogán. By



the time tourism development was initiated in the south, approximately 40% of land (15,000 hectares) in San Bartolomé de Tirajana was owned by the estate of the *Conde la Vega Grande*, a title held by a succession of landowners with considerable economic and political influence in island affairs since the estate had been inaugurated during the late 17th century (Nadal and Guitián 1983: 78).

Prior to the construction of the *urbanizaciones*, a little over 1,000 hectares were dedicated to the cultivation of tomatoes for export to Europe (Nadal and Guitián 1983: 62). The expropriation of surplus was controlled largely by a powerful commercial class of tenant farmers (of which there were 34 in 1958/59), who enlarged their stock of capital through the operation of several large agro-export companies, under which were the plantation supervisors (*mayordomos*) and the labourers (*jornaleros*) and sharecroppers (*aparceros*) themselves. However, as the tomato export market began to stagnate during the 1960s many of the (particularly smaller) agro-export companies began to close down through a combination of a lack of investment, mismanagement and the effects of the economic downturn in the 1970s. The area devoted to the cultivation of tomatoes on land within the Conde's estate subsequently decreased from 932 hectares in 1955 to 463 in 1970 (Nadal and Guitián 1983: 62). Similarly, the area dedicated to the cultivation of the other major export crop on Gran Canaria, bananas, fell from a peak of 4,200 hectares in 1965 to 2,794 hectares in 1984, a decline of 30% in just under twenty years (Martín and González 1991: 44-45). Thus, the combination of economic recession in the agricultural sector, and the potential for short-term profits to be made in tourism and tourism-related property development, enticed many capitalist entrepreneurs away from this sector. Nadal and Guitián (1983) cite an example of one well-known export company which collapsed in 1976-77 as a result of the mismanagement induced by an excessive emphasis on channelling surpluses into tourism and land speculation.

There were various attempts to initiate the development of tourism in this area, including one by the *Cabildo* to build a *parador* in the Maspalomas dunes area. However it was the Conde himself who set in motion what was eventually to become the sprawling coastal resort development of Maspalomas-Playa del Inglés. San Bartolomé de Tirajana alone has a total capacity of between 85,280 and 85,500 bed spaces, depending upon the source consulted (Consejería de Turismo y Transportes; Istac 1996: 19), which is equivalent to nearly 70% of the island's bed capacity; although some estimates are as high as 150,000 (*La Provincia* 25/7/95)! The development of this extensive tourism resort was steered and controlled by the landowner and a collection of capitalist interests (including a notable injection of capital from an established Catalan industrial consortium) gathered together under the umbrella of a development company set up by the Conde, who owned 2,130 hectares of land upon which the *urbanizaciones* were to be built. Under his guidance and initiative an international competition was organised in order to draw up the plans for the resort, eventually won in 1962 by a French architectural consortium known as SETAP (*Société pour l'Etude Technique d'Amenagements Planifiés*) (Nadal and Guitián 1983: 81). The most notable aspect of the plan was the division of the site into seven separate zones, each with their own name and particular endowment with a different range of accommodation and commercial facilities, that is, in theory. Initially, it was intended that 2,000 hectares of land would be developed, covering approximately 12 kms of coastline from San Agustín in the east to Pasito Blanco in the west.



Construction began in 1962 in the eastern most part, in San Agustín as it was one of the most physically suitable areas, situated on a level coastal plain leading down to a small beach, and whose proximity to the major trunk road which linked the south to Las Palmas facilitated the delivery of supplies and made it more accessible to the workforce (Nadal and Guitián 1983: 88). During the first period of construction (1962-1969) the majority of investors originated from predominantly from the Canary Islands and mainland Spain, as well as individual capitalist entrepreneurs from Britain, France, Germany and Scandanavia, who would purchase relatively small plots of land (1,000-3,000 square metres) upon which hotels, apartments and other facilites were built in accordance with the direction and plans set up by the development company.<sup>15</sup> Between 1960 and 1975 the regional economy grew at 10% per year (Alonso *et al.* 1995: 51), a rate well above the national average which was linked directly to the weight of the service sector in the regional productive base (see Table 7.3). In 1960 the contribution of the service sector to the Canary Islands GDP (43.3%) corresponded closely to that of the country as whole, in which it made up 40.6% of national GDP. However by 1979 the weight of the service sector in the Canary Islands was considerably higher than the national average, contributing 70.5% to regional GDP in comparison to only 58% for Spain as a whole (Díaz Rodríguez *et al.* 1985: 329). Today tourism makes up nearly 10% of GDP and 8% of employment in Spain, while at a regional level it is estimated that tourism makes up between 23 and 28% of GDP, rising to 51.5% in San Bartolomé de Tirajana (Medina Muñoz 1997: 1-3).

**Table 7.3** Gross Domestic Product per Sector (%): Canary Islands

SECTOR	1955	1960	1975	1981	1985	1989	1994	1995
Agriculture/Fishing	27.3	32.3	9.4	7.0	5.1	4.5	4.0	3.3
Industry	14.9	19.1	12.3	10.6	10.9	11.5	9.0	8.9
Construction	6.8	5.3	10.7	9.9	9.6	12.1	8.0	7.9
Services	51.0	43.0	67.6	72.5	74.4	72.0	79.0	79.7

Source: Banco de Bilbao-Vizcaya *Renta Nacional de España*; García Herrera (1987); Istac (1997b)

The most intense period of development took place between 1969 and 1972, during which time the total capacity of this area had risen from 11,500 to 27,000 (Cáceres 1988) The rate and scale of construction entered a new and more dynamic phase in response to the structural transformation in the nature of investment and ownership of the *urbanizaciones* themselves. One of the principal reasons, which has been well documented in most of the literature on Spain, was the passing of the *Ley Strauss* in West Germany in 1968, specifically aimed at encouraging investment in underdeveloped or developing countries, with specific reference to Spain and the Canary Islands. Although foreign investors had already started to emerge as a significant force in the development of Spanish tourism facilities as a result of Spanish legislation passed in 1959 which allowed foreign investors to purchase up to 50% of the shares in Spanish companies (Jurdao 1990: 129), the new law granted further provisions including a 12-year tax exemption for German investors in the development of tourism infrastructure. Unsurprisingly



the *Ley Strauss* stimulated an avalanche of foreign investment from Germany, at a rate of up to 750,000 pesetas per hour according to newspaper reports of the period, to the extent that foreign capital made up 40% of all investment in the Canary Islands at that time (Gaviria 1974: 328). Despite numerous restrictions on the size and type of property that could be purchased, foreign investors easily disguised themselves behind anonymous companies registered by in Spain, from where they earned the nickname “*hombres de paja*”, literally ‘straw men’ (Jurdao 1990: 129-131). One of the most significant transformations which therefore occurred during this period was the appearance of foreign investors, not as individual entrepreneurs as before but in large units of capital invested in anonymous companies. It also signalled the penetration of foreign capital into the purchase and development of property itself, rather than the mere running of tourism facilities in an infrastructure which belonged to ‘locals’. It was this particular shift which precipitated the charges of “neo-colonialism” from critics, who argued that all that was left for the indigenous population was the job of bricklayers (Jurdao 1990: 134). Investment was channelled into the development of larger, more extensive tourism *urbanizaciones* - up to 50,000 square metres or 10 hectares - in contrast to the previous period in which smaller plots of around 1,000 square metres were developed by smaller investors and individual entrepreneurs (Gaviria 1974: 292).<sup>16</sup> This phase of expansion is symbolised by the largest of all the *urbanizaciones*, Playa del Inglés, the central nucleus of hotels, high-rise apartments, villa complexes and commercial centres which stretches to nearly 300 hectares and contains the majority of the bed spaces within this southern resort area (Cáceres 1988: 67).

The original plans set out by SETAP intended to create an integrated urban tourism space surrounded by gardens and public spaces which would accommodate around 60,000 tourists at any one time. Other guidelines (not enforced by statute) included a minimum density coefficient of 60-80 beds per hectare, the construction of residential facilities for the workforce and the channelling of waste water towards areas of continued agricultural exploitation. However weak planning regulations and complicit local councillors were unable to constrain the interests of the landowners, investors and developers in extracting as much revenue as possible from the developments, resulting in a dense configuration of urban construction (30-50 square metres plot per bed) which deviated substantially from the earlier plans (Cáceres 1999). According to the planning department of the Canary Island government, 125% of the projected bed capacity for San Bartolomé was built in only 40% of the total area set aside for the development of the tourism resort area of Maspalomas-Playa del Inglés (Smettan 1990: 43).

This situation was not aided by the fact that the development company had its own team of architects and planners and even created its own supervisory body, on which sat landowners and senior municipal politicians, which prioritised planning applications and effectively reduced public intervention to a process of rubber stamping of construction licences and site plans (*Planes Parciales*). From the outset the entire project had been undertaken in the absence of sufficient municipal planning legislation, in particular a General Plan, which local governments were required to draw up by the Land Law (*Ley del Suelo*) of 1956, subsequently amended in 1975 (Seco Gómez 1985), and which constitutes the principal piece of legislation governing land use planning at the municipal level in Spain today. Indeed many



plans were elaborated before the land had even been classified as “*suelo urbano*”, and construction licences were granted in the absence of planning permission. Cáceres (1977) argues that the entire project contravened the *Ley del Suelo* of 1956, in that there were no investment guidelines for each particular project, little guidance on the precise type and configuration of buildings in each area and lastly an inadequate legal framework based on municipal planning instruments (Nadal and Guitián 1983: 86). The pressure to build as quickly and as cheaply as possible, particularly during the more aggressive period of development propelled by foreign capital (1969-1972), meant that areas earmarked for open or green spaces were built on, usually in favour of more lucrative facilities such as commercial centres, density thresholds were often breeched and, as recent tragedies where buildings have collapsed testify, the quality of construction materials worsened.

The rate of construction across the south dropped off during the early 1980s largely due to the fact that most of the available land that had been granted permission for construction had been saturated (Cáceres 1988). However it was not long before the second so-called ‘tourism boom’, stimulated by rising prosperity amongst the travelling public in northern Europe and Spain’s accession to the European Community in 1986 which further facilitated foreign investment into Spain (Santana Santana 1993: 144), although this did not extend to permission for the full foreign ownership of companies (Machado Carrillo 1990). Moreover the economic recovery in the core capitalist countries increased available capital surpluses within the global financial system which ‘required’ new outlets for investment now that northern Europe’s shrinking industrial infrastructure made investment in manufacturing less attractive (Hernández 1994). Tourism was attractive to investors, due to the potential for short-term profit, and the Spanish/regional governments alike, as it offered a short-cut to economic growth in a sector which required little (perceived) need for training outlay or technology transfer. Foreign investment in Spain rose to almost 20% of GDP in 1989 (Alonso and Castells 1992: 82), and between 1977-1986 foreign investment into tourism in the Canary Islands totalled 73,637 million pesetas (Machado Carrillo 1990: 35). Consequently the rate of development in the Canary Islands outstripped that of Spain as a whole, reaching a peak of 7% per year between 1983 and 1986 (Machado Carrillo 1990: 47), whereas the national economy only reached a peak of 4.5% per year between 1986-1990 (Alonso and Castells 1992: 81). This was also reflected in a high concentration of foreign investment in municipalities in which tourism was the dominant economic activity. In 1986 San Bartolomé de Tirajana absorbed the highest percentage of foreign investment in real estate (34.4%) for the province of Las Palmas (Gran Canaria, Lanzarote and Fuerteventura), followed by Tías and Tegui on Lanzarote, and then Mogán, which absorbed 12.6% (Santana Santana 1993: 241). The influx of capital was reflected in a rise in the rate of construction which grew substantially from the early 1980s, leading to an expansion of 72% in bed capacity across the region between 1986 and 1990, a total of approximately 50,000 bed spaces (Alonso *et al.* 1995: 121). This renewed construction fervour, still under-regulated, bearing in mind that during this period the central government was in the process of devolving key planning powers to the regional level (see Chapter Ten), precipitated an over-supply in accommodation which laid the foundations for the recession at the end of the 1980s.



The shift of capital from one area of production to another over such a short period of time, testifies to Mouzelis' (1978: 478) assertion that capital tends to shun investment in manufacturing in favour of speculative and commercial activities in peripheral capitalist formations. Over the space of little more than a decade, a mono-crop plantation economy directed by a minority of absentee landowners and powerful tenant farmers which controlled the distribution and sale of produce, was transformed into a capitalistic service economy which revolved around construction, property development and tourism. Despite the involvement of substantial foreign interests in the tourism sector (Gaviria 1974), agrarian landowners and local capitalist classes from other parts of the island, region and mainland, materialised into a powerful intermediary class of 'rentier' capitalists who control key assets in the tourism sector. In particular they are able to exercise substantial influence over the terms of development through their interventions in the instruments of municipal and regional planning and the control of assets in large construction consortiums and property development companies closely involved in tourism, as demonstrated by the close involvement of the *Conde de la Vega Grande* in the development of Maspalomas-Playa del Inglés (Santana Santana 1991: 36-39). Moreover the development of a large-scale tourism infrastructure precipitated the expansion of inter-mediate managerial classes involved in a range of ancillary services, in particular retail and car rental companies (Gutiérrez Hernández 1985). However, the subsequent expansion of construction during the 1980s, which was to particularly affect Mogán due to a lack of space in San Bartolomé, took place in the context of the more aggressive expansion of the services in the global economy due to capitalist restructuring in northern Europe (Harvey 1990: Ch. 9), and thus signalled even greater involvement of external capitalist interests in the region's tourism sector.

### *Tourism Employment and Social Exclusion*

Moreno Becerra (1980) estimates that between 1960 and 1975 approximately 100,000 workers abandoned the agricultural sector in favour of the tertiary sector, most of whom would have gone to work in Maspalomas-Playa del Inglés, particularly after 1967 when construction began on the larger *urbanizaciones* (Nadal and Guitián 1983: 169). Martín Ruíz (1981: 119) is a little more conservative in his estimate; he estimates the number of workers who entered employment in construction and tourism between 1950 and 1975 at 62,280. Nevertheless the pattern is clear to see; between 1960 and 1975 the proportion of the working population in the Canary Islands employed in agriculture and fishing fell from 54% to 21.6%. Over the same period, the corresponding figures for the service and construction sectors had increased from 27.2% (services) and 5.6% respectively, to 52.7% and 13.3% (see Table 7.4). The rapid expansion of tourism in San Bartolomé, led to a substantial exodus of the non-wage agricultural workforce from the island's interior in search of employment (evidenced by the chaotic expansion of the satellite worker towns on the periphery of the resort area - Nadal and Guitián 1983), with the result that the number of farmers decreased by 52% between 1960 and 1979 (García Herrera 1987: 30). While in 1960 only 53% of the island's population were involved in wage-labour, within the space of 15 years the number had risen to 71% (Moreno Becerra 1980: 27). Today the accommodation and restaurant sector employs 10.7% of the workforce in the Canary Islands, while in San Bartolomé de Tirajana it employs



49% and in Mogán 45% of their respective workforces, demonstrating the weight of the service sector in these formerly agrarian societies (Istac 1995).

**Table 7.4** Distribution of the Working Population (%): Canary Islands

SECTOR	1960	1975	1981	1985	1989	1994	1996
Agriculture/Fishing	54.0	21.6	19.4	15.4	9.6	5.9	6.8
Industry	13.2	12.4	10.3	10.5	10.9	6.8	7.9
Construction	5.6	13.3	9.2	8.9	11.6	9.6	10.0
Services	27.2	52.7	61.1	62.9	67.9	66.0	65.5

Source: Banco de Bilbao-Vizcaya *Renta Nacional de España*, García Herrera (1987); Istac (1997b)

Although the rapid transformation of Gran Canaria from an agrarian based economy to one dominated by services has led to a surge of employment in construction and tourism, without detailed analysis of the social composition of the workforce, turnover and contractual conditions involved in the tourism sector it is difficult to specify with any precision the extent to which this sector has absorbed the surplus agrarian workforce. Indeed there is ample evidence to suggest that one of the more long term effects has been to exacerbate uneven development on the island and give rise to new configurations of social polarisation. In particular the new structural and spatial patterns of accumulation precipitated by tourism have created a substantial labour force living in precarious conditions and with little job security, many of whom have long severed links with the non-wage agricultural sectors. Although there was a rapid movement of labour into construction, once tourism facilities began operation and the initial construction boom ceased, many unskilled workers found it difficult to gain access to the more qualified jobs in tourism, on top of which the number of job losses in the region rose to around 26,000 during the early 1980s (CEC 1993: 147). This problem has consistently been exacerbated by the presence of a better trained workforce from the principal tourist generating countries and the mainland, particularly from Madrid and Andalucia (Odouard 1973: 167).<sup>17</sup> By the early 1990s EU figures suggest that 11% of the total number of foreign residents in Spain, live in the Canary Islands (CEC 1993: 146). However construction, as the figures suggest, is both a cyclical sector and suffers the highest rate of unemployment as a result. Thus although the figures suggest a massive transferral of the working population from agrarian activities into tourism, it is important to view them with caution. Indeed Jurdao (1990: 150) argues that unemployment in the tourism sector is often confused with the real problem, that is, unemployment in the construction industries which are heavily dependent upon tourism.

After the initial period of development, the construction sector contracted at a rate faster than the other sectors during the 1970s. Whereas the average rate of unemployment for the island as a whole hovered around 5.5%, it reached 17.4% in the construction sector (Alvarez 1980b: 373). During this period many attempted to return to work in the agricultural sector, however by this time the agro-export sector had contracted too far for it to absorb all but a small percentage of this surplus labour force (Nadal and



Gutián 1983: 149). Thus despite ever-increasing demand and high occupancy rates, tourism appears to have done little to ameliorate social marginalisation and high rates of unemployment, which on average is higher than the mainland. Despite the creation of 56,000 new jobs between 1986-1989 (CEC 1993: 147), unemployment in the region has remained around 5% higher than the national average. In 1986 it stood at 26.5% before falling to a low of 22.5% (1988-89), after when it rose steadily to a level of 27.4% in 1994, the third highest rate in Spain behind Extremadura and Andalucía (CEC 1994; *El Mundo* 1994; *El País* 1995). Poverty levels have also been consistently high: in a survey carried out in 1991 it was estimated that nearly 220,000 (30% of the population) in Gran Canaria were living in poverty, defined as a per capita monthly income of less than 29,000 pesetas (c. £160) (EDIS 1991: 118). Whilst the proportion of the population living at or below the poverty line has remained unchanged, according to regional government estimates, it has risen to close to half a million people in absolute terms (Díaz 1997: 149). Indeed while the growth of the tourism sector in the Canary Islands continues to outstrip the national average, per capita income lags approximately 5-10% behind that of the whole country (<http://www.istac.rcanaria.es>, 20/4/99). A further indication that levels of economic development in the Canary Islands is lagging behind that of the country as a whole is reflected in the fact that it has been a major recipient of Objective 1 funding from the EU since 1994, in order to facilitate the social and economic regeneration of poorer interior areas (Balchin *et al.* 1999: 141-142). The persistent levels of poverty and high levels of unemployment are not *necessarily* linked to the structural dependence on tourism, but they have been exacerbated by the high birth rate, entrance of women into the labour force and the substantial flow of migrants into the region. Nevertheless the flexible organisation of employment across the tourism sector and control exercised by north European tour operators reinforces the precarious material position of the local work force.

During the first two decades of expansion, the massive influx of workers into the areas around Maspalomas-Playa del Inglés created a massive strain on what was at that time an almost non-existent public and social welfare infrastructure in the south. In Maspalomas no accommodation for the workforce, already estimated at around 15,000 in 1972, was built until the early 1970s (Nadal and Guitián 1983: 109). However these apartment blocks, situated in an area just north of Playa del Inglés called San Fernando de Maspalomas, were overcrowded and built with poor materials. Land prices were at a premium leaving few options for those unable to find accommodation in San Fernando or El Tablero further beyond this. Many commuted from as far away as Las Palmas or migrated to small satellite towns in the neighbouring municipality of Santa Lucía, which had grown significantly since the first agricultural labourers had settled there in 1930s. Thus the population of Santa Lucía rose dramatically from the mid-1960s onwards, 95% of which (21,839) became concentrated in the narrow coastal strip by 1975, compared to 1930 when only 40% (1,463) of the municipality's population was situated here (Nadal and Guitián 1983: 151). However, despite the infrastructural inadequacies, tourism did provide a more stable source of income than the more precarious living to be made from share-cropping, and even began to stimulate the growth of ancillary commercial activities in these towns (Nadal and Guitián 1983: 169-173). The third and most unpleasant option was to build makeshift shacks (*cuarterías*) which sprang



up on the urban periphery of the *urbanizaciones* beyond San Fernando and along the coast towards Arguineguín, many of which lack running water and electricity (Socorro 1991).

Much of the the area to the west of Maspalomas-Playa del Inglés however remained cultivated until very recently. Despite this fact part of this area, in particular Las Meloneras and Pasito Blanco, had been earmarked for development since the outset, and indeed construction has commenced in 1998. Construction in both places was never completed as a result of the saturation of supply and the numerous official complaints which arose in response to the planning infringements committed during the period 1962-1972. Pasito Blanco had originally been intended as an enclave of luxury villas and hotels adjacent to a yachting marina, however it gradually became an overspill area for wealthier segments of the workforce in Playa del Inglés as well as a week-end getaway for the urban middle-classes, many of whom purchased the villas and keep their yachts here rather than in the more expensive marinas in Las Palmas and Puerto Rico. Las Meloneras on the other hand, despite being surrounded by the abandoned infrastructure intended for the tourism developments here (paved roads and street lighting), became a popular spot for locals and resident foreigners as a result of its long sandy beach and a small beachfront restaurant which has gained a reputation for its *paella* and seafood. However since the recovery from the recession the end of the 1980s this area has started to be cleared again for construction of 'higher quality' facilities including a congress centre and a golf course, in-keeping with recent tourism development policies at a national and regional level (MCT 1994; Cabildo Insular 1992b). This has resulted in the clearance of land and the eviction of a few remaining share-croppers and smallholders who were still working the land, and will extend the urbanisation of the remaining virgin coastline in San Bartolomé de Tirajana even further.

## Conclusion

This chapter has considered the emergence of mass tourism development on the island of Gran Canaria in the context of the uneven development of capitalism and internal social transformation. It has been demonstrated that the combination of an acquisitive agrarian bourgeoisie which had amassed great wealth as a result of the land disentailments of the 19th century, and the prevailing circumstances linked to the imperialist phase of capitalist expansion, facilitated the penetration of British capital into the island, and subsequently underpinned the development of an early tourism infrastructure up until the outbreak of the First World War. These early recreational facilities were primarily concentrated in the port of Las Palmas, which emerged as a hub for the export of commercial agricultural crops grown on the plantations financed by British capital. Las Palmas remained as the epi-centre of tourism development on the island up until the 1950s whereupon Scandinavian tourists began to popularise the burgeoning hotel and apartment complexes around the narrow beach strip of Las Canteras.

Later, dramatic changes in the socio-economic circumstances of post-war Europe, in conjunction with improvements in transportation technology, led to the emergence of a Fordist model of large-scale mass



tourism development in the south of the island away from the now congested port city of Las Palmas. The construction of extensive tourism resort complexes was facilitated by the existing pattern of land tenure, concentrated in the hands of one landowner, and the active intervention of tenant farmers who were quick to transfer their surpluses from a struggling agricultural sector into property and hotel development.

A similar pattern of large-scale enclave-type tourism development was extended into Mogán, although the nature of this development was differentiated by a different set of internal socio-economic characteristics linked to the historical development of agrarian capitalism in Mogán, and by changes in the prevailing macro-economic conditions and political circumstances during the development of this coastline. These issues will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Nine together with detailed consideration of the inception of tourism in the village of Playa de Mogán. The following chapter will firstly consider the manner in which broader patterns of agrarian capitalist development and population settlement gave rise to a specific socio-economic formation in this particular locality.



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- <sup>1</sup> “The example of the Canary Islands, where 20,000 hectares of the best beaches are in foreign hands, and in which the Spanish carry out the work of architects and bricklayers, is a veritable example of this phenomenon. The profits derived from land speculation in an area of potential touristic use have concealed the sale of the country in plots, resulting in an auspicious *neocolonialism* dictated in turn by the generator countries.”
- <sup>2</sup> This has led many commentators to apply Frank’s model of dependency (see Bergasa and Viéitez 1969) in order to explain what has been termed “*el hecho diferencial económico canario*”, ‘the Canary Island differential factor’ (Garí-Montllor 1992: 13-24).
- <sup>3</sup> “whose identity has been constituted in the context of the changes precipitated by tourism”.
- <sup>4</sup> “the national identity of the capitalist is of little interest to the working class...to analyse the varied nature of capitalist formations within tourism.”
- <sup>5</sup> The history of the Canary Islands prior to the Spanish conquest is shrouded in myths and contested evidence. They are said to appear in a variety of historical chronicles, ranging from accounts by Phoenician fishermen who supposedly were the first to navigate these waters, to Greek mythology which describes the existence of the mythical society of Atlantis, beyond the Pillars of Hercules, and in Roman texts who referred to them as the Fortunate Islands (*Fortunatae Insulae*), a name still evoked today in tourism brochures (Cabrera Perera 1988).
- <sup>6</sup> “a type of tourism attracted by the mild winter climate of Gran Canaria, by the landscape and the generous, attentive hospitality of the islanders”.
- <sup>7</sup> Although it is still the subject of some considerable debate, most sources suggest that the pre-conquest populations of the Canary Islands were predominantly of Berber origin. For a fuller discussion of both the economic and cultural aspects of these indigenous societies, see del Arco Aguilar y Navarro Mederos (1987), Macías Hernández (1995a) and Tejera Gaspar (1995).
- <sup>8</sup> For a more detailed examination of the factors leading to the ‘discovery’ and conquest of the Canary Islands, see Suárez Acosta *et al.* (1988).
- <sup>9</sup> Archeological and historical evidence suggests that prior to their incorporation into the Crown of Castile at the end of the fifteenth century, the islands were probably inhabited by peoples of Berber origin from North Africa, whose population was estimated to be around 100,000 in 1400 (Macías Hernández 1995a: 38). Many had already in fact been enslaved by previous visitors to these waters, including the Portuguese who had then taken them to Madeira even before the Spanish had established a permanent presence here (Wolf 1982: 196). During the fourteenth century Mallorcan missionaries were the first to attempt the conversion of the indigenous population to Christianity in some parts of the island, including Arguineguín, at that time an important indigenous settlement on the southern tip of the island (Suárez Moreno 1997: Ch.2). Few indigenous peoples survived the Spanish conquest and most were killed, died from disease or sold into slavery. Amongst those who did, most notably members of the indigenous nobility who had collaborated with the invaders, were converted to Christianity and absorbed into the ranks of the new ruling classes (Suárez Acosta *et al.* 1988: 64-6).
- <sup>10</sup> “These land repartitions represented the basis and main bulwark for the agricultural wealth of the islands since they allowed for new crops to be planted in new areas, such as sugar cane, the vine and other fruit trees brought from Spain and Madeira, thus giving rise, simultaneously, to a commercial emporium of extraordinary dimensions.”
- <sup>11</sup> This mechanism was a key means of reproducing the rigid social hierarchy of the absolutist order by proclaiming inheritance as the sole right of the first born son who would then hand both inherited and accumulated wealth down to *his* eldest son and so on.
- <sup>12</sup> For a more detailed summary of the key elements which conditioned the uneven development of capitalism in Gran Canaria, see Appendix I.
- <sup>13</sup> “Thanks to them [the English] the chain is complete whereby the Canary Islands is home to the port which supplies coal to the British steamships, a garden for the cultivation of vegetables for the English meal tables and a place of recreation and recuperation built and maintained by the English.”
- <sup>14</sup> For a more detailed consideration of the process of urbanization in Maspalomas-Playa del Inglés see the comprehensive study undertaken by Nadal and Guitián (1983).
- <sup>15</sup> Between 1962 and 1969, only 16 out of a total of 93 construction licences were granted to foreign investors in Maspalomas-Playa del Inglés (Nadal and Guitián 1983: 98).



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<sup>16</sup> Between 1969 and 1972, 84 out of 356 construction licences were granted to foreign investors in Maspalomas-Playa del Inglés (Nadal and Guitián 1983: 114).

<sup>17</sup> In 1960 the illiteracy rate (18%) in the Canary Islands was the highest in Spain whose national average was 11% (Odouard 1973: 167).



# CHAPTER EIGHT

## A Brief Social and Economic History of Mogán

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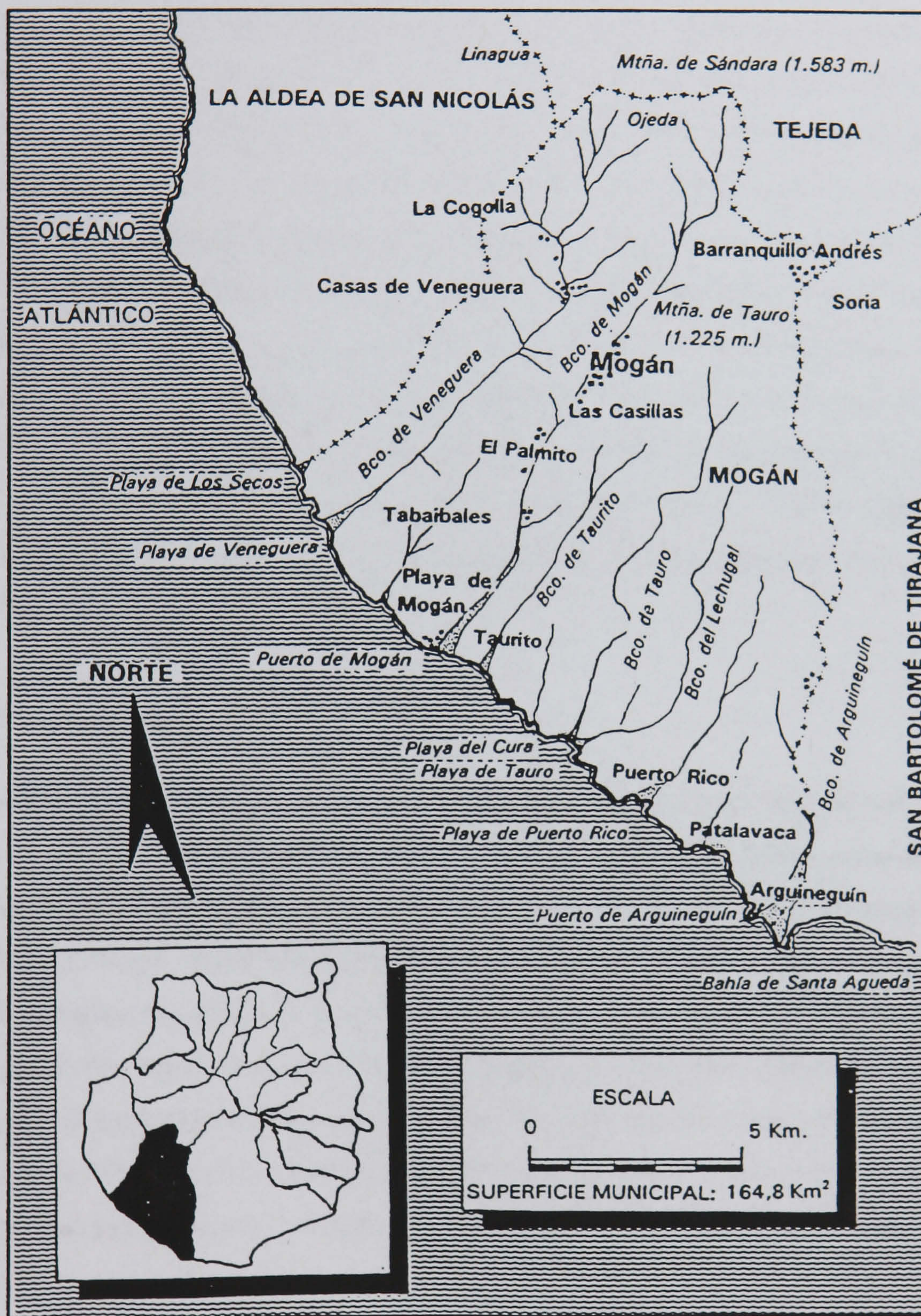
### Introduction

This chapter examines the principal social and economic forces of change which gave rise to the locally-specific capitalist formation and social structure in Playa de Mogán. This historical analysis enables the examination of tourism development in Playa de Mogán, to be situated in the overall context of social change and economic development in this part of the municipality of Mogán. The manner in which the broader processes of peripheral capitalist development in Gran Canaria, described in the previous chapter, became manifest in uneven patterns of socio-territorial development cannot be reduced to economic factors alone. Rather, the variation in the nature of socio-economic formations at the micro-level across the island needs to be examined in relation to several inter-related processes - the transformations in patterns of land tenure precipitated by the liberal land reforms of the 19th century; the differential impact of the economic cycles of agrarian capitalist development across the island (in particular the advent of commercial banana and tomato plantations for the cultivation of export crops), in tandem with the emergence of distinct agrarian and artisanal fishing modes of production.

### 8.1 Patterns of Settlement and Economic Development in the 19th Century

The municipality of Mogán<sup>1</sup> stretches across 172.43 square kilometres of Gran Canaria's leeward face, 11% of the total surface area of the island, yet is home to only 10,398 permanent inhabitants, giving it a population density of 62.5 inhabitants per square kilometre, a figure considerably lower than the insular average of 459 (Istac 1997a). Traditionally the population has been concentrated in the two largest and most fertile valleys of Mogán and Veneguera in the eastern half of the municipality, and the two fishing settlements of Playa de Mogán and Arguineguín on the coast (see Figure 8.1). However in recent years as the expansion of tourism has led to the progressive urbanisation of coastal areas, over 50% of this population has become concentrated within one kilometre of the coastline. As a result of its position on the leeward face of the island, it lies in the rainshadow and is shielded from the prevailing winds which bring heavy rain and wind to the north-east face of the island during the winter. It therefore receives very little rainfall, 200mm in the coastal areas, rising to 300-400mm further inland. Consequently its climate is dry with temperatures varying between 20-25 degrees centigrade, although at certain times of the year the *cálíma* (a dry wind from the Sahara) raises the temperature of the valley floors quite considerably, and in some years surpassed 40 degrees. The rugged and arid landscape is characterised by a series of deep eroded valleys (*barrancos*) in which lie agricultural settlements, separated by lateral ridges which stretch from the centre of the island down to steep cliff-faces at the coast. There is a limited availability of flat land adjoining coastal areas and no natural sand beaches, physical constraints which have played important conditioning factors in the distinct spatial dispersion of tourism development in this area. The





**Figure 8.1:** Map of the municipality of Mogán, showing principal population settlements and enclaves of tourism development. (Source: Suárez Moreno 1997)



Montaña de Tauro, at 1,225 metres is the highest point in the municipality, although most of the ridges reach heights in the region of 300-500 metres. Although the more fertile valleys of Mogán and Veneguera have supported a rich and diversified agriculture, this stretch of coastline, known in the past as, “*las calmas de canarias*” due to the calm seas with few dangerous currents, has been particularly suited to the development of its two traditional industries, fishing and tourism.

The historical patterns of settlement and resource exploitation in Mogán are connected to the wider processes of economic development which date back to the island’s conquest (Chapter Seven: *Conquest and Settlement*), during which time greater economic importance was attached to the windward face of the island, whose superior natural and climactic conditions (for agricultural purposes) meant that it was here that the earliest concentrations of population, infrastructure and economic wealth were located until the 19th century. Zones of small and medium-sized cultivation worked by peasant small-holders or tenant farmers were found higher up into the hinterland (*medianías*) where settlement was more dispersed, whilst the arid south-western quadrant of the island was devoted mainly to shepherding and forestry, and settlement was both sparse and dispersed (García Herrera 1987: 33). Prior to the beginning of the 20th century the leeward face of the island was accessible only by a series of rural pathways which traversed the centre of the island, or by sea. Thus its geographic isolation, combined with the rugged terrain and scarce availability of water meant that it was of little interest to the conquering nobles and dominant agrarian classes during the land repartitions.<sup>2</sup>

### *The Genesis of Agrarian Society in Mogán*

During the course of the 18th century the changing social and economic circumstances at a regional and international level constituted the context in which landowners, peasants and public authorities intervened in the unfolding agrarian development of the south-west, leaving a distinctive socio-geographic imprint on the landscape of Mogán, which also marked the beginning of an important historical period in which Mogán began to acquire something of its own identity as a separate municipality (Suárez Moreno 1997: 51).<sup>3</sup> Specifically, the dispersed character of settlement still visible today, reflects the diversity of land tenure and modes of production which underpinned the unfolding agrarian economy. As the 19th century progressed, a local (as opposed to absentee) landowning class began to take shape in Mogán, whose influence was principally derived through their monopolisation of land, water and the economic infrastructure.

Prior to the enactment of the disentailment legislation (see Appendix I), these extensive expanses of uncultivated land came under the jurisdiction of the Crown, (*baldíos realengos*), or the municipal authorities, known as *bienes de propios* (Béthencourt and Macías 1977: 241).<sup>4</sup> Over the course of the 17th and 18th centuries there had already been some settlement in this area by clandestine cultivators as well as legal purchase of land by agrarian landowners, which was sold by the *Cabildo* in an attempt to amortize public debts (Suárez Grimón 1987: 249). However increased settlement of the south-west did not however receive a significant impulse until the second half of the 18th century, when the cancellation



of the Canaries commercial monopoly with the Americas precipitated the collapse in wine exports in the 1770s, (García Herrera 1987: 27). This encouraged an intensified exploitation of the rural workforce and a desire amongst the land-hungry agrarian bourgeoisie to increase the volume of their existing holdings on the one hand, whilst increasing rural hardship expanded the ranks of landless peasantry and thus precipitated further clandestine cultivation of Crown lands, particularly in the south-west (Macías Hernández 1978: 46). The need to combat declining agricultural productivity and ease the demographic pressure in the north, as well as diffuse potential agrarian unrest, thus placed increasing pressure on the *Cabildo* to open up more Crown lands for cultivation, which had hitherto been used for communal grazing.<sup>5</sup> However, population growth was slow during the first half of the century, and only comprised some 400 inhabitants at the beginning of the last century, but soon began to increase due to the introduction of cochineal around the middle of the century (Suárez Moreno 1997: 88). It reached a peak of 893 inhabitants in 1877 before falling by just over 50% to 437 in 1893.

Following the disentailment legislation of 1836 and 1855, the rise and fall of cochineal exports between 1845 and 1890 and the introduction of new agricultural crops for export towards the end of the century after the collapse of the former, were to create the circumstances in which a local class of powerful rural landowners, or *caciques*, was to emerge, who were to monopolise economic and political power in Mogán until the decline of agro-export agriculture in the 1950s. The disentanglements in Mogán were of a more modest scale than in San Bartolomé de Tirajana (where nearly 12,000 hectares, close to one third of the municipality, were sold off - Ojeda 1977b: 345)<sup>6</sup> due to the fact that much of the land had already been progressively sold off to large absentee landowners (*forasteros*) prior to this period, in order to alleviate public debts (Suárez Moreno 1997: 126). Thus during the middle period of the 19th century (1840 - 1870) a total of 4,008 hectares of land was concentrated in the hands of four absentee landowners, which constituted 24.3 % of the entire surface area of Mogán (Suárez Moreno 1997: 128).<sup>7</sup> Nevertheless, the second disentailment (1855) and break up of the larger estates during the last quarter of the 19th century, set in motion the fundamental socio-economic transformation of this peripheral municipality. In particular, it laid the foundations for the emergence of a stratum of local rural landowners who gained control over the fertile valley floors and water sources, and who were to subsequently exploit its agricultural potential to the full.

A key stimulus to the emergence of a new agrarian bourgeoisie here and other parts of the island, was the export of cochineal (a dye extracted from the cochineal beetle found in cactus plants). Cochineal had provided a substantial means of economic subsistence for small and medium-sized proprietors as well as larger landowners, as it required little or no foreign investment (Macías Hernández 1983: 285).<sup>8</sup> However the subsequent crash of this export sector in the 1870s precipitated a further concentration of land and wealth in the hands of local *cacique* families.<sup>9</sup> Capital accumulated by successful farmers and landowners who had endured the crash, was reinvested in the acquisition of further landholdings, assisted by both falling land prices and debt-ridden smallholders, many of whom were forced to emigrate.



Es la burguesía compradora - agraria y/o comercial - la que con probabilidad más se benefició con la crisis de la cochinilla, incrementado sus terrenos a cambio muchas veces de un billete para emigrar a América. (Millares Cantero 1977: 285)<sup>10</sup>

The extent of devastation was such that during the period 1880-1891 it is estimated that nearly two-thirds of the population of the *village* of Mogán alone, emigrated to Cuba (Suárez Moreno 1997: 102).<sup>11</sup>

For the most part this emergent stratum of local agrarian landowners constituted a distinct and subordinate fraction within the island's ruling political-economic oligarchy (see Appendix I). Territorial and political fragmentation reinforced the parochialism of their interests as they began to consolidate considerable power bases in the rural hinterland and inaccessible areas such as Mogán, where they monopolised the areas agricultural wealth through their ownership of land and water resources, and controlled the levers of municipal government (*ayuntamiento*), which was formed in the period between 1835 and 1836. Despite the territorial extension of the state via the imposition of a uniform tier of municipal government across Spain, it did little to alter the control exercised by local *cacique* families who quickly monopolised the instruments of municipal power in isolated rural areas such as Mogán. Moreover, rural taxes continued to be collected by the *Cabildo* in Las Palmas, thus undermining the economic security and autonomy of the newly formed municipal corporations. This did little to ease antagonisms between the island's political elite in the *Cabildo* and local landowners, as well as the numerous conflicts between prominent local landowners and the central government over the levels of local taxation (Suárez Moreno 1997: 110-113). This institutional divide can be traced back to the 19th century municipal forms derived from the French model of administration which saw municipalities as 'subaltern corporations' within the centralised state (Carr 1982: 98-99), and is one which still underlays the federal structure of government and development planning put in place after the demise of Franco (see Chapter Ten: *Tourism, Politics and the Contours of Dissent*).

However, a combination of the steep topography in this area and the progressive break-up of individual estates through inheritance since the mid-19th century has endowed Mogán with a more diverse pattern of land tenure than San Bartolomé de Tirajana, referred to as *minifundismo*. Hence a number of small and medium-sized landholdings were scattered along the narrow valley floors which ranged in size from an average of 55 hectares in areas of dry cultivation (*secano*) to 100-170 hectares on irrigated land (*regadío*) (Suárez Moreno 1997: 128). Between the village of Mogán and the fishing settlement of Playa de Mogán at the mouth of the valley, land was concentrated in the hands of around half a dozen landowners. At this time much of the land under cultivation would have been dedicated to the cultivation of a variety of crops (including cereals, citric fruits, aubergines, avocados and other vegetables), and was either worked directly by the proprietors themselves or by tenant farmers (*arrendatarios*), or the numerous subsistence farmers and landless peasants scattered along the valley, living in small stone houses or caves.<sup>12</sup> However the introduction of banana and tomato plantations in Mogán by British export companies in alliance with local landowners was to fundamentally transform the social and economic landscape of this relatively isolated region.



## 8.2 Playa de Mogán: Anatomy of a Fishing Village

According to Santana Talavera (1990a) the village of Playa de Mogán itself dates back to 1865 when several caves in the rockface upon which the village is now situated, were used as dwellings by ten inhabitants dedicated to fishing and farming for their subsistence needs. During the first half of the 20th century this make-shift settlement was to grow into a dense cluster of predominantly fishermen's housing (*barrio pesquero*) at the base of the cliffs on the shoreline (Plate 8.1), and adjacent to the estate of the local *cacique* family (see Plates 8.2-8.3). The advent of agricultural plantations for the cultivation of export crops in lowland areas at the turn of the century, was a crucial factor which precipitated a substantial movement of population from the rural interior of the island into low lying coastal areas particularly in the north and south-west (Burriel de Orueta 1981). From the 1890s onwards the population of Mogán increased steadily, experiencing a significant rate of growth between 1920 and 1940, when the population increased from 995 to 2,670 inhabitants. By the beginning of this century 60% of Mogán's population was already concentrated in these two valleys alone (Suárez Moreno 1997: 89). The collapse of exports and rise in prices of basic subsistence products caused by the Civil War (1931-36), increased rural hardship (something referred to by the local inhabitants as "*los años del hambre*", 'the years of hunger') and as a consequence precipitated an influx of people into Playa de Mogán from the interior in search of food (this area was well-known for its abundant fishing grounds). Population growth in Playa de Mogán up until 1900 was relatively gradual, increasing from approximately 10 in 1865 to 42 in 1900. However over the course of the next four decades the population increased spectacularly, and reached 650 inhabitants in 1940 (Table 8.1). This population influx was also facilitated by the construction of an unpaved road in the 1930s by the agricultural export companies, which linked the centres of agricultural cultivation in the valleys of Tasarte, Veneguera and Mogán to Arguineguín where it connected with the main highway to Las Palmas (Suárez Moreno 1997: 169).

**Table 8.1** Population (de jure): Mogán (*término*) and Playa de Mogán<sup>13</sup>

Year	Mogán	Playa de Mogán
1900	468	42
1920	995	131
1940	2670	650
1950	3595	690
1960	5332	614
1970	4919	-
1975	5871	-
1981	6808	-
1986	7932	694
1990	10420	(1991) 596
1995	11497	-
1996	12117	-
1997	10625	630

Source: *Cabildo Insular* (1986); *Istac* (1991)  
*Ayuntamiento de Mogán*





**Plate 8.1:** Playa de Mogán around 1931. (Photo: Expedito)





**Plate 8.2:** Playa de Mogán in 1968. The banana/tomato packaging warehouses can be seen to the right of the picture along the shoreline. (Photo: Expedito)





**Plate 8.3:** Playa de Mogán in 1981, just prior to the commencement of construction on the marina.  
(Photo: Expedito)





**Plate 8.4:** Photo showing the lower section of the valley of Mogán, most of which was owned by one local *cacique* family at the end of the 19th century. The neighbourhood of *Lomo Quiebre* is situated in a dense cluster against the valley wall (centre-left of the picture). (Photo: Cabildo Insular 1990)



## *The Rise of Plantation Agriculture in a Fishing Settlement*

The emergence and development of fishing communities in the Canary Islands, such as Playa de Mogán (and also Arguineguín), has thus been closely tied to the changing dynamics of the agricultural export sector since the beginning of the century, as noted by Galván Tudela:

la génesis, reproducción y desarrollo de las comunidades pesqueras canarias ha estado determinada fundamentalmente por la demanda de las comunidades agrícolas cercanas, y sobre todo por los comerciantes y burguesía exportadora asentada en los puertos. (1982: 84)<sup>14</sup>

During the years spanning 1880 to 1930, large estates in the rural lowlands of Gran Canaria began to be converted into extensive plantations devoted to the cultivation of tomatoes and bananas for export (Macías Hernández 1983).<sup>15</sup> These export crops were to provide the mainstay of the island economy until their eclipse by tourism in the 1960s. However, the contrast in climate, topography and social structure across the island, meant that the emergence of these enclaves of capitalistic production was an uneven and staggered process. Initially, the cultivation of banana and tomatoes was concentrated on the windward face due to its wetter climate and plentiful water supply, but during the first decade of the 20th century banana and tomato cultivation had been introduced into low lying coastal areas in the south of the island also. The majority of cultivation in San Bartolomé de Tirajana was situated on land belonging to the *Conde de la Vega Grande*, who had accumulated 20% of land in this particular municipality during the period of land reform (Ojeda 1977b: 345). Indeed after 1930 this was the largest single area of tomato cultivation on the island, precipitating a massive influx of migrant labour from the interior areas (Nadal and Guitián 1983: 58). This laid the foundations of permanent settlement of a mixture of share-croppers and labourers in what were to become the over-crowded agro-towns of Vecindario, el Doctoral and el Cruce de Sardina in the neighbouring municipality of Santa Lucía, which lay adjacent to the areas of cultivation (Nadal and Guitián 1983: 127).

British export companies began to introduce banana and tomato plantations along the coast of Mogán during the final years of the last century. The valley floors of Tasarte, Veneguera and Mogán, particularly towards the coast in order to facilitate transport by sea, was given over to the cultivation of export crops on land which was rented from the local *cacique* families, and packaged for export in warehouses erected by these companies along the shoreline, (Suárez Moreno 1997: 156). These buildings can be clearly seen in the foreground in Plates 8.2 and 8.3. The introduction of these plantations thus began to signal a shift in the balance of power towards the landowners who controlled land in the lower parts of the valleys, a fact which was to condition the social organisation of Playa de Mogán well into the last quarter of the 20th century. The village subsequently became dominated by one particular *cacique* family whose estate (54 hectares) stretched several kilometres inland from the shoreline to a point known as *La Posteragua* (see Plate 8.4).<sup>16</sup> The landowning *caciques* of this area stood at the apex of the social structure and in some respects were akin to a local 'planter class' (Beckford 1972) in so far as they syphoned off agricultural surpluses, and in the process enhanced their prestige and influence in the area by virtue of their enhanced wealth and commercial alliances with the predominantly British mercantile companies. However, in contrast to the plantation system in the Caribbean, they were not



absentee owners but for the most part a resident elite who were involved in the day-to-day management of the estate. Furthermore, their local dominance was not however translated into positions of political influence at wider levels despite several well-connected local landowners and councillors, including one of the first generation of heirs to the estate in Playa de Mogán, who occupied the position of mayor for 31 years between 1931 and 1962 (Suárez Moreno 1997: 221).

This local state of affairs in Mogán was in contrast to the political influence exercised by the alliance of agrarian and merchant interests in Las Palmas (Millares Cantero 1983), which included the absentee landowners in neighbouring areas, such as the *Conde de la Vega Grande*, who comprised part of the island's dominant political elite during the late 19th and early 20th centuries (Noreña Salto 1977). The unchallenged authority of the *caciques* over local affairs, from above and below, was reinforced by the distance and relative isolation of Mogán from the regional (Las Palmas) and national centres of power (Madrid) as well as the high degree of illiteracy amongst the rural population.<sup>17</sup> Market fragmentation was underpinned by a poorly developed local market and the mobilisation of economic resources towards the export of agricultural crops. Moreover, although the advent of crop cultivation for export had begun to shift the geography of production and power towards the leeward side of the island, this area still remained for the most part economically and politically subordinate to the predominant wealth-producing areas such as San Bartolomé de Tirajana and the windward face of the island, until the consolidation of tourism development in the 1960s (García Herrera 1987: 36).

The persistence of vertically-arranged social relations in Playa de Mogán in which attentions amongst all but the landowning classes were focused on daily subsistence needs provided by the family unit, combined with the geographic isolation of this area, presented significant obstacles to the formation of lasting or more robust horizontal social relationships. The absence of a rural proletariat of the kind that existed in Santa Lucía, Agüimes and Arucas (see Suárez Bosa 1995: 298), or a more militant working class who were concentrated in the urban areas of Telde and Las Palmas (see Orihuela *et al.* 1992), meant that there was little threat of social unrest which might concern the franquist authorities, thus entrenching the domination of *cacique* families over peasant households. To a certain extent this bred a culture of conservatism and deference amongst many local inhabitants, which still persists today in attitudes towards the newer elites associated with tourism development. A common perception of *caciques* is one of 'benevolent' patriarchs who put the interests of the locality above those of 'outsiders'. Thus, according to Pitt-Rivers (1971), the village or rather, *pueblo*, constitutes a social, economic and political unit within which a network of friendships, fictive kinships and patronage ties provides a social and moral bond transecting class divisions to provide a mechanism by which the locals identify and defend themselves against external interests:

El cacique siempre había protegido a la clientela de su localidad de las leyes, los impuestos y las obligaciones militares del mundo externo del estado. (Carr 1970, cited in Jurdao 1990: 55)<sup>18</sup>

*Caciques* in this respect, are seen as 'gate-keepers' who mediate between the bounded cultural sphere of the village and its residents, and the outside world. This then suggests that *caciques* were not



ideologically motivated, but rather acted as a mechanism of social cohesion, mediating between the demands of the centre and their own particular sphere of influence at the level of the *pueblo* (Kenny 1961). The following remark by an elderly resident of a village on the north-west face of Gran Canaria, would suggest that there is some truth in this assertion:

Uno ne se sabe si ese alcalde era de izquierdas o de derechas porque en tiempo de Franco esas cosas no se podían preguntar, pero lo que sí podemos decir es que fue un caballero. (*La Provincia* 31/5/91) <sup>19</sup>

Indeed, despite the experiences of the recent past and such clear social divisions, little explicit or open display of animosity is directed towards the local *cacique* family. Elderly residents of the *barrio pesquero* who had worked in the estate often expressed gratitude towards the landowners for the valuable work which the agro-export plantations had provided for the inhabitants of the village. In particular there is a certain amount of respect reserved for the long-standing mayor and local *cacique* mentioned above. Along with eight other heirs, he inherited the estate in Playa de Mogán from his father in the 1940s, who had originally acquired it at the end of the 19th century (see footnote no.16). To some extent these observations support the claim by Pitt-Rivers (1971: 62-3) that the possession of wealth alone does not generate respect or status, but rather it is derived from the use to which such wealth is devoted. In this respect the *cacique* family of Playa de Mogán are generally regarded with a certain esteem as the agricultural wealth produced by their estate provided a valuable source of income for many peasant households, and provided the stimulus for valuable infrastructure improvements to the locality, including the construction of roads and regular bus services to more distant villages. Indeed, the provision of a modicum of benefit and social welfare to subordinate classes is often an effective means of maintaining the status-quo in a variety of socio-economic contexts. However, as Martínez-Alier's (1971: 298) dissection of labour relations in southern Spain indicates, it cannot be assumed that rural peasants and labourers will value the ownership of land over the ability to secure employment and a living wage. Perhaps more importantly in the case of Playa de Mogán, wage-work in the plantations was first and foremost a supplementary economic activity to artisanal fishing, which was the predominant source of income for the majority of peasant households. Nevertheless, some of those who had worked in the estate occasionally let their guard slip, referring to the fact that wages on the estate were indeed "*una porquería*" (miserable) or "*una mierda*" (shit),<sup>20</sup> according to two elderly women still resident in the village, both of whom had spent considerable parts of their lives working in the estate. Alternatively, criticisms of local *cacique* families are often reflected in an indirect and subtle manner through wry commentaries and anecdotes; as one informant recounted, in Playa de Mogán there have traditionally been, "*pocos indios pa' mucho caciques*".<sup>21</sup>

Despite the expansion of wage-work in the banana and tomato plantations they did not however lead to the rise of fully capitalist social relations. Rather they constituted what Wolf describes as, "*outposts of one mode of production in the midst of other modes*" (1982: 315). Although these plantations were centres of agricultural production for the world market, they were only 'formally capitalist' in terms of the relationship between the landowners and the direct producers (*i.e.* members of peasant households), given the existence and persistence of non-capitalist modes of production in the both the agrarian and



fishing sectors of the economy (see Laclau 1971: 26-7).<sup>22</sup> In addition, unlike absentee landowners elsewhere, such as for example the *cacique* families in Los Santos who were considered as 'outsiders' in Moore's (1976a) study of Tenerife, the landowners in Playa de Mogán took an active interest in the day-to-day management of the plantations, although they would rarely enter the *barrio pesquero* itself. Across the island as a whole, much of the workforce in the export plantations was made up of migrants from the agricultural subsistence sector in the interior. Smallholders who were often unable to extract a sufficient surplus from their own small plots of land (usually less than one hectare)<sup>23</sup> also supplemented their incomes by working for a daily wage in the plantations, a phenomenon found also in other parts of Spain at that time, including Mallorca (Cela Conde 1977: 11), and Mijas in Andalucía (Jurdao 1990: 76). However, in addition to being able to draw on a migrant workforce from the interior, the plantation owners in Playa de Mogán were principally able to draw on a regular supply of cheap labour from among the inhabitants of peasant households in the *barrio pesquero*.<sup>24</sup>

A further factor of some considerable importance in precipitating immigration into this area and further settlement in Playa de Mogán, was the establishment in the village of the *factorías de salazón*<sup>25</sup> in 1911, which stimulated the subsequent expansion of artisanal fishing (*pesca artesanal*).<sup>26</sup> Prior to the arrival of the *factorías* fishing was predominantly a subsistence activity as the catch could not be preserved for any length of time, demonstrated by the fact that in 1864 there were only three registered fishermen in Mogán out of a total of 347 on the entire western side of the island (Suárez Moreno 1997: 162). Once the *factorías* were established it stimulated the commercialisation of fishing, and in particular tuna fishing (*la pesca de los túnidos*) which occurs during the summer months. This attracted temporary migrants from the windward villages (in particular from Agaete in the north-west) to the coast of Mogán who then return to their place of permanent settlement during the autumn (Pascual Fernández 1991: 50). By the turn of the century there were approximately 40 inhabitants in Playa de Mogán which was now becoming a permanent fishing settlement, many of whom had migrated here from other parts of the island, including Castillo de Romeral in Santa Lucía, Agaete, Melenera and San Cristóbal in Las Palmas (Santana Talavera 1990a: 57-60). Many elderly inhabitants recall that between 1934 and 1936 bountiful catches stimulated a further influx of migrants from surrounding areas which is reflected in a five-fold increase in the population of Playa de Mogán between 1920 and 1940 (see Table 8.1). It also enabled many existing inhabitants to make improvements on their dwellings, many of which were little more than the extension of caves in the cliff-face (see Plate 8.1). Seasonal migration from the north-west of the island (known as *el Movimiento*) however ceased after the Civil War, as a result of the economic recession which followed it and the development of road transport which led to the gradual disappearance of sea-borne transport known as *cabotaje* (Pascual Fernández 1991: 50).

As the population steadily increased, fishermen and their kin continued to build small dwellings in a dense cluster on the western flank of the valley against the cliff face and adjacent to the shoreline. There was little space elsewhere as the landowners occupied most of the suitable land on the valley floor itself, which stretched up to the shoreline and hugged each flank of the valley. In contrast to the absentee landowners of San Bartolomé de Tirajana and the windward face, the local agrarian bourgeoisie of Playa de



Mogán lived in the locality itself, albeit in larger houses adjacent to the *barrio pesquero*. Indeed they were more akin to the *burguesía agrícola* (agrarian bourgeoisie) in Cordoba in Andalusia, who managed their land in person, in contrast to the *señoritos* (aristocratic absentee landowners) who left this task up to tenant farmers known as *labradores* (Martínez-Alier 1971: 292-293). Moreover, Romero-Maura (1977) affirms that in many parts of rural Spain *caciques* were not always men of considerable wealth. This was also confirmed by local accounts and hence they are referred to by Suárez Moreno (1997: 106) as “*campesinos acomodados*”, literally “wealthy peasants”. However, although the material contrasts between the local *cacique* families of Mogán may have been less significant than in other areas, there was a significant difference in their capacity to mobilise political support and control local voting patterns, as well as their education. Moreover they monopolised the material wealth of the village and controlled the principal means of agrarian production in the area, as well as a number of buildings around the square in the *barrio pesquero*, some of which were either rented by shopkeepers, or used by fishermen to store their nets and equipment.

The material divisions between the landowning *cacique* families and peasant households are however interwoven with significant symbolic distinctions, a point noted also by Pitt-Rivers who argues that, “*the great gulf is not an economic one between rich and poor, but a social one between those who work with their hands and those who do not*” (1963: 21). Playa de Mogán’s landowning classes were not absentee landowners or *señorito*’s of the kind described by Pitt-Rivers, and in fact lived adjacent to the *barrio pesquero* but separated from the dense cluster of housing by a dry river bed. Nevertheless despite their spatial proximity to the *barrio pesquero*, they remained for the most part detached from the shared life experiences and close-knit rhythms of the peasant households within the narrow intersecting passages and alley ways of the village. Whilst the children of fishermen would often leave school at the age of fourteen or earlier in order to become crew members aboard family fishing boats, their contemporaries amongst local *cacique* families would be sent to Las Palmas in order to complete their secondary and tertiary education. Daughters would often accompany their brothers to the city in order to assist in domestic chores as well as to seek potential husbands amongst the urban middle classes.

This spatial segregation between these socio-economic groups extended to the use of the beach itself; most fishermen would haul the boats up onto the beach and in the shade of trees which lay in an open area between their houses and those of landowners. In addition the children from the *barrio pesquero* would swim in front of the plantation warehouses, whilst children of landowners tended use a smaller cove on the far side of the shoreline. An elderly informant from the *barrio pesquero* remarked that they would often throw stones at the landowners’ children across the line of sugar cane plants which separated the *barrio pesquero* from the estate. Although internal social alignments did exist amongst non-landowning classes, they have nevertheless been bound by a collective experience of manual work, either in fishing or in the plantation. Furthermore, the peasant inhabitants of the *barrio pesquero* have not only been bound by physical proximity, but by a greater degree of family and kin ties through inter-marriage, enduring social relationships, and economic interdependence, which have contributed to the shared life experiences within the village. In contrast, inter-marriage did occur between the local *cacique*



families of Playa de Mogán and the agrarian village of Mogán, although inhabitants tended to distinguish between them according to their village and valley of origin. The high degree of correlation between economic and political power at the municipal level meant that, for example, members of the local *cacique* family in Playa de Mogán were closely involved with municipal politics and came into frequent contact with both the prominent agrarian and merchant classes resident in the village of Mogán. Two notable examples include the landowner and farmer from Playa de Mogán who also became the long-standing mayor of Mogán (1932-1962) mentioned earlier, whose niece and heir to a portion of the estate married a future mayor from Mogán with whom she was to later open a restaurant in Playa de Mogán (see Chapter Nine: p. 169).

Material divisions amongst peasant households thus tended to be submerged in the social distinction between *los pobres*, the category in which most of inhabitants of the *barrio pesquero* included themselves, and *los ricos* who constituted the local *cacique* families. At the interface between these two groups, was a small class of merchants, shop-keepers and foremen, some of whom were from or resident in other villages, including Mogán. Thus the social distance between peasant households and this collection of merchants and local *cacique* families, was reinforced by an absence of shared life experiences, as well as antagonistic economic interests (see Wolf 1966: 47). The material contrasts in the life circumstances between those who owned the land and those who worked the land and the sea, thus underscores important symbolic distinctions between local *cacique* families and peasant households in Playa de Mogán, as well as long-standing animosities between inhabitants of the agrarian village of Mogán in the upper part of the valley, and the fishing settlement of Playa de Mogán.<sup>27</sup>

### *Strategies of Subsistence in a Fishing Settlement*

Playa de Mogán has never been an isolated community in the sense of an hermetic or corporate peasant society of the kind described for example by Redclift (1973). Its very existence was borne out of its links to wider social structures beyond the physical confines of the valley, exemplified by the establishment of the export plantations and the *factorías*, which further integrated the village into the global economic system. The development of sustained commercial ties to the outside world was however an uneven process which was dependent upon a variety of historically contingent circumstances in distant economic centres. There was a limited internal market in this area and few sustained economic transactions between villages. Rather fishing and agricultural surpluses, generated via distinct modes of economic production, were circulated via different sets of commercial intermediaries to external markets via Las Palmas. In the agro-export sector it was the local agrarian landowners in alliance with the British export companies who channelled produce to the world market, while the entrepreneurial middle-men who ran the *factorías* performed a similar role in the artisanal fishing economy.

The *factorías* provided a significant impulse to the development of a more complex division of labour in the artisanal fishing economy by bringing local fishermen into an expanded network of commercial exchange through which surpluses were distributed. They also helped increase the productivity of fishing



through the introduction of technological improvements and the improvement of fishing techniques motivated by competition between the different *factorías* along the coast. These improvements in productivity led to increased surpluses and thus facilitated occupational pluralism, allowing fishermen to also undertake wage-work in the adjacent agricultural plantations. Most families also continued to meet their material subsistence needs by keeping livestock including chickens and rabbits, as well as goats which were an important source of milk and cheese. The women and children would also collect shellfish and other seafood from the shallow sea shelf (uncovered at low tide) adjacent to the shore. As these products were not suitable for bartering in the rural interior they provided a valuable source of subsistence access to which was unrestricted by any physical, legal or economic obstacles. However improved productivity also increased the demand for labour beyond the level which the village could supply. Thus in the 1930s the *factorías* brought in labour and even entire families from other parts of the south, who went to work on the boats (as well as the plantations), which led to the introduction of weekly wages on boats contracted to sell their catch to the *factorías* (Santana Talavera 1990a: 65-67).<sup>28</sup>

Despite the increasing commercialisation of fishing, these changes did not set in motion the complete transformation of the mode of production or social organisation of the village itself. The ownership of the means of production, *i.e.* the boats and equipment themselves, are predominantly controlled by the family unit comprised of the male head of household and his immediate male kin. Although the *factorías* exercised significant control over the means of production and distribution - they provided boats and equipment in return for a fee and a monopoly on the catch (of tuna only) - they did not significantly alter the relationship between the direct producers themselves and the owners of the means of production within the rest of the artisanal fishing economy.<sup>29</sup> Most fishermen however concentrated on *pescado blanco* (white-fleshed fish caught with nets), and which was sold through a different network of intermediaries. There is no hard and fast distinction between 'owners' and 'non-owners' of the means of production within the family economic unit, whose primary concern is the satisfaction of family consumption needs and thus to ensure the reproduction of the family unit rather than the accumulation of capital. The organization of work and labour in the artisanal fishing economy can thus be conceptualised according to Chayanov's concept of the peasant or natural economy:

In a natural economy, human economic activity is dominated by the requirements of satisfying the needs of each single production unit, which is at the same time, a consumer unit. (1966: 4)

This does not mean however that there is an absence of competition between boats which is a characteristic of many fishing societies, as noted by Barnes (1954: 41). In particular competition between fishing households is manifest in the inter-generational transmission of the *secretos del mar* (secrets of the sea), the closely guarded intellectual property of each productive entity usually held by the *patron* or captain (regarding the movement of fish, tides, phases of the moon, landmarks, fishing techniques etc.). The *secretos* are a crucial component of the reproduction of each family and are handed down through the generations as would be the inheritance of property (see Galván Tudela 1982; Pascual Fernández 1991: 183-8). Given the absence of territorially-defined property rights at sea, knowledge as



capital takes on an even greater significance for boats which are tied into a particular family economic unit.

One of the most significant features of the artisanal fishing economy in Playa de Mogán is the gendered division of labour which is interwoven with the fishing and agricultural sectors. The frequent and sometimes long absences of the male head of household and his sons from the 'land' and in particular, from the home or domestic milieu has meant that women in peasant fishing societies have often undertaken tasks which in other societies would be carried out by men (Pascual Fernández 1991: 113), thus gaining in status and autonomy from the rigid strictures of a patriarchal household. In Playa de Mogán, as in other similar fishing communities, the women rarely fished themselves, although there are one or two exceptions where families lacked male kin or in the case of a daughter who was particularly keen to go out to sea.<sup>30</sup> They did however fulfill important roles within the fishing economy, particularly administration and management of the household income.

The artisanal fishing sector and agricultural export sectors were however inextricably tied together via the movement of labour between them, which provided a means of reproduction for peasant households whilst providing an ample and cheap labour force for the latter. Fishermen, and more commonly, their wives and daughters, themselves have often complemented their incomes from fishing through wage-work in the banana and tomato plantations, during periods when catches were poor and the opportunities to make a living were more favourable in agriculture (Santana Talavera 1990a: 106). Usually though they would work on land during the winter months, as the summer (July - September) is the period devoted to tuna fishing, which due to its substantial economic return to peasant households, occupied all available fisherman during this period. Whereas the women would be concentrated in picking and packaging activities in the plantations the men would undertake the tasks including the preparation of the soil prior to planting, or loading and unloading the boats at the shoreline during picking periods. In addition, council records suggest that they also carried out a number of other tasks for the municipality, including road maintenance and construction work. Despite the dependence of many peasant inhabitants in Playa de Mogán on wage-work in the banana and tomato plantations in order to complement their incomes from fishing, it is doubtful whether the relationship between the local landowners and those who worked on the estate can be regarded as an expression of 'patron-client' ties of the type identified by Pitt-Rivers (1971). Although some oral evidence confirms the existence of favouritism and social ties between local *caciques* and certain peasant households (see also Díaz Marrero 1981), few inhabitants spoke of mutual obligations between them. Moreover the focus of most peasant households in Playa de Mogán on fishing has endowed them with a certain measure of autonomy from the local *cacique* families, who in turn had no involvement in this sector. For the most part social relations between residents of the *barrio pesquero* and landowners was predominantly based on the cash nexus in the context of agricultural wage-work in the plantation, rather than that of loyalty or mutual obligation. Employment was essentially granted on a 'first-come first served' basis and as such there were few if any long-term relationships or for that matter much 'loyalty' between members of peasant households and local *cacique* families.



Until the construction of the *factorías* and the improvement of road links to Arguineguín in the 1930s, women had been responsible for both bartering fishing surpluses in exchange for agricultural produce (such as *gofio* and vegetables)<sup>31</sup> yielded by the inhabitants of villages in the interior. Later they would also begin to sell the fish not purchased by the *factorías* (*pescado blanco*), throughout a number of villages in the interior, until the improvement of road links in 1949 enabled a wider network of intermediaries (see below) to take over this role and transport surpluses by road to Las Palmas. The inaccessibility of Mogán required them to get up before sunrise and travel large distances on foot, often as far as Tejeda some 15-20 kms inland and several hundred metres above sea level. It followed from this, that as women were responsible for selling the catch, they were ultimately responsible for the control of household finances, perhaps a good thing given the reputation of the men for indulgent and reckless consumption!; “*tienen una merecida fama de bebedores y juergistas*” (Pascual Fernández 1991: 223),<sup>32</sup> although the men would still make production decisions regarding fishing and investment in equipment, a characteristic of social relations noted also by Zarkia (1996) on the Greek island of Skyros with respect to agriculture and herding.

As a result of both these roles and the fact that women also participated in manual tasks such as hauling boats out of the water, repairing nets, working in the plantations, they were regarded by the wealthier inhabitants of Mogán as *brutas* (coarse) or worse, *putas* (whores) (Santana Talavera 1990a: 57). This socio-territorial distinction between the women-folk of Playa de Mogán and the village of Mogán, is also based on the material distinction between themselves and the female members of local *cacique* families in the village of Mogán who would not have engaged in physical labour. Wives of fishermen were thus perceived to be vulgar and dirty by virtue of the fact that they participated more freely in the physical activities of social life in Playa de Mogán. Previous tensions between the two villages have to a certain extent dissipated since the onset of tourism and the increasingly diverse social composition of the village. However, newer socio-economic divisions between different resident groups have emerged over the past two decades in particular. These have largely been conditioned by the varying abilities of the local population to take up the entrepreneurial and employment opportunities precipitated by tourism, which will be the focus of the remaining chapters.

Successive improvements in the productivity of fishing during the post-war period, thanks to technological innovation and new equipment (e.g. motorisation of boats), lessened the dependence of fishermen on the *factorías*, enabling them to distribute their expanded fishing surpluses via merchants from Las Palmas (Santana Talavera 1990a: 75). One of these however was an enterprising inhabitant from Playa de Mogán itself, whose experience of working in the *factorías* has enabled him to become the most prominent fish merchant in the village, as well as open distribution outlets in Las Palmas (see Chapter Eleven: p.219). Whilst his business continues to monopolise the distribution of *pescado blanco* (white fish - caught with nets), the *Cofradía de Pescadores* (fishermens' cooperative), which opened in the early 1980s, took over the purchase and distribution of tuna (known as *pescado negro*) subsequent to the closure of the *factorías* in 1975. However, prior to the establishment of these two



principal intermediaries which still today monopolise distribution of fish, fishermen would often revert to selling their surpluses through their wives when catches were down (Santana Talavera 1990a: 73).

### *Prelude to the Expansion of Tourism*

From the early stages of settlement in Playa de Mogán different levels of the social formation have been tied into trading networks which have extended social relations outwards into wider circuits of commercial exchange. However, until the arrival of tourism in the early 1960s fishing and agriculture remained the principal occupations whilst the ownership of land continued to provide the principal source of wealth and power, with the result that the social organisation of Playa de Mogán remained largely unchanged. The social and economic structure of this area, and in particular Playa de Mogán, was thus still clearly divided by class, residence and the symbolic distinction between *los pobres*, made up of fishing households and agricultural labourers, and *los ricos*, who continued to monopolise agricultural wealth and political power in the municipality. Indeed a significant proportion of local councillors continued to be drawn from the ranks of prominent local cacique families well into the 1980s alongside the more recent emergence of a professional political class during the democratic era.

The recovery of north European markets during the early post-war period (1945-1960) which stimulated the renewed expansion of the agricultural export sector did however precipitate the intensification of links to the wider economy (García Herrera 1987: 29). The agro-export economy in Mogán peaked during this period and was manifest in the expansion of the total surface area dedicated to the cultivation of tomatoes for export from 145 hectares in 1945 to 567 in 1963 (Suárez Moreno 1997: 200). The immigration of rural labourers into the municipality was thus given further impetus increasing the municipal population from 3,595 in 1950 to 5,332 in 1960 (see Table 8.1). This demographic expansion precipitated the need for the construction of basic infrastructure and public amenities. According to Suárez Moreno (1997: 214) in 1955 out of a total of 500 domestic housing units in the municipality only 193 had running water, 75 connected to the electricity grid and a mere 24 with access to a telephone. Indeed the council minutes during this period reflect the initiation of numerous public works projects including, the improvement of telephone services in Mogán, Playa de Mogán and Arguineguín (1957), the construction of the road from Mogán to La Aldea (1958), and the improvement of water supplies.<sup>33</sup> Electricity only began to arrive in Playa de Mogán in the early 1970s, until then most houses and the few businesses that existed relied on paraffin generators. Of particular concern was the lack of schools and high levels of absenteeism amongst the young, many of whom would have also been needed for their labour at sea or in the plantations. Despite the construction of five new primary schools in 1960, including two in Playa de Mogán, the western half of the municipality still lacks adequate school facilities at a secondary level, forcing pupils to travel daily to either Arguineguín or La Aldea.

More significantly, the penetration of commercial capital into the acquisition of land meant that capitalist relations of production became more prevalent throughout the agro-export plantations (Suárez Moreno 1997: 194-5). The break-up of estates during the 1940s and 1950s through the institution of partible



inheritance exacerbated this process as heirs sold land to commercial investors from Las Palmas. The result was that by 1960 60% of land in the municipality became concentrated in the hands of 12 landowners, which were in effect coalitions of 'absentee' metropolitan investors, whilst the rest remained in the hands of local landowners and smallholders (Suárez Moreno 1997: 202). However in Playa de Mogán, perhaps given their historical ties to the locality, the estate remained in the hands of the local *cacique* family and its descendents. The changes brought about by the commercialisation of the agricultural export sector, in fact consolidated the strength of local *cacique* families, whose agricultural wealth was reflected in the construction of elaborate villas which dot the landscape in the valley of Mogán. Since the late 1940s the estate in Playa de Mogán has passed from the seven children and three grand-children of the landowners who acquired this area in the late 19th century (see above), into the hands of 30-40 separate landowners who own a patchwork of 75 separate plots which run parallel to each other across the valley (Suárez Moreno 1997: 193; *Plan Parcial Playa de Mogán*, catastral, 1988).

There were few intermediate classes between the landowners and agrarian capitalists who syphoned off agricultural wealth from the area, and peasant households who either worked the sea or the land. Nevertheless there had always been a small merchant class, made up of shop-keepers, clerical workers, teachers and the estate or *factoría* supervisors. There were also a number of smallholders and *medianeros* scattered along the valley of Mogán who were however dependent upon the larger landowners in order to sell distribute whatever surpluses they could produce. There was little antagonism between these two strata given that local *cacique* families regulated their access to the market and potential employment, as for example, plantation supervisors or clerical jobs in the local council. Furthermore, the small merchant class was also closely tied to local *cacique* families through inter-marriage. Indeed, relatives of local *cacique* families (usually wives) also ran small shops in Mogán and Playa de Mogán, whilst many of the civil servants and administrators in the local council are comprised of the urban educated descendents of the agrarian bourgeoisie. The long-standing complementarity between the landowning *cacique* families and the small merchant class only began to be superseded by a more heterogeneous commercial bourgeoisie upon the arrival of tourism.

Together with the technological improvements in fishing, these changes brought about a significant influx of agricultural labour into the municipality and an intensification of capitalist wage relations on the plantations. Whilst a number of smallholders continued to farm plots of less than a hectare in the valley of Mogán and tenant farmers controlled the larger plantations which were now owned by absentee owners, for the most part this influx was comprised of rural labourers and share-croppers who made up the poorest stratum of the population. Many lived in make-shift dwellings bordering the areas of cultivation, or else became concentrated in the village of Arguineguín whose population in 1960 reached 953 inhabitants in comparison to 614 in Playa de Mogán and 686 in the village of Mogán (Cabildo Insular 1986: cuadro 8). This was due to the limited space for urban expansion in Playa de Mogán as well as the closer proximity of Arguineguín to the principal road links to Las Palmas and the more extensive areas of tomato cultivation in San Bartolomé de Tirajana. Although they made up a smaller proportion of the population, there were also a number of families in Playa de Mogán who possessed



little or no capital or expertise in the form of either agricultural or fishing means of production, and whose source of income was derived from a number of menial occupations including, agricultural labour, road construction, building and on occasion fishing when boats were short of crew members. Many had been drawn to Playa de Mogán during the 'years of hunger' during the 1930s and 1940s due to its relative prosperity and reputation for abundant fishing. Despite living in close proximity to fishing households their position in the social structure was subordinate to the former, whose access to independent means of production in the form of fishing boats and knowledge of fishing techniques, endowed them with a modicum of security in contrast to the latter. As will be discussed in the following chapter, it was a number of individuals from within this stratum together with a small number of fishermen who began to see an 'easier' living to be made from tourism in the 1960s, who were to become the first tourism entrepreneurs in the village.

## Conclusion

This chapter has shown how the wider processes of socio-economic transformation set in motion by the liberal reforms of the 19th century, conditioned the emergence of a distinctive agrarian society in what was to become the municipality of Mogán in the previously barren, under-populated and marginal territory on the leeward face of the island. In its elucidation of the principal factors which have conditioned these changes, it has also demonstrated the degree to which the uneven development of agrarian capitalism in Gran Canaria has been marked by the emergence of quite diverse social formations in close proximity to each other. Specifically, the land disentailments of the early to mid-19th century set in train a process of social change which led to the increased settlement and cultivation of this area. However, rather than stimulate the redistribution of land amongst the peasantry and small farmers it merely led to the acquisition of the most fertile land (and water) by powerful local *cacique* families who enhanced their economic wealth through the export of cochineal. At the turn of the century the introduction of agricultural crops for export (bananas and tomatoes) in extensive plantations along the low lying parts of the valleys nearer the coast, consolidated the economic and political dominance of this local agrarian bourgeoisie until well into the last quarter of the 20th century and the arrival of tourism. This was further bolstered by their monopolisation of political power in the area via their control of the municipal government situated in the village of Mogán, which had been inaugurated during the 1830s.

The advent of extensive cultivation for export not only enhanced the prominence of local *cacique* families towards the lower end of the valleys, but also facilitated the emergence of a permanent fishing settlement in Playa de Mogán. A crucial factor in the reproduction of these households was their ability to complement their income from fishing through work in the adjacent agricultural plantations, most of which was undertaken by women. Although wage-work became a prominent feature in these plantations, and to a certain extent within the artisanal fishing economy also, capitalist relations of production have been slow to develop in this social formation. There were few incentives for the landowners to invest in productive improvements in agriculture. Other than the provision of seeds, fertilisers and farming



implements, and the maintenance of buildings and fences, little infrastructural investment was required as all produce was transported by sea. They were also guaranteed access to a regular supply of servile and cheap labour whose subsistence needs could be met by the non-capitalist sector, which revolved around artisanal fishing and subsistence agriculture.

Hence, the increasing integration of export-enclaves in Mogán into the world market at the turn of the century strengthened parochial loyalties and the vertical organisation of productive relations, whilst at the same time enhanced the power and wealth of local *caciques* who forged ties to foreign mercantile interests. These factors are also relevant to the persistence of a culture of conservatism and deference towards authority amongst inhabitants, and have underscored important symbolic boundaries between peasant and landowner classes, as well as between agrarian and fishing communities. Thus despite an outward appearance of social cohesion and cooperation in certain spheres of production (*e.g.* participation in the hauling in of boats) peasant society in Playa de Mogán has always exhibited stratification. Hence, the character of the socio-economic formation in Playa de Mogán has been structured precisely by the nature of the extensive trading relationships which span outwards from this locality, binding agrarian landowners and peasant households alike into wider social structures prior to the arrival of tourism.

The approach adopted here therefore has been to outline some of the principal factors which have shaped the societal development of Gran Canaria and in particular the south-west, with a view to providing a platform from which to approach the examination of the micro-dynamics of tourist development in Playa de Mogán. The next chapter will now turn its attention to the ascendance of tourism in Mogán and Playa de Mogán, and in particular its effects on the social structure in relation to changes in the prevailing mode of economic development and the emergence of an entrepreneurial middle-class.



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<sup>1</sup> Mogán is the second largest municipality on the island after San Bartolomé whose surface area extends to 333 square kms.

<sup>2</sup> During the 18th century the majority of Gran Canaria's 45,000 inhabitants lived in Las Palmas, as did almost all of the absentee landlords (Béthencourt 1981: 142). Nevertheless, Mogán was flanked on both sides by two extensive landed estates; that of the *Marqués de Villanueva del Prado* in the municipality of La Aldea de San Nicolás to the west, and that of the *Conde de la Vega Grande de Guadeloupe* in San Bartolomé de Tirajana to the east, both of whom were prominent members of the agrarian nobility (Béthencourt 1981: 145). See Suárez Moreno (1990, 1997) and Millares Cantero (1977) for a more detailed discussion of the emergence of these two estates.

<sup>3</sup> Prior to the reforms enacted by the *Cortes* of Cádiz in 1812, which laid the legal foundations of the modern Spanish state, the expanse of territory now within the municipal territory of Mogán came under the jurisdiction of Tejeda, which lies adjacent to Mogán's northern boundary and stretches across the summit of the island, known as *las cumbres* (see Fig. 8.1). The momentum for the creation of a separate municipality is closely linked to the changing economic importance of this area as a producer of export crops for the world market. In 1814 the construction of a church in the agro-village of Mogán by a returnee from Cuba, and subsequent establishment of a parish, was the precursor to the birth of full municipal status in the late 1830s. After nearly two decades of political instability due to the resistance of the absolutist regime in Madrid, the inauguration of the municipal government in the village of Mogán took effect in between 1834 and 1836 (Suárez Moreno 1997: 104-105).

<sup>4</sup> Land which belonged to the Crown consisted mainly of forest and scrub used for pasture, hunting and gathering. It could not however be rented or broken up without formal permission from the chancellery in Seville (Gilmore 1980: 19). These lands were beyond local control but were administered by the island council (*Cabildo*) on its behalf (Béthencourt and Macías 1977). Although they were for the most part uninhabited, except in cases of encroachment either by clandestine subsistence cultivators or acquisitive landowners, these lands were held in common and could be used for grazing. The *bienes de propio* on the other hand were under the direct control of the municipal authorities who rented them to farmers on a short-term basis (up to 2 - 3 years) in return for a modest rent (Béthencourt and Macías 1977: 242). Jurisdiction over the sale of uncultivated lands was however an area of intense political conflict which came into sharp focus during the disentailments (see Suárez Grimón's 1987). In instances where the Crown had previously ceded jurisdiction to municipal authorities, it did not however prevent it from reappropriating this land with the aid of land-hungry members of the agrarian bourgeoisie.

<sup>5</sup> During the 1770s, the *Cabildo* began to consider ways in which it could stimulate settlement in the south-west of the island by encouraging small-scale cultivation in return for a small tax, which would also contribute towards the necessary public infrastructure (Béthencourt 1981). The valleys of Tasarte, Veneguera and Mogán were considered as the most apt for cultivation and thus earmarked by the *Cabildo* for settlement. Not only was this for reasons related to the natural environment; these valleys were the widest, flattest and most fertile in the area, and were endowed with a reasonable amount of fresh groundwater, but moreover, this territory did not interfere with the extensive landed estates in La Aldea to the west and to the east of Arguineguín. This policy found particular favour with the *Real Sociedad Económica de Amigos del País de Las Palmas*, an instrument of an emergent bourgeoisie who were keen to encourage new avenues of productive investment in agriculture in order to 'modernize' the rural interior (Béthencourt and Macías 1977). The professed aims of this policy were thus to attenuate rural poverty, and thereby stem pressures for emigration to South America, through the encouragement of cultivation, which would also have the benefit of raising finance for the new public institution which would be required to administrate this area. However, neither this nor a similar project which aimed to stimulate whale fishing, came to fruition due to a combination of opposition from existing landowners, lack of finance and the poor technological capability of farmers (Suárez Moreno 1997).

<sup>6</sup> The origins of the feudal estate (*mayorazgo*) of the *Conde de la Vega Grande* dates back to 1679. However rather than break up as a result of the liberal reforms of the eighteenth century which abolished the *mayorazgo*, astute purchases made by the IVth Conde during the second disentailment, consolidated the estate's control over 20% of the land in San Bartolomé de Tirajana (Ojeda 1977a), which later grew to 37% by the beginning of the twentieth century (Nadal and Guitián 1983: 53).

<sup>7</sup> The sale of ecclesiastical lands (1836) had a less significant impact on Mogán than did the later period of civil disentailments (1855). Between 1870 and 1897 a total of 719 hectares (4.3% of municipal surface area) of public lands became concentrated in the hands of three different landowners (Suárez Moreno 1997: 126). One person alone amassed 590 hectares of property between 1870 and 1873 (Ojeda 1977a). This particular landowner was also the local teacher and became a prominent figure in the newly created local government administration as he was one of the few literate inhabitants in the area (Suárez Moreno 1997: 90).

<sup>8</sup> Cochineal contributed 48% of Mogán's agricultural revenue in 1857 (Suárez Moreno 1997: 94).



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<sup>9</sup> The significance of this period for the consolidation of power amongst a narrow stratum of landowners is reflected by the extent of land accumulated by one particular member of the rural landowning classes, and legendary local figure, known as “*el virrey de Mogán*”, (literally the viceroy of Mogán!). A landowner, businessman and agriculturalist he also became a dominant force in local politics, occupying both the position of secretary and mayor for much of the period from 1881 to 1923. He was also in charge of tax collection on property and the administration of state debts which enabled him to appropriate the properties of bankrupt farmers, many of whom merely abandoned them and left for Cuba after the cochineal crash (Suárez Moreno 1997: 115-116). Over a period of forty years around the turn of the century, he amassed 179 properties totalling 2,891 hectares, of which 165 encompassing a total of 2,488 hectares were situated in Mogán (15% of the municipal land area). His properties included 723 hectares of valuable agricultural land in Veneguera-Tabaibales adjacent to the valley of Mogán (Ibid. 1997: 140-9).

Furthermore, the position of secretary to the *Ayuntamiento* and the local courts (often the same person held both posts) was often more influential than that of the mayor, due to the control wielded by the secretary over all aspects of council administration including potentially lucrative areas such as land transactions and tax collection (Suárez Moreno 1997: 138). In addition those who held the post of mayor did not usually remain for long periods whereas the Secretary did, allowing them to build up positions of influence over time and disseminate all manner of favours amongst their extended family and political connections.

<sup>10</sup> “It is the acquisitive bourgeoisie - agrarian and/or commercial - who in all likelihood benefitted the most from the cochineal crash, by increasing the size of their holdings often in exchange for a ticket to America.”

<sup>11</sup> Despite the liberal objectives of 19th century agrarian land reform both prior to and including the disentailments, it failed to attenuate rural poverty and effect a significant redistribution of land amongst the peasantry and smaller proprietors. It only served to strengthen the dominance of the existing agrarian oligarchy and at the same time expanded the land-grabbing opportunities of a nascent agrarian bourgeoisie which had grown rich on the profits of cochineal, particularly following the period of civil disentailments (1855)..

<sup>12</sup> In 1856 out of a total of 142 landowners, 34 had registered incomes which exceeded 1,000 *reales* and were thus considered wealthy. Out of a total population of 719 inhabitants in 1851, there were only 40 registered landowners (*propietarios*), 80 tenant farmers (*arrendatarios*) and 69 rural labourers (*jornaleros de campo*), scattered along the valleys of Veneguera, Mogán and Soria (Suárez Moreno 1997; A.A.M.1861).

<sup>13</sup> Accurate population figures for individual villages are erratic and indeed are missing for many years. Without a fuller analysis it is hard to be certain, however it is likely that the population of Playa de Mogán has remained relatively unchanged due to two factors; firstly the increasing pressures on out-migration due to the increase in cost of living and lack of space in the village, and secondly, these figures do not reflect the highly visible itinerant population made up of tourists, long-term foreign residents and enterprise owners who may reside elsewhere. For example the estimated *poblacion de hecho* (de facto population) for Mogán in 1997 was 15,042 as opposed to the *población de derecho* of 10,625 permanent residents (de jure population).

<sup>14</sup> “The initiation, spread and development of the Canary Island fishing communities was largely determined by the demand in existence in the near-lying agricultural communities and, first and foremost, by the traders and the bourgeois exporting companies already well-established in the port areas.”

<sup>15</sup> The scarcity of even terrain suitable for farming has limited the total surface area under cultivation in the Canary Islands as a whole to approximately 20% (Nadal and Guitián 1983: 145). Hence, The cultivation of agricultural crops for export has historically been located in the lowland areas, in contrast with non-capitalist subsistence sectors which are more usually confined to the upland zones (*medianías*) above 300 metres. This does not however support the dualist theories of development, but rather, these distinct modes of agrarian production have been closely linked and indeed articulate with each other, thus ensuring the reproduction of the peripheral model of capitalist development (Galván Tudela 1980: 96). I would also argue that closer examination at the micro-level illustrates that a greater diversity of relations of production often exist even within these lowland areas.

<sup>16</sup> At the end of the 19th century, much of the land in the lower part of the valley of Mogán, from *El Cercado* to the sea (a total of 70 hectares), became divided between two closely related local *cacique* families (each of the male heads of household were married to one of two sisters). In a stroke of good fortune, the *cacique* family which was to consolidate its wealth through the cultivation of bananas and tomatoes for export in Playa de Mogán, had acquired this land through an exchange with the other family, whose holdings lay further inland (Suárez Moreno 1997: 130, 193-194).

<sup>17</sup> Between 1897 and 1910 the rate of illiteracy in Mogán was approximately 80% (Alvarez 1980b: 314).



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18 "The *cacique* had always protected the clients in his locality from the laws, taxes and military obligations of the outside world, the State." See also Carr (1982: pp.58-9) and Cohen (1992: 110-4)

19 "Heaven knows whether he was Left-Wing or Right-Wing because you couldn't ask questions like that when Franco was still around. However what we do know is that he was a real gentleman."

20 By most accounts those who worked either in the plantations themselves or the *empaquetados* (the warehouses where the tomatoes and bananas were put in crates ready for loading onto the boats) were paid approximately between 85 and 105 pesetas/week in the 1940s. Figures provided by Suárez Moreno (1997: 212) demonstrate the relative parity of wages in 1955 for a number of manual occupations: plantation work (packing) 450 ptas., agricultural labourer 525 ptas., construction worker 630 ptas., general labourer 675 ptas. It is worth noting that agricultural labour was less well-paid than construction work, a disparity which would have increased further once building began on hotels.

21 "Few indians for so many chiefs".

22 Although the agricultural export plantations were principally enclaves of production for the world market, the relations of exploitation between landowners and agricultural workers, although based on the cash nexus, were not characterised by a system of capitalist 'free' labour whereby the workers were entirely removed from their means of subsistence and thus dependent upon wage labour for their survival and reproduction. The costs of production (and hence price of commodities) were kept down through the ability of the workers to meet their subsistence needs predominantly through the artisanal fishing economy.

23 The limited size of individual smallholdings is a common feature of the agrarian landscape in Gran Canaria; according to Martín and González (1990: 85), 80% of these are less than one hectare in size, and up to 60% of these are less than half a hectare.

24 As noted by Firth (1971) in *Elements of Social Organization*, peasant economies (and thus the households which make up these economies) are not exclusively agricultural. They include fishing, as well as stock-raising, trading and craft activities, in which non-capitalist modes of production are prevalent and the division of labour is undertaken within parameters defined by kinship units (see Cheater 1989: 98; Marx 1977: 317).

25 These were storage houses built for the salting of fish prior to the arrival of refrigeration. The first to be built along the south coast was in Meloneras to the east of Arguineguín. A further two were later built in Tauro (1918), and then then two more in Arguineguín after 1920.

26 For a detailed anthropological study of *pesca artesanal* in Playa de Mogán, see Santana Talavera (1990a), and elsewhere on Gran Canaria and Tenerife, see Galván Tudela (1982) and Pascual Fernández (1991), who defines this activity as follows: "*aquella que se realiza dentro del perímetro de la plataforma submarina de cada isla o en sus cercanías por barcos hasta unos doce metros de eslora, que no salen del Archipiélago en sus faenas*" (1991: 217). [that which is carried out within the limits of each island's continental shelf or the immediately surrounding area, always fishing within the waters of the Archipelago, in boats no more than twelve metres in length].

27 One indication of a source of such animosity was revealed to the researcher by an elderly informant from Playa de Mogán, who recounted how a shop-keeper from the village of Mogán who used to run a small store in the fishing village and later emigrated to South America, exploited the low levels of numeracy and literacy amongst fishermen and other residents of the *barrio pesquero* by fabricating debts and the price of goods, thus creating high levels of indebtedness amongst peasant households.

28 For example the *chinchorro*, a dragnet used for fishing from the beach, often required up to 20 persons (see Pascual Fernández 1991: 218; Santana Talavera 1990a: 60-2)

29 See Appendix II for further details on the division of labour in the artisanal fishing economy.

30 Prior to the advent of tourism in Playa de Mogán, families with no male offspring were often the poorest because they would be unable to fish. For those families in the village who therefore had no means of fishing for a living or any land to farm, the only reliable source of income came from wage work in the plantations while the agro-export economy was buoyant. As a means of easing these biological discrepancies it was not uncommon for peasant fishing households to donate food and assist these families with basic necessities. In some cases others would even 'adopt' the daughters of other households, who would then be incorporated into a fictive kinship network in return for certain domestic obligations to that particular family, in a form of social kinship similar to that discussed by Meillasoux (1981). (personal communication to the author by A. Santana Talavera)



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- 31 A traditional gruel made from wheat and cornflour, and a staple of the Canary Island diet.
- 32 “they have a well-earned reputation for drinking and partying.”
- 33 A.A.M. *Libro de Actas de Comisión Permanente*, No. 9, 23/3/58 - 4/9/60).



# CHAPTER NINE

## The Changing Landscapes of Tourism Development in Mogán

### Introduction

This chapter examines the emergence of tourism in Playa de Mogán in light of the historical forces of peripheral capitalist development, and the emergence of a locally-specific agrarian society forged by its connection to the agricultural export sector and artisanal fishing, which have been set out in the previous two Chapters. Prior to the more detailed examination of the ethnographic evidence for Playa de Mogán, a brief outline of the phases of large-scale tourism development along the adjacent coastline is presented, with particular regard to some of the broader socio-economic transformations it brought about, using predominantly background secondary sources.

The main emphasis of this chapter is an examination of tourism activity and development in the village of Playa de Mogán itself, and the manner in which different touristic processes began to permeate *through* the social formation, creating new configurations of production and the alignments of different social groups within it. In particular it explores the varied responses by particular segments of the social formation in relation to the underlying social structure and material forces of change. Specifically, it examines the factors which have conditioned the emergence of a local entrepreneurial middle-class in the tourism enterprise economy of Playa de Mogán since the 1960s.

### 9.1 *Costa Mogán*: From Plantation Agriculture to Tourism Mono-Culture

There has not yet been any detailed examination of the political economy of the tourism development processes in Mogán, nor a detailed study similar to that carried out by Nadal and Guitián (1983) on the development of tourism in Maspalomas-Playa del Inglés. Although the development of tourism complexes along Mogán's coastline consisted of a similar combination of facilities, apart from the clear physical contrasts presented by the terrain which made ribbon-like sprawl impossible, it would be inaccurate to posit it simply as a continuation of the processes experienced in San Bartolomé de Tirajana. At the time of the initial development of tourism infrastructure in San Bartolomé, Mogán was still a predominantly agrarian society with little if any touristic activity, and a population density of 32.5 inhabitants/square kilometre in 1960, in contrast to San Bartolomé which although nearly twice the size, registered a density of 37.1 (Cabildo Insular 1986: cuadro 9). As discussed in the previous chapter, the social organisation of Playa de Mogán remained relatively unchanged until the 1960s and the decline of extensive tomato and banana cultivation for export across the island (which in Mogán were briefly substituted by cucumbers, aubergines and peppers). Amongst other factors, heightened competition from producers in Africa and Latin America precipitated a decline in the agro-export sector, reflected in the reduction of land dedicated to tomato cultivation in Mogán from nearly 600 hectares in the mid-1960s to a mere 24 hectares in 1984 (Suárez Moreno 1997: 226). The reduction of cultivation was more marked in



the south where land previously under cultivation was ideal for the construction of a large-scale tourism infrastructure.

Initially the expansion of tourism in Maspalomas-Playa del Inglés had already begun to draw a substantial portion of the agrarian and fishing workforce into wage relations in construction and tourism. However, it was not long before the metropolitan capitalist classes who had acquired many of the flat enclaves of land along the coast of Mogán during the 1940s and 1950s, began to exploit the touristic potential of this area. Although there was little contact or cooperation between the different clusters of local and absentee landowners in Mogán, nor was their room to draw up plans on the scale witnessed in Maspalomas-Playa del Inglés, the expansion of construction along the coast of San Bartolomé in the early 1960s precipitated capital investment into the development of large-scale tourism complexes in Mogán. Agro-export companies which had previously syphoned off agricultural surpluses from this area during the previous export boom, thus became instruments of property speculation for the metropolitan bourgeoisie almost overnight. Despite warnings regarding the potential ill-effects of tourism development on the environment due to the lack of adequate planning regulations (Suárez Moreno 1997: 229), in 1965 the coast of Mogán was declared a *Centro de Intérés Turístico Nacional* by the Spanish Minister of Tourism, a state policy to encourage tourism by granting credits and tax exemptions to investors (*La Provincia* 21/5/95). The largest of these, the resort of Puerto Rico, for which the construction of 30,000 beds over 200 hectares was approved in 1967, was created out of the sale of 563 hectares of land to further metropolitan investors from the region, who also developed the neighbouring tourism *urbanizaciones* of Cornisa del Suroeste (approved in 1969). Several smaller concentrations of tourism complexes were built in Playa de Tauro (approved in 1971), Playa del Cura (approved in 1972) and Taurito (approved in 1973) during the 1970s (see Figure 8.1). The latter lies closest to Playa de Mogán and unlike the other enclaves, was developed with the capital of the British agro-export company (*L.H. Pilcher S.L.*) which had been instrumental in the introduction of tomato cultivation in this particular enclave and across the south from the late 1920s onwards (*La Provincia* 18/1/69).

Given the criticisms which had begun to emerge concerning the excessive concentration of urban tourism developments in Maspalomas-Costa Canaria, the promoters of Puerto Rico claimed that it would be an exemplary form of tourism development based on 'quality' and superior planning practices (Gaviria 1974: 302). It was to be modelled around a series of parks, a central precinct of shops, bars and cafes around which accommodation facilities would span outwards towards the valley sides and down towards an artificial beach and marina. However, much as before, these early intentions (whether genuine or not) were largely overcome by commercial expediency in the manner which had blighted Maspalomas-Playa del Inglés, which led to it being dubbed as an environmental catastrophe by the late celebrated artist and environmentalist César Manrique (Smettan 1990: 47). Although the originally intended capacity has not been reached (only 20-22,000 bed spaces have been built), due to periods of economic recession in the major markets at the beginning and end of the 1980s, the extent of environmental destruction is clear to see. The most striking aspect of this *urbanización* is that the accommodation infrastructure has saturated not only the valley floor, but the walls too and in some cases are spread over the summit of the steep



mountain ridges. Moreover, the beach is too small to accommodate the number of tourists and the commercial precinct grew to double the size originally intended (Smettan 1990: 47).

Over the course of the the last three decades the coastline of Mogán has thus been transformed from a series of banana and tomato export enclaves to a series of large urban tourist complexes concentrated at the mouth of each valley. They are mostly built by local or Spanish construction companies with capital put up by anonymous companies, behind which lie a web of commercial investors, who dictate the sale and leasing of space for apartments, hotels and commercial centres to international tour operators, as well as independent entrepreneurs comprised of a mixture of Canary Island, Spanish and foreign interests. Construction would also have gone ahead further to the west, where permission had been granted for the development of 92 hectares in Playa de Mogán in 1974, and 1862 hectares in Veneguera in 1977, bringing the total number of bed spaces in Mogán to 149,000! However a combination of unfavourable macro-economic circumstances triggered by the energy crisis in 1973 and later at the end of the 1980s, and the growing criticisms of unchecked development linked to municipal corruption throughout the 1980s in particular, put a hold on construction for many years, which has left the skeleton of half constructed hotels and empty streets which lead to nowhere, dotted along the coastline (see Chapter Ten: *Tourism, Politics and the Contours of Dissent*). According to Machado Carrillo the municipality of Mogán contained 38,507 bed spaces at the beginning of the decade (1990: 92). By 1994, an ex-councillor for tourism suggested that there were 40,000 legal and 10,000 'illegal' bed spaces in Mogán (*La Provincia* 14/4/94). The figures specified by Suárez Moreno (1997: 231) would appear to confirm this estimate; he claims that the accommodation capacity of Mogán was equal to 47,000, and distributed amongst the tourism enclaves as follows: 1,013 in (Playa) Puerto de Mogán; 2,420 in Taurito; 2,500 in Playa del Cura and Tauro; 22,000 in Puerto Rico; 19,067 in Patalavaca-Cornisa del Suroeste-Arguineguín. However a more recent survey by the Canary Island Statistics Institute, Istac (1996a: 19), suggests that the figure is nearer 28,000, equivalent to 22% of Gran Canaria's bed capacity. The rate of (often illegal) construction and the existence of a significant volume of unregistered accommodation facilities in tourism areas, makes it exceedingly difficult to monitor bed capacity to a high degree of accuracy. Thus we can only take this figures as an approximate guide, although they do give an indication of the intensity of tourism development in this area.

To date, approximately 20% of the initial bed capacity (149,000) envisaged in the *Normas Subsidiarias* passed by the municipal government of Mogán in the 1987, has been completed.<sup>1</sup> Moreover only 20% of the remaining 80% has since been completed or partially completed (Cabildo Insular 1992a). These areas include the development of a hotel in Taurito, where the total planned capacity is 17,000 although some developments are still suspended since the declaration of a ban on further construction by the island council, 4,500 more bed spaces in Cornisa del Suroeste and the near completion of the artificial beach and urbanization of Playa de Amadores, approved in 1969, and which is being promoted by the same metropolitan capitalist interests who control both Puerto Rico and Cornisa del Suroeste. Nevertheless pressure to continue developing tourism infrastructure has recently resurfaced again after the recession of the late 1980s, thanks to the intense lobbying by pro-construction interests in the municipal



government, and the bouyant economic climate of the 1990s. However, the most significant recent development in the expansion of Mogán's touristic offer, has been the decision to develop a particular niche in time-share, which in the words of the marketing director of Mogán's newest and most prestigious time-share development, will offer both "*quality of product and quality of clientele*" (*La Provincia* 24/5/95). Time-share companies have however been accused of being involved in fraudulent business activities, and the harrassment of tourists by vendors (see Díaz 1997: 169-172). Indeed the latter accusation has been borne out in Playa de Mogán where time-share vendors are no longer allowed into the village but must stay in the marina itself. Nevertheless both the municipal authorities and the time-share company referred to above argue that it will can guarantee occupancy rates of up to 80% and 1,000 full-time jobs (*La Provincia* 24/5/98).

The rapid and often poorly regulated development of tourism in Mogán has also thrust its small but vocal municipal government into direct confrontation with the planning authorities in the *Cabildo Insular* and in the regional government (*Gobierno Autónomo*), a conflict which has yet to be resolved (see Chapter Ten: *Tourism, Politics and the Contours of Dissent*). Since 1995 the regional authorities have been attempting to implement the proposals outlined in a strategic insular plan for territorial regulation, the PIOT (*Plan Insular de Ordenación del Territorio*), but have been fiercely resisted by the municipal authorities in Mogán, who claim that it violates key areas of municipal sovereignty in relation to planning (*La Provincia* 17/1/98; see also footnote 1). The obligation on the *Cabildos* to elaborate a PIOT was stipulated in the *Ley de Planes Insulares de la Comunidad Autónoma de Canarias* (Canary Island Law of Insular Plans), ratified by the Canary Island parliament in 1987, and represents the most advanced planning document to have been elaborated in Gran Canaria to date. Significantly, the PIOT attempts to go beyond mere land use planning and begins to outline the parameters of long-term strategic development proposals geared towards the creation of a specific mode of (high quality) tourism development (*Cabildo Insular* 1992b). However, despite explicit statements within the PIOT to the effect that it does not constitute a threat to the planning powers of municipal government, a number of proposals within it have arguably done just that, which has led the latter to boycott the PIOT a little over two months after it had been approved (*La Provincia* 28/5/95).<sup>2</sup>

What most concerns the municipal authorities in Mogán is the fact that the PIOT has declassified one-third of the potential bed spaces (comprising 515 hectares) earmarked for tourism development in Mogán by the *Normas Subsidiarias*, thus reducing the potential capacity from 99,218 to 34,249 bed spaces (*Cabildo Insular* 1992a). Arguably the most radical changes have been felt in the suspension of proposed construction of an integrated luxury tourism complex in Veneguera. The entire valley of Veneguera once belonged to the estate of the 19th century landowner mentioned above. It was later passed down to his heirs who managed the lucrative agricultural export business here until 1947, at which time the estate was gradually bought up by a number of metropolitan investors from Las Palmas, who with the benefit of state subsidies continued the export of agricultural crops until the early 1960s (Suárez Moreno 1997: 197-198). In 1964 the various commercial interests which controlled the land and agricultural resources of Veneguera became incorporated under the umbrella of one company, which however went into



receivership during the 1970s as a result of the economic downturn, with the result that the ownership of this territory has been passed through the hands of a variety of large-scale corporate concerns since then (*Costa Canaria de Veneguera S. A.*, no date). More significantly, in 1977 permission was granted for the construction of 80,000 bed spaces (other sources suggest it was originally 120 000) over an area of 1862 hectares. However, the economic downturn and a sustained campaign by environmental campaigners (*Salvar Veneguera*) led to the originally proposed capacity to be reduced down to 20,000, and then finally to a maximum of 16,000 bed spaces (*La Provincia* 15/1/98). The incorporation of part of the valley into an area protected under the Law of Natural Spaces (*Ley de Espacios Naturales de Canarias*) passed in 1987 by the regional government prohibits any development in this area, and a further 300 hectares has been declared as provisional rural land, which leaves a total of 200 hectares now available for development (*Costa Canaria de Veneguera S. A.*, no date).

The predominant focus of economic activity in Mogán has therefore switched from the agriculture and fishing sectors to a growing dependence on the service sector, in which tourism is predominant. The accommodation and restaurant sector alone generates 10,000 million pesetas in gross income for the municipal economy, which constitutes 42.3% of municipal revenue. If all other direct and indirect effects of touristic activity are aggregated this figure would rise to nearly 80%. These activities alone employ 44.9% per cent of the working population compared to only 5% in agriculture and 4.7% in fishing (Istac 1995). Nevertheless it is clear that fishing still employs an important segment of the working population when compared to San Bartolomé where less than 0.5% of the working population are involved in fishing. The only other comparable figure exists for the municipality of Agaete (4.7%) in the north-west, where there is still an important fishing community centred around the port of Puerto de las Nieves. The importance of fishing to the material reproduction of family economic units in Mogán is however far greater than suggested by the figure, if we consider that for every person registered as employed in the fishing sector there will be a number of family members dependent on this source of income. Moreover the figures cannot demonstrate the degree of occupational pluralism that exists; an individual member of a particular household may be working in more than one sector at any one time. A study published by the regional government in 1990 states that the total working population in Mogán is relatively low (25.6%) compared to other municipalities, due to the fact that few women or young people are engaged in waged employment (Smettan 1990: 46). This 'fact' however ignores the social nature of work and organisation of tourism production which is not easily classified or measured statistically, and the unreliability of official employment statistics.

### *Tourism, Occupational Change and Social Mobility*

One of the most significant effects of the rapid expansion of tourism from 1960 onwards, was to stem the periodic waves of emigration during periods of structural crises in the mono-crop export sector. After the crash of 1929, which was followed shortly afterwards by the Civil War, emigration to South America once again began to intensify after the period of economic growth between 1895-1910 (Macías Hernández 1992: 151). A combination of political oppression and the the inability of a depressed agricultural sector



to absorb an expanding rural workforce led to an outflow of 15,213 inhabitants in the period 1941-50, which rose to a 22,926 in 1951-60, despite state restrictions on emigration. Emigration peaked at 41,018 in 1961-70 before the development of tourism dramatically reversed this decline, to the extent that the Canary Islands had become a net recipient of immigrants, receiving 87,186 during the period 1971-80 (Gran Canaria registered a net immigration of 61,435), after a long history characterised by emigration and migrant remittances (Maciás Hernández 1992: 178). Thus both San Bartolomé de Tirajana and Mogán were transformed into the fastest growing municipalities in Gran Canaria. Mogán experienced a 67% increase in its immigrant population during the period 1981-85, which reflected the later shift of tourism activity towards this area after the initial phase of development had begun in San Bartolomé (Istac 1993). Although detailed figures regarding the social and ethnic composition of this immigration are hard to come by, in 1966 over half of all immigrants were from the northern industrial countries, in particular Britain, Germany and Scandinavia, rising to 61% ten years later (Alvarez 1980a: 306).

Due to the nature of the steep topography in Mogán, the tourism complexes built along this section of the southern coastline were concentrated in clusters rather than an unbroken urban sprawl, some of them in areas of very little or no prior habitation. Arguineguín, which lies approximately 12 kilometres to the east of Playa de Mogán (see Figure 8.1), is the only other significant concentration of population along this particular stretch of coastline to predate tourism development, although there were also scattered settlements of sharecroppers and plantation workers as well as some fishing inhabitants, in Playa de Veneguera, Playa de Tauro and Puerto Rico. The decline in the export of agricultural crops in the late 1960s, and the demand for labour created by the development of tourism, and in particular construction, exerted a powerful pull on many of the young, male members of the population from the settlements in Mogán. As a result of fewer restrictions of space and the proximity of Arguineguín to the extensive tomato plantations of San Bartolomé de Tirajana and later, the tourism conurbations of Maspalomas-Playa del Inglés and Puerto Rico, it became a dormitory town for workers and home to resident foreigners, thus leading to a more rapid population growth and contrast in the pattern of socio-economic development than that experienced in Playa de Mogán (see Santana Talavera 1990a: 79-80). Between 1960 and 1970 the population of Arguineguín grew at a much faster rate during this period than that of Playa de Mogán and other villages in the western half of the municipality. Villages such as Playa de Veneguera, which had been in the midst of the agricultural plantations, experienced a rapid decline in population as inhabitants moved eastwards in search of employment. As a result of the pull exerted on its labour force, Mogán experienced a relative decline in its population during the 1960s, which fell from 5,357 in 1960 to 4,919 in 1970, whilst that of San Bartolomé rose at a rate of 0.14%, from 12,406 to 12,581 (Cabildo Insular 1986: cuadro 1). However by 1970 the initiation of development in Patalavaca, Cornisa del Suroeste and Puerto Rico were key factors in the rise in Mogán's population by 3.6% per year between 1970-1975, whilst that of San Bartolomé continued to rise at a slightly lower rate of 3.4% (Alvarez 1980a: 63). Nevertheless, the superior concentration of tourism infrastructure in San Bartolomé compared to Mogán is also reflected in its population, which at 35,423 permanent residents is over three times greater than the 10,398 permanent inhabitants of Mogán (Istac 1997a).



Once tourism development began to expand along Mogán's coastline the increase in the demand for labour expanded employment opportunities and as a result precipitated the social advancement of both young men and women, despite the lack of training and education, based on *inter-sectoral* mobility.<sup>3</sup> This intensified their contact with the cash nexus in a modern capitalistic sector on a more regular basis, and was often their first experience with working practices beyond the agrarian and fishing sectors. Men were able to find work in construction and in basic maintenance work, and as security guards, to the extent that there were signs stretching along the coastal highway advertising employment for able-bodied labour particularly younger men who had not yet taken up fishing 'full-time' (Santana Talavera 1990b: 28). Many of the men also found work building the coast road itself for a favourable wage of 1000 pesetas/month. Despite the improvement of employment opportunities, the rapid transformation of Mogán from an agrarian society to a modern service economy initially led to similar patterns of social exclusion experienced in Maspalomas-Playa del Inglés (see Chapter Seven: *Tourism Employment and Social Exclusion*). In 1955 an estimated 100 families (500 persons) were living in slum dwellings made out of wood, sacks and pieces of zinc (*chabolas*) in the village of Arguineguín (Suárez Moreno 1997: 213-214). More recently, in the early 1990s up to 27% and 39.5% of the populations of Santa Lucía and Mogán respectively were still living in poverty. Both are also amongst the municipalities with the lowest level of educational achievement on the island (EDIS 1991: 67)

Pronounced changes were also taking place in the gendered division of labour which reflected the changing roles and social experiences of women in the region as a whole and in a wider context. Between 1940 and 1975 the proportion of women for the Canary Islands as a whole absorbed into wage-work, rose from 6.1% to 11.1% (Martín Ruíz 1981: 116). Once hotels and apartments began to open, employment opportunities for women, predominantly as cleaning staff, exerted a pull on the young women of Playa de Mogán and other nearby villages. The demand for female labour thus provided an opportunity, albeit limited, for the social advancement of young women in particular, enabling them to enter a sphere of employment where there was little competition from men. Moreover it expanded the range and variety of social and economic relations outside the home and the village, a pattern noted in other studies of tourism and gender noted earlier (see Chapter Three: *Tourism, Gender and the Commodification of Household Labour*). An independent source of income facilitated the ability of women to move beyond the 'boundaries' of the village and the watchful gaze of mothers, fathers, husbands and brothers. Although the movement of some segments of the village population into wage-work in construction and tourism signalled the beginnings of significant changes in the structure of the social formation in Playa de Mogán, in particular as a result of changing work patterns and increased social mobility amongst young men and women (Santana Talavera 1990b: 31), it did not result in the emergence of a significant proletarian labour force in Playa de Mogán. Nor did it transform the continued predominance of hierarchically-ordered social relations through which most inhabitants were connected to the world of non-wage labour in the non-capitalist forms of economic production. Furthermore the range and extent of social mobility experienced by all but a few women, was still structured to a large extent by the patriarchal dictates of domestic labour in the household. Moreover those who found work as cleaning staff in hotels and apartments were now increasingly subordinated to capitalist relations of wage-work.



These factors, which relate to the specificity of the social formation in Playa de Mogán into which tourism was introduced in the 1960s, are therefore crucial parts of the analysis of the emergence of local responses to tourism and entrepreneurial agency in the village itself. It is clear therefore that generalisations regarding the nature of tourism development across the south of Gran Canaria, can present an incomplete picture of the dynamics of touristification which ignore a variety of historically contingent factors and the diversity of social structures that condition processes of tourism development. The remainder of this chapter will now focus its attention on the local patterns of touristification which emerged in the village of Playa de Mogán. It develops an analysis based on ethnographic data collected during several periods of fieldwork in order to look beyond the veneer of 'concrete structures' or immutable categories of social change and uncover the different strategies and organisation of entrepreneurial response to tourism by different segments of the population of Playa de Mogán.

## **9.2 Peasants, Fishermen and Hippies: The Origins of Tourism Entrepreneurship in Playa de Mogán**

### *The 'Discovery' and Emergence of a Tourist Resort*

Far from being an isolated community cut-off from the 'outside' world, the social organisation of Playa de Mogán can be understood in relation to wider trading networks and changing social structures linked to the historical development of capitalism in Gran Canaria. By the time the the early trickle of foreign visitors started to arrive, the locality they encountered was one which had been mediated by the uneven dynamics of peripheral capitalist development. Prior to tourism the population of Mogán had subsisted through work in pastoralism, subsistence agriculture, plantation agriculture for export, fishing and other general labouring activities. The social organisation of Playa de Mogán was thus highly stratified and much of its population familiar with a life of hardship, a situation exacerbated by periods of poverty and famine. A lack of written historical evidence makes it difficult to be precise with regard to when the first foreign visitors began to arrive in Playa Mogán. However according to local accounts and what little documented evidence exists, there appear to have been few if any foreign visitors to this area prior to the 1960s, other than travelling merchants and representatives of the metropolitan agro-export companies. Despite attempts by the municipal authorities to restrict the activities of the former on the basis that they were detrimental to local economic concerns (often controlled by councillors and their families), itinerant traders and villagers from the interior who came to sell/exchange their agricultural produce, had been frequent visitors to the village since the early part of the century.

a pesar de esta prohibición, aún están viniendo los árabes a este pueblo [Mogán] a vender sus mercancías causando con ello perjuicios al comercio de este pueblo..<sup>4</sup>

For the most part they sold a variety of goods in both the village of Mogán and Playa Mogán, much like the present traders who continue to sell textiles, crafts etc. in a weekly market which is held in the village square (*plaza*) of Playa de Mogán, and has expanded considerably in recent years due to the expansion of tourism. In addition African workers were also brought in for the construction of the



*factorías* during the 1920s by the company which built and managed them (Santana Talavera 1990a: 64). Given the isolation of the area often they would stay for several days or weeks at a time, lodging with local families who were willing to put them up in their houses for little or no remuneration, or else they would camp out in the open. This gave rise to the first lodging facilities in Playa Mogán in a house in the *barrio pesquero* which today still sits at one end of the *plaza* (see Plate 9.1), and is the one remaining family-run general stores in the village today, of the type that was prevalent until very recently.

Oral accounts differ somewhat, but most locals suggest that the first ‘explorer-travellers’<sup>5</sup> began to arrive in Playa de Mogán between the late 1960s and the early 1970s, a claim supported by references to such visitors in council minutes from that period.<sup>6</sup> This was predominantly facilitated by the paving of the treacherous coastal track in the mid-1960s which had been extended from Arguineguín to Mogán in the 1930s by the tomato exporters, improving access to the area by private vehicles and a coastal bus service which was initiated in the late 1940s. The period from the 1960s onwards thus began to witness the emergence of a small number of locally-owned guest-houses and tourism enterprises run by individual households, which were to signal the beginning of a more profound transformation of the social organisation of Playa de Mogán. The first travellers to make the arduous journey (despite the opening of the paved road) to Playa de Mogán, are referred to locally as *los ipis* (hippies) in reference to their physical appearance and liberal attitudes towards sex and drugs.<sup>7</sup> It is hard to ascertain precisely to what extent these “*nomads from affluence*” to use Cohen’s (1973) phrase in an eponymously titled paper, were merely seeking temporary diversions from their home lifestyles or were more akin to the ‘flower children’ who took up permanent residence in Ibiza (Rozenberg 1995), and who rather than attempt to transform their home societies through social revolution, sought to escape repressive social norms and seek meaning in the life of others (see Cohen 1979a: 106).

Most probably the early visitors to Playa de Mogán were in search of ‘wild’ and ‘undiscovered’ places (cf. Zarkia 1996), long associated with southern European peasant communities, not least amongst the artistic and literary elite of the nineteenth century (Brettell 1986; Waldren 1996). Although their nationality and/or place of origin is uncertain (they are simply referred to as *los ipis*), a series of conversations with the owner of a local pension who came into contact with many of them (testified by the many fading photos on the wall inside), that most were German along with some Americans, Dutch and Scandinavians. Indeed Macleod (1997) suggests that there were a number of deserters from the Vietnam war amongst early visitors to La Gomera in the 1970s, a smaller and more inaccessible island south-west of Tenerife, who were attracted by its isolation and anonymity. No doubt the geographical isolation of Playa de Mogán enhanced the rustic appeal of this area for the early visitors. More significantly it also distanced them from the gaze of the Civil Guard or *Guardia Civil* - a quasi-military state police force who would periodically come to remove those whose visas had expired - and the moral conservatism of the Franco regime.<sup>8</sup>

Despite its rustic appeal, Playa de Mogán was never ‘colonised’ by a foreign resident community of the kind discussed by Waldren (1996) in Deia, mainly as a result of its isolation and comparatively recent





**Plate 9.1:** The main square (*plaza*) in Playa de Mogán. The older building behind the café-bar (centre-left) dates back to the beginning of the century and was one of the first lodging houses in the village. A newly constructed amusement arcade can be seen in the background between the older buildings. (Photo: R. Bianchi)



'discovery' by northern European travellers. Furthermore it was never 'sanctified' by the presence of eminent foreign aristocrats and intellectuals such as the Archduke Luis Salvador and Robert Graves who chose Deia as their home and intellectual inspiration in many ways thus acting as a magnet for further artists and intellectuals.<sup>9</sup> One exception was the arrival of *Lars* in the 1960s, a resident Danish painter and one of the first foreign visitors to arrive in Playa de Mogán.<sup>10</sup> After having lived in Mallorca for six years, in the mid-1960s *Lars* settled in a village on the leeward face of Gran Canaria before making the arduous journey south in 1968, after a violent storm had destroyed a studio and restaurant which he had set up there. Initially he developed few friendships with locals beyond one or two members of the local *cacique* family (from whom he rented his studio and accommodation), and an educated man from the village of Mogán, although he experienced no hostility from any of the villagers. Apart from the landowners and their descendents most villagers have had very little formal education and were bewildered as to why such a person would wish to come to their village for no other obvious reason other than to paint. The fact that it was not seen as a legitimate occupation in the eyes of locals accustomed to the rigours of *manual* work in the plantations or at sea, would also have contributed to the social isolation between himself and the villagers as did the customary deference to strangers in rural societies accustomed to the dominance of rural *caciques*. However nor did he engage in much social intercourse with the local *cacique* families, other than for the purposes of seeking a place to live and paint. He even suggests that there was little real difference between them and the rest of the inhabitants in terms of their "*cultural level*" to use his phrase. This does appear to further confirm the contrast between the local *cacique* families in Playa de Mogán and the more powerful absentee estate owners in San Bartolomé and elsewhere who as prominent members of the island's political and economic elites had received much formal education, and were often related to the island's intellectual and artistic establishment. Indeed even after three decades living in the village, having set up two art galleries and decorated a local restaurant, few locals have ever entered his gallery (which is prominently situated in the *plaza*) or bought a painting from him. As an 'outsider' and a metropolitan intellectual, his initial contact with villages was restricted largely to members of the landowning family off whom he rented one of the (by this time) disused packaging warehouses on the beach, which he used as a studio together with another Catalan painter who arrived later but soon left. During the early 1970s *Lars* abandoned this location and set up a studio-gallery in one of the oldest houses in the village situated in the *plaza*, where it still stands today. It is owned by a descendent of the earlier generation of landowners, and at that time was used by fishermen to store nets and other equipment. He was able to negotiate a cheap rent which he still enjoys today, despite the rapid rise in property prices since the construction of the marina. At that time, it appears that property speculation in the *barrio pesquero* was far less of a concern than was the value of the land in the estate which was to become a major focus of internecine conflict and speculative interest. He also suggested that few travellers remained or bought houses at the outset, due to the lack of basic amenities such as running water and electricity which only arrived in the 1970s. This suggests that few of the early visitors were in fact in search of alternative agrarian lifestyles or had much interest in learning the ways of the local inhabitants, but were rather akin to a more recreational type of tourist as for example encountered by Cohen (1982b) in southern Thailand.



Unlike the periodic misunderstandings which characterised the initial encounters between Skyrians and foreigners during the first years of tourism (Zarkia 1996: 166), and between Ibicencos and hippies who established themselves on somewhat larger a scale in Ibiza during the 1960s (Rozenberg 1995), social interaction between *los ipis* and the villagers are on the whole said to have been amicable. Indeed they are well regarded by locals in contrast to tourists today who are regarded as 'cheap' and 'ignorant', particularly those who arrive on day-trips from the large resorts and spend very little if anything in local bars, restaurants and shops. *Los ipis* were not regarded as a threat to local ways of life and in fact are often remembered with some nostalgia by locals who associate them with a more harmonious period of tourism prior to the construction of the marina, which allegedly benefitted them to a greater extent.<sup>11</sup> Some justified this claim by suggesting that *los ipis* used to spend more in local bars than do the current generation of visitors (there was of course less competition in those days and thus fewer places in which to spend their money). It is therefore implicit that *los ipis* were instrumental in precipitating new economic opportunities for those amongst the poorer strata in Playa de Mogán, and thus decreasing their dependence on the arduous work at sea or in the banana and tomato plantations (and thus by implication, submission to the authority of the local *cacique* family). They would usually spend the evening drinking and smoking marijuana together with local men in one of the few bars which existed at that time, after which they would find an available space to to sleep rough or camp for the night in the open space around the *plaza* (this has subsequently been occupied by commercial enterprise and housing). One of the earliest of these spaces, according to most accounts, was situated in one of the narrow alley ways which lead off the *plaza*, essentially a general store serving few items, including rum, 'hot coca-cola' (so-called due to the lack of refrigeration facilities), sardines in oil and bananas.

Cultural embarrassment, or at worst clashes between *los ipis* and locals, was avoided by the fact that they would swim and sunbathe in the nude on the sandier beach in the neighbouring valley of Taurito to the east, which at that time was uninhabited and occupied only by an estate which belonged to an absentee landowner. It should be noted also that prior to the arrival of tourists, it was not unusual for local women to strip down to their underwear and swim in the sea. Positive recollections of *los ipis* was further demonstrated by an anecdote recounted by one local inhabitant in his 60s who was one of the first entrepreneurs to open accommodation and restaurant facilities for tourists in the 1960s (see below). He spoke of two journalists who arrived in Playa de Mogán during this period in search of a controversial story on the subject of *los ipis* and their promiscuity, which was of course an affront to the rigid moral climate of Franco's Spain. As far as he was concerned they were welcome in Playa de Mogán and was unperturbed by their liberal attitudes. This was perhaps the result of the generally more lax social climate and thus relaxed attitude to such 'vices' characteristic of fishing communities - whose inhabitants, as suggested earlier, have a well-earned reputation for drinking and partying - in contrast to the more regulated social behaviour of agrarian villages in the interior. More importantly it reflects an almost universal recognition of the social mobility precipitated by the economic opportunities which had arisen as a result of these long-haired visitors. According to oral accounts by male inhabitants, many of the menfolk in Playa de Mogán had also been accustomed to visiting brothels in Las Palmas on a regular



basis and thus enjoyed the company of these liberal-minded yet untroublesome visitors. Moreover it was also one of the first occasions that many of the men had been in such close proximity to foreign women.

The geographic distance and social isolation of Playa de Mogán from the island's socio-political 'epicentre' in the north-east, cannot however be reduced to a function of geography. Its peripheral socio-economic status has been accentuated over the course of the 19th and 20th centuries by the uneven development of peripheral capitalism (see Chapter Eight), the consequences of which has been to subject the peasant inhabitants of Mogán to an arduous life of semi-subsistence and the categorisation of its inhabitants as culturally marginal by urban elites who have traditionally regarded this part of the island as 'primitive' and 'uncivilised'.<sup>12</sup> Once asked by friends in Las Palmas during the height of the agro-export economy in the south-west, why an educated man like himself continued to live in such an isolated and backward place as Mogán when he had houses in Las Palmas, a prominent landowner from Veneguera replied that down here he had all that he could possibly need in the way of wealth and luxury.<sup>13</sup> Furthermore there was little challenge by other dominant classes to the monopoly on local economic and political life exercised by the local *cacique* families in Mogán. A local anecdote serves to illustrate the underlying subtleties which transcend simple dualisms regarding central/marginal societies; prior to the development of the marina, locals would reply to the imperious suggestion that "*Playa de Mogán está en el culo del mundo*", with the retort, "*¡aquí llega el correo antes que a San Mateo!*",<sup>14</sup> in reference to the fact that communication by sea was in fact far more efficient than by mule, the means of transport by which goods etc. were carried from Las Palmas into the interior and upland regions.

In summary, it would be inaccurate to speak of a clash of cultures between villagers and the arrival of 'outsiders' in the late 1960s. Rather, *los ipis* were able to interact with certain (male) segments of the village relatively free from harassment or surveillance by the authorities in a way that would have perhaps been more difficult elsewhere. Furthermore the fact that Playa de Mogán and its environs became the focus of attention for these northern 'explorer-travellers', has been a significant factor in enabling locals to reassert their own sense of identity in the face of condescending villagers from the interior (who have since begun to migrate regularly to the village in search of tourism-related work as agriculture has declined) and the urban middle-classes from the island's principal centres of population, for whom Playa (Puerto) de Mogán has become a desirable place for a week-end break (see Chapter Ten: *The Cultural Ideology of Tourism and Conceptions of Space*). It is important then to see the arrival of the first visitors (*los ipis*) and later independent 'explorer-type' tourists, in conjunction with the broader structural changes taking place at this time in the peripheral capitalist formation, and the subsequent expansion of the geographical and economic nexus of tourism production into the agrarian and fishing communities on the leeward face of the island. Together these changes were significant for the initiation of a moderate degree of social advancement for many villagers, particularly amongst the lower socio-economic strata in the community who previously had access to few opportunities to escape the drudgery of agricultural labour, or a more prosperous yet still arduous life in the artisanal fishing sector. By the early 1970s both the steady influx of these early visitors and the increase in demand for labour in the nearby expanding tourism resort areas, created the economic and social conditions which were to facilitate a number of



entrepreneurial responses amongst certain segments of the village, and thus set in motion significant structural changes in local productive systems and social (re)alignments in Playa de Mogán.

### *Peasant Entrepreneurs and the Informal Appropriation of Tourism Resources*

Prior to the arrival of the first foreign visitors in the late 1960s and early 1970s, the extent of local commercial enterprise (excluding agriculture and fishing-related activities) was limited to a number of small grocery stores which sold a limited range of basic goods to locals. These stores also doubled as bars and served as the principal social spaces in which local men would congregate to drink and discuss the issues of the day. It was thus inevitable that they would also become the site of initial encounters between *los ipis* and locals. The improvement of the coastal road after the Second World War, principally to serve the needs of the agro-export plantations, improved communications with nearby villages and urban areas and thus led to a moderate expansion of enterprises. Principally, it enabled local shop-keepers to make weekly trips to Telde or Las Palmas in order to purchase necessary stock, and also precipitated a moderate influx of entrepreneurs from other parts of the island who set up small shops in the village, often marrying local inhabitants. One of these early general stores was situated adjacent to the *factorías* on the waterfront, and was run by a plantation foreman originally from a village on the north of the island, but who had married the daughter of a local *cacique* family and relative of the local mayor. Around this time also (from late 1940s to 1950s) the early lodging facilities mentioned earlier, situated in the *plaza*, were converted into a shop by an individual of north African origin after the original owners had migrated to South America during the years of hardship immediately after the Civil War. By the time foreign visitors began to arrive in the early 1960s there were around half a dozen of these small family-run stores and little else in the form of commercial enterprise.

The expansion of mass tourism in nearby coastal enclaves such as Puerto Rico was an important factor which led to the upgrading of the coastal road to Playa de Mogán in the mid-1960s, and therefore precipitated an increase in the number of foreign visitors to the village, whose presence over extended periods of time was to provide the stimulus for the expansion of tourism-related enterprise owned and run by local inhabitants. The arrival of *los ipis* in the village itself not only brought many residents into face-to-face contact with foreign 'explorer-travellers' for the first time, but also began to signal a change in the structure of the local economy through the commodification of resources previously outside the circuits of economic exchange, in particular lodging facilities. Given the need to seek food and shelter the early visitors were more likely to come into contact with fishing families and other peasant inhabitants in the dense cluster of housing of the *barrio pesquero* rather than the local *cacique* families, notwithstanding the comments made by *Lars* the painter regarding the fact that he found it difficult to socialise with inhabitants of the *barrio pesquero* due to the substantial differences in education and cultural background. Hence the initial focus of tourism consumption and social encounters between *los ipis* and locals (predominantly men) took place within the shared social spaces of the small grocery store-bars. These were able to increase their turnover through the provision of a regular yet limited range of basic foodstuffs



and drink to tourists who would continue to camp out in the open or else find lodgings in some of the early rooms for rent or fledgling accommodation establishments (*pensiones*)

During the early flourishing of tourism enterprise, a number of locals without access to the capital to rent premises set up small kiosks in the *plaza* which sold food and drink to locals and tourists alike. One such enterprise was set up in the 1960s by a migrant from nearby San Bartolomé de Tirajana, followed later by a local resident, whose experience is illustrative of many who were neither landowners, farmers or fishermen and thus had little capital with which to invest in larger facilities. Like many of the elderly residents he and his family have earned a living via a number of manual jobs prior to tourism, including work as a general labourer, a crew member on fishing boats and more recently as a smallholder cultivating aubergines. As a result of the increasing volume of tourism development in the village since the mid-1970s he and his family have since been able to sustain a modest living running a small ice cream stand which now sits permanently near the entrance to the marina, whilst their children continue to take up seasonal jobs in cleaning and cooking in the larger hotels in adjacent resorts.

The changing fortunes of inhabitants from amongst the lower socio-economic strata in the village (more on this below) is clearly demonstrated in the case of the first establishments to offer accommodation to foreign visitors on a regular basis in the mid-1960s (*Pension Santiago*), which is still one of the most popular pensions in the village today. Originally from Veneguera and Tasarte to the west, the owners of this establishment arrived in Playa de Mogán as young children with their parents during the late 1930s. Like many other families at this time they had come here in search of work during the period of rural hardship following the Civil and Second World War. The relative prosperity offered by fishing and wage-work in the banana and tomato plantations provided the inhabitants with a marginally higher standard of living than could be found elsewhere. After having worked for a period of approximately 10-15 years in a combination of labouring jobs and plantation work, the male head of household *Santiago*, began to run a small grocery store-bar of the kind referred to above, in a rented premises in the *barrio pesquero*. Over the same period of time his wife continued to work in the plantation but soon afterwards during the mid-1960s began to rent out rooms in their house to the few foreign visitors who began to arrive on a regular basis. At first the visitors were confined to one room and would eat together with the rest of the family. Increasing income from both the shop and this early pension, enabled them to build a second storey which then became the family home, whilst the entire ground floor became given over to tourists. During the mid-1970s their three children began to leave the family household in order to continue their education in Las Palmas. They subsequently converted a further three rooms for rent and built additional kitchen and bathroom facilities for the visitors. Finally in 1975, permission was granted to build a further storey on top of the family home, comprising four separate rooms, two kitchenettes and two bathrooms, on top of which there is a roof terrace.

In the meantime, encouraged by the increasingly regular flow of visitors to the village, *Santiago* was now running a shop in the *plaza* itself. A couple of years later, he was then able to pool the resources from this and the pension together with a small bank loan, in order to purchase one of the empty



banana/tomato packaging warehouses from a local landowner, in which he was to open the first bar-restaurant in the village in 1969. Thus while his wife increasingly dedicated herself to the management of the pension, a task which could be performed at the same time as other domestic duties, *Santiago* devoted himself to the running of the bar-restaurant. Also, during this period of time, *Santiago* and one or two others who had begun to develop similar ventures such as the owner of the beach bar mentioned earlier, were becomingly increasingly familiar with the needs and desires of foreign visitors, with whom they had regular contact. In a few cases, enterprising locals such as *Santiago* also began to act as intermediaries for a small number of foreign visitors, who over the course of the 1970s began to purchase local properties vacated by departing families, in exchange for a commission. In this respect they acted as 'culture brokers' who not only mediated between the internal culture of the village and that of the visitors, but also supplied valuable services in exchange for a fee (cf. Boissevain 1974; Cohen 1982c: 246). This not only gave them additional status as it did for similar peasant intermediaries in Deia (cf. Waldren 1996), but it also provided a valuable source of 'seed' capital which was then channelled into the establishment of the first accommodation and eating facilities for tourists.

This role signalled the increasing significance of outside involvement in the changing structure of the local economy which was rapidly becoming driven by tourism by the end of the 1970s. Thus during the early 1970s the first tourism enterprise managed by a foreign national was set up by *Lars* together with another recent arrival, an Italian chef married to an islander. This particular establishment was highly significant given that it was run by outsiders far more attuned to the needs and desires of the village's temporary population of *ipis* and tourists. Furthermore like *Santiago's* bar-restaurant (*Bar Santiago*) which stands opposite, it was also situated in a refurbished banana/tomato warehouse owned by the local *cacique* family who were by now beginning to see the profits to be made from selling and/or renting out these abandoned buildings (see Figure 10.1, Appendix V). Previously there had been a couple of small shops in this area run by women from landowning families, however the conversion of unproductive warehouses into tourism-related enterprises represented a fundamental change in the relationship of locals to the use of space in the village, and reflected the growing consolidation of a tourism enterprise economy initiated by residents of the *barrio pesquero*. The shift of socio-economic activity towards this area thus provided a powerful impulse in the breaking-down of the social differentials between the inhabitants of the *barrio pesquero* and the residences of local *cacique* families in the agricultural estate. Although landowners were able to benefit from the income provided by the sale or leasing of these premises, they were no longer in a position of impregnable authority as they were increasingly becoming implicated in contractual relationships with a minority of residents from the *barrio pesquero* in the context of a growing service economy centred around these tourism establishments.

During the 1970s the success of these establishments encouraged several others local inhabitants to seize the opportunities offered by tourism. Two of these in particular (they will be known here as *Alberto* and *Enrique*) were both from fishing backgrounds but saw little future in this sector despite the increasing productivity of fishing in the 1970s (Santana Talavera 1990a: 75). Both of them emphasised that they had opted not to pursue fishing due to the fact that tourism appeared to offer a regular income and was a



far less arduous way of making living. Like *Santiago*, *Alberto*'s family had also migrated the short distance from Veneguera to Playa de Mogán in the 1930s, whereupon his father took up fishing, a livelihood to which he remained committed for the next 50 years (until the mid-1980s), while his mother and older sister worked in the plantations. Although some of his brothers also took up fishing, only one member of his family (brother-in-law) continues to fish, while his father has since retired and helps him manage his bar-restaurant which opened in 1977. Prior to this *Alberto* had taken up a variety of jobs in agriculture, construction and tourism, before taking over the running of the small general store on the waterfront (see above). He too had soon accumulated a small amount of capital with which to convert these premises into what was to become the third tourism-related bar-restaurant in the village. Indeed, both he and *Enrique*, the son of a fisherman who in 1983 opened what was to become the fourth bar-restaurant in the village on the premises previously occupied by *Santiago*'s second store in the *plaza*, were part of the first generation of locals to work as waiters in the newly built hotels which opened in Mogán during the late 1960s. In a similar manner to *Santiago*, their early contact with tourism, albeit as workers, enabled them to accumulate a small amount of capital, in some cases used as collateral for further small bank loans, which coupled with the relatively low cost of premises enabled them to establish themselves as tourism entrepreneurs at an early stage in the development of the village as a tourism resort.

The first fully-fledged bar, as opposed to either a shop or a bar-restaurant, to open in the village did so in the early 1970s. It was situated in a make-shift shack on an unoccupied plot of beachfront land between the *barrio pesquero* and the landowners' houses, close to the spot where fishermen moored their boats prior to the construction of the marina (see Plate 8.2). It was set up by a local originally from the nearby valley of Tauro, who will be referred to as *Benito*, who had previously worked in a number of labouring jobs prior to and during his time running this establishment. As it was the only enterprise of its kind, before long this bar became one of the main focal points for encounters between locals and *los ipis* during the 1970s. However, during the early 1980s the increase in the potential economic value of this beachfront parcel due to tourism, led to his eviction by adjacent landowners and business interests, who subsequently enclosed the plot with a concrete wall. Previously his informal-type business had been 'tolerated' by the landowners, however the increasing scale of tourism development in the village, triggered further by the beginning of construction on the marina in the early 1980s, precipitated a growing interest amongst this segment of the population who had yet to become greatly involved in local tourism development, to exploit the commercial potential of such a prominent beachfront location.<sup>15</sup> It was also one of the few establishments run by a member of the non-landowning classes to be situated outside the *barrio pesquero* itself, and thus signalled the changing socioeconomic status of individuals and families from amongst the lower social strata in the village. *Benito* did not legally own the land upon which it was situated, hence there was little he could do to prevent his ejection. Furthermore this informal enterprise had opened at a time when there were few checks by the local authorities on licences.<sup>16</sup> As a result he was forced to relocate his activities to Lomo Quiebre, a cluster of housing approximately one kilometre inland (see Plate 8.4). Other members of peasant households were also beginning to be 'displaced' to the neighbourhood of Lomo Quiebre during the 1970s, due to the absence



of affordable land and housing in the *barrio pesquero*, and on the valley floor itself given that it is in the hands of numerous landholding interests.

### *From Past to Present: The Consolidation of a Tourism Enterprise Economy*

By the end of the 1970s there had been little overall change in the patterns of entrepreneurial involvement in tourism in the village. The approximate number of tourism-related enterprises in the village was limited to one pension and a few other rooms for rent, around a dozen small shops and grocery stores (where drinks could also be bought) concentrated in the *barrio pesquero*, one bar and three bar-restaurants. During this period there was little demand for more facilities given that most visitors found accommodation in the only existing pension or in one of several clandestine rooms for rent in local houses. Alternatively many also continued to camp out in the open in vacant plots of land adjacent to the *plaza*. These early tourists could purchase locally-produced foodstuffs (*e.g.* bananas, sardines) and basic supplies from the locally-run stores as well as snacks and drinks from those which also doubled as bars, or from the small bar situated on the beach adjacent to the estate.

Crucial changes in the structure of the local economy began to take place by the late 1970s as the islands' tourism economy began to pick up again and construction on the marina began during the early 1980s. The consequent expansion in the scale and scope of tourism enterprise was manifest in an increasing number of local entrepreneurs who began to seize the opportunities to engage directly in the tourism economy, which reached a peak towards the end of the 1980s, the period during which the development of the marina transformed Playa de Mogán into a fully-fledged tourism resort. Council records concerning requests for permission to refurbish buildings, open tourism-related businesses and enlarge existing ones demonstrates that there was a flurry of business activity during the early 1980s.<sup>17</sup> It was during this time that *Enrique* took over the premises previously occupied by *Santiago's* shop in the *plaza*, and converted it into a bar-restaurant which opened in 1983 (which still stands today but has since passed on to various owners). He then went on to open the establishment he currently manages in the mid-1980s, which was the third bar-restaurant to be situated in a refurbished warehouse. A number of other tourism-related facilities were also inaugurated during this period including, a small cafe-bar in the *plaza* run by an inhabitant from the village of Mogán, a number of small shops and grocery stores, and the construction of apartments for rent.

During the first half of the 1980s the arrival of workers from the mainland who came to work on the construction of the marina, and the increase in tourism visitation due to the bouyant macro-economic environment across Europe, led to the opening of half a dozen new pensions in the neighbourhood known as Lomo Quiebre alone (see Plate 8.4). In most cases these began as simple rooms for rent which gradually expanded into pensions, as rooms were vacated by relatives who had left the village. The first two to open were operated by women whose families were the first to move to Lomo Quiebre in the late 1960s and early 1970s. One exception was a small pension opened by the incumbent mayor in 1981, situated in part of an attractive old house purchased from a landowning household adjacent to the banana



and tomato packaging warehouses. The lack of space in the *barrio pesquero* and subsequent concentration of housing and pensions in Lomo Quiebre, was exacerbated by competition for built capital from private individuals from 'outside' who were willing to pay prices beyond the means of most former peasant households, for homes which could be refurbished and made into attractive summer residences. The economic impulse of the marina and the 'beautification' of the *barrio pesquero* increasingly began to attract a different, more wealthy category of visitor from northern Europe, some of whom were also involved in the running of enterprise in the marina. Furthermore, the *Normas Subsidiarias* passed by the municipal council in 1987, were to later prevent any further construction in the *barrio pesquero* and therefore made it difficult for residents to build extensions and potentially convert their premises into lodgings (see Chapter Ten: *The Commodification of Space in the barrio pesquero*). Similar effects have been felt in the tourist town of Paláia Epidhavros in Greece where the imposition of zoning laws and design restrictions by the Greek government (in this case to protect "important archaeological sites" adjacent to the town as well as promote a "traditional style of architecture" inside the town) has inhibited the expansion of local homes and businesses (Williams and Papamichael 1995: 133-139). Significantly, few locally-owned pensions have opened in Playa de Mogán, although the number of private apartments for rent has increased (many of them unlicensed), since these regulations have come into effect and the opening of the marina. One of the few lodging facilities to have opened in recent years, are situated in a relatively modern house on the opposite flank of the valley facing the *barrio pesquero*, and are owned by an individual entrepreneur from Germany. Several other bars and restaurants opened in and around the *barrio pesquero* during this time, a small number of which continued to be owned and run by the same handful of peasant entrepreneurs who had emerged during the 1970s. The expansion of tourism-related businesses also reflected the growing influence of northern Europeans in the village, who were able to convert their limited financial resources but substantial cultural-educational capital into profitable tourism enterprises (cf. Macleod 1999).

Two more bar-restaurants situated in the area of converted warehouses were opened during the early to mid-1980s. However, in this case they were both run by and situated in dwellings owned by the wife of the incumbent mayor (who owned the pension cited above), who was a first generation descendent of the local *cacique* family, and who had also been instrumental in the eviction of the small bar proprietor referred to earlier. The first of the two establishments was granted permission to open in 1984 (it had initially been open for a brief period without a licence!), whilst the adjacent property was converted into a bar-restaurant towards the end of the decade. The former has subsequently become one of the most popular restaurants in the village due to its attractive architecture and beachfront location, and is one of the few locally-operated bar-restaurants which employs a relatively large number of cooking and waiting staff from amongst the village population due to its size and the nature of its ownership (see Chapter Eleven: *The Organization and Structure of Tourism Enterprise*). The management of both establishments has since passed on to two of their children, one of whom was elected as the municipal councillor for tourism in 1995. These changes are significant as not only did they constitute the conversion of landowners' property into enterprise specifically *for tourism*, but it also marked the entrance of landowning families into an economic sector as producers rather than merely speculators or rentier



capitalists. The growing involvement of this segment of the local population was also manifest in the appropriation of the beachfront property adjacent to this restaurant during the early 1980s, resulting in the eviction of *Benito* and the closure of his beach bar mentioned earlier, which had been situated here for most of the 1970s.

By the end of the 1980s the current social and economic configuration of the tourism resort in the village of Playa de Mogán had begun to take shape, and was becoming commonly referred to as Puerto de Mogán (e.g. on bus timetables), after the marina. The 'post-marina' phase of tourism-related growth had also witnessed the expansion of important retail facilities which have benefited local residents, including a hairdresser, pharmacy and launderette. In contrast small villages in neighbouring valleys such as Venegeura were still without the most basic commercial facilities in the early 1990s. By this time there were approximately eleven pensions, fifteen bars and restaurants and a dozen retail outlets outside the marina (where in any case there are only two restaurant proprietors from Playa de Mogán itself at the time of writing) situated in and adjacent to the *barrio pesquero* as well as in Lomo Quiebre. Private rooms to rent, many of which are not officially registered, are operated by a mixture of foreign residents and other outsiders (residents of Las Palmas) who have purchased property in the village as well as local families from Playa de Mogán. The ownership of pensions was and continues to be dominated by peasant entrepreneurs whilst the pattern of ownership amongst bars and restaurants reflects a greater diversity of non-capitalist and capitalist forms of ownership. Among the latter group of establishments, approximately half were owned and run by peasant entrepreneurs, whilst a further two belonged to landowning families. The remainder were owned by a combination of people from the mainland and foreign incomers, one or two of whom had opened their premises during the 1970s. Pensions on the whole are run by owner-proprietors whilst bars and restaurants are characterised by a combination of owner-occupied and rented establishments, although there is a tendency for the older establishments to be owned given that the first phase of entrepreneurial involvement prior to the development of the marina, occurred at a time when property prices were very low. Lastly, at this time most of the retail premises within the *barrio pesquero* were small family-owned establishments, whilst newer retail premises are increasingly managed by non-local entrepreneurs who rent the premises at the market rate.

The late 1980s also witnessed the opening of the first large commercial supermarket in the village managed by outside commercial interests. This together with the construction of apartments to rent and the refurbishment of buildings in strategic locations (particularly around the *plaza*), began to reflect the increase of outside involvement in the tourism infrastructure of the village, as well as the ability of a minority of local entrepreneurs to convert their property into profitable commercial premises. For example, the premises occupied by the supermarket were rented from *José*, the local fish merchant (*Santiago's* brother), who is one of the most powerful and influential local entrepreneurs in the village, and who together with *Alberto* and *Enrique*, has been active in municipal politics since the end of the 1970s (see Chapter Eleven: pp.238-9). The degree and pattern of involvement amongst local entrepreneurs has however remained relatively unchanged since this period, although the progressive commodification of the built environment of the village has intensified the involvement of a more



capitalistic entrepreneurial class from other parts of the island and beyond, who have the capital and expertise to invest in an increasing array of commercial tourism enterprise. Indeed a number of visible and dramatic changes in the renovation of the built environment and transformation of the commercial fabric of the village during the period of fieldwork, testify to this. The premises in which the supermarket referred to above was situated, has recently been refurbished and converted into three commercial units, each of which have been rented out at 150,000 pesetas per month (£750) to outside commercial retailers. A modern two-storey block has also been built on the vacant plot adjacent to *Bar Santiago* (and adjacent to the enclosed beachfront parcel) by an entrepreneur from the mainland who has been resident in the village for some time, and divided between commercial premises on the ground floor (for sale at 150 million pesetas [£750,000]), and three apartments upstairs (for sale at 12 million pesetas each [£60,000]). It is significant to note, as one informant was keen to point out, that this is one of the few new buildings that have been built anywhere in the village (except of course in and adjacent to the marina), providing further testimony of how the interests of capital and non-resident investors have been allowed to override those of local residents who have been unable to build new homes or extend existing ones. Similarly, the ownership of several other properties around the *plaza* has passed from local *cacique* families into the hands of external investors, whose adaptation of these buildings reflects the intensified appropriation of the built environment of the *barrio pesquero* by commercial capital. In one example this led to the purchase and demolition of one of the oldest buildings in the village by commercial interests from Las Palmas (who also own a casino in this city). It had previously been occupied by a small pizzeria, however in its place the new owners erected a modern two-storey building (much to the dislike of the foreign residents in the houses behind it!), in which there is now a noisy amusement arcade (see Plate 9.1).<sup>18</sup>

The completion of the marina at the end of the 1980s and the opening of the numerous bar, retail and accommodation facilities within it, began to attract a steady influx in day-trippers who continue to arrive daily (on an ever-increasing scale) from the nearby resort conurbations on local buses (whose frequency has increased from twice a day in the 1960s to every fifteen minutes in the mid-1990s) or tourist coaches chartered by tour operators. This trend signified a further change in the nature of tourism consumption, which has steadily moved away from the initially close encounters between *los ipis* and the predominantly peasant inhabitants of the *barrio pesquero*, through the more regular visitation by explorer-type tourists throughout the 1980s, to finally, a multi-layered destination catering for many different types of tourists. Most local inhabitants however tend to distinguish between *los ipis* who used to frequent the village during the late 1960s and early 1970s, and *los turistas* (tourists) which denotes the more recent arrivals associated with the expansion of the marina and the large-scale tourism *urbanizaciones* along the coast of Mogán, from which the village has become increasingly accessible since the early 1980s (see footnote no. 5). This distinction also reflects a certain disillusionment amongst certain members of the local entrepreneurial classes, who argue that as the scale of tourism development in the village has increased, they seem to attract fewer and fewer customers (although some restaurants such as the beachfront establishment owned by a member of the landowning classes, has maintained its popularity). Many contrast these modern-day tourists to the era of visitation prior to the



development of the marina, when the initial handful of peasant entrepreneurs monopolised the few facilities available in the village, and for whom it constituted a 'golden era' of tourism.

A variety of independent or explorer-type tourists continue to frequent the pensions and clandestine rooms/apartments for rent, some of whom used to frequent the village before the marina was built. Most are however comprised of middle-class professionals, teachers and students as well as longer-stay itinerant resort workers. For their clientele pensions tend to rely mostly on word of mouth, personal contact (repeat visitation) and numerous independent guide-books, particularly in Germany where there has been a lot of interest in Playa de Mogán to the extent that one regular visitor has named his own bar in Berlin after one of the pensions in Lomo Quiebre he frequents during his stay in the village! In contrast, the island's tourism promotional agencies hold little or no information about these establishments. It was often suggested by local residents and smaller entrepreneurs alike that the municipal council is unconcerned with the needs and priorities of small, local businesses (stressing that this of course does not apply to those which are connected in some way to the municipal councillors either through kinship ties or direct political representation). Instead, they argue, the authorities prefer to concentrate their efforts on attracting investment for large scale tourism developments. The political emphasis on 'international standard' tourism projects including the creation of an artificial beach and promenade (Playa de Armadores) near Puerto Rico (see Figure 8.1), and time-share complexes, would appear to confirm many of these suspicions.<sup>19</sup> The very fact that so much publicity has been expended on a Norwegian 'flagship' timeshare project, to the extent that the chairman of the time-share company has been made an "*hijo adoptivo de Mogán*" [an adopted son of Mogán] and the municipality in Norway in which the head office is situated twinned with Mogán,<sup>20</sup> is testament to the disproportionate emphasis on corporate-capitalist driven tourism development.

In her study of tourism development in a small Cycladic island, Kenna (1993: 87) claims that "non-local" enterprises were frequented predominantly by "non-Greek" tourists, given their more cosmopolitan atmosphere. Likewise, Zarkia claims that local entrepreneurs in Skyros, prefer Greek clients to their foreign counterparts, due to the fact that among other reasons, the former return year after year, spend more, and above all "*know the moral code and how to behave*" (1996: 166). However the straightforward distinction between 'locals' and 'non-locals', does not tell us enough about the varied modes of tourist consumption, and is furthermore contradicted somewhat by the experience of visitors in Playa de Mogán. Many pension owners are for example reluctant to rent rooms either to islanders from the north (*los rusos*) or to long-term clients (either foreign or Spanish/Canary Islanders who come in search of work). Some pensions have however been known to let rooms for free or at a reduced rate in return for cleaning and basic duties, although these guests tend to be (foreign) itinerant resort workers who come to seek work for a season or more in one of the many tourism establishments, predominantly those in the marina. One pension proprietor in particular recounted a bad experience he had had with some members of the construction crew working on the marina, who had stayed here in the early 1980s. At one point he was forced to call the Civil Guard in order for them to pay their rent. On a further occasion during the fieldwork, the owner of another pension refused to accommodate a construction crew from the mainland



who were working on a hotel in the neighbouring resort of Taurito, despite the fact that his pension was half empty.

Most are in agreement with regard to the practice of not renting rooms to *los rusos*, although in contrast to the above, other proprietors do not mind renting rooms to construction crews due to the fact that this guarantees them a regular income over a specified period of time.<sup>21</sup> Whereas most explorer-type tourists who stay in the pensions are liked as they are keen to communicate with their hosts and learn something about the local way-of-life (particularly the Germans who often learn some Spanish), islanders from urban areas are accused of being patronising and rude towards their hosts, and said to damage rooms. These proprietors also suggested that they tend to play on the fact that they are on their home territory or rather, island (in contrast to foreign tourists who are only visitors) and as a result feel entitled to do as they please in the village. It is also interesting to note that the less discriminating pensions tend to be those with fewer linkages to alternative sources of income and therefore cannot afford to turn away clientele. One or two pensions are however related through family ties to other enterprise or alternative sources of income (perhaps a bar or restaurant, or even land in some cases) and can thus spread their risk across more than one activity. Many local restaurant proprietors on the other hand *do* prefer Canary Island clientele for the same reasons suggested by Zarkia (1996) in Skyros, in that they tend to spend a lot more money on food and time over their meals. However they tend to differ from the younger clientele so disliked by the owners of the pensions; they tend to be older, usually families, and are often relatives or friends from the city.<sup>22</sup>

In Playa de Mogán there is also a noticeable variation in the type of tourists who use similar categories of accommodation and enterprise, as well as between those who use different ones, which can be related to the manner in which the different clusters of visitors consume the touristic landscapes of Playa de Mogán. On the one hand their choices vary according to the conventional characteristics of the facility, in terms of its cost and location. Indeed most independent travellers tend to stay in locally-owned pensions for reasons to do with their accessible cost (this is the only destination area on the island endowed with such a high concentration of pensions), whereas the marina specifically targets higher-spending, supposedly 'discerning' types of tourists who are concerned with a modicum of luxury and modern facilities.<sup>23</sup> However there are also more subtle variations in the conceptions of space which inform tourist consumption, and which transgresses the simple spatial divide between marina and *barrio*. For example, the beachfront restaurant mentioned earlier, which is situated in a converted landowner's residence, appeals to wealthier day-trippers and tourists staying in the marina alike (some of whom are time-share tourists and others are guests of the hotel), amongst others, as it is both an architecturally-appealing building and has an attractive view of the marina and sea. This is one of the few locally-run restaurants regularly frequented by tourists staying in the marina, in tandem with those situated along the old waterfront of the village, which explicitly target tourists and are within easy reach of the marina.

Many of the establishments in the *barrio pesquero* tend to be frequented by a wider variety of visitors, particularly long-stay itinerant resort workers and younger independent tourists. It is within these spaces



that different segments of the transient/visitor population come into contact with locals (predominantly men). Although there are one or two premises which are frequented mainly by locals, such as the cafe-bar in the *plaza*, there are no facilities in which visitors are completely excluded. Different groups of visitors compose their own particular images of the locality and seek distinct symbols of Playa de Mogán (or consume the same one in different ways). These range from the 'authentic' Canary Island village sought by explorer-type tourists as well as day-trippers, albeit in different ways, to the status-seeking urban middle-classes from Las Palmas who moor their yachts in the marina, where they often spend week-ends and public holidays socialising in the bars and restaurants there. The marina of *Puerto de Mogán* thus constitutes a stage of conspicuous consumption for this and other groups of more affluent visitors, who would rather be seen here than in the less salubrious resorts of Puerto Rico with the 'masses' (incidentally a popular destination for many working people from Las Palmas). However such symbols often mean different things to the distinct groups of tourists who come here. For example the simple rustic environment sought by the explorer-type tourists who stay in the pensions, in seeking to 'discover' a more authentic side or back-regions of the village, are themselves engaging in what Harkin (1995) refers to as acts of "*connoisseurship*" in order to mark themselves off from the 'less knowledgeable' (day) visitors from Puerto Rico and elsewhere, who can only indulge in the consumption of the symbolic markers of the village 'authenticated' by the tourist brochures and pointed out to them by the tour guides, symbolised by the promotion of the marina as the '*Venice of the Canaries*' (see Chapter Ten: *The Cultural Ideology of Tourism and Conceptions of Space*)

Although independent explorer-type tourists and itinerant resort workers attempt to maintain a distinction between themselves and the day-trippers and resort tourists who stay in the marina, they share in common a tendency to define the landscapes of Playa de Mogán in opposition to notional values of 'modernity' and 'civilisation'. Moreover their search for 'authenticity' does not preclude seeking out people of similar socio-cultural background who stay in the pensions and socialising with these groups rather than with local inhabitants. They may even use many of the same facilities as both the more affluent tourists and local inhabitants, both in the marina and the *barrio pesquero*, but each still tends to remain within discrete socio-cultural groups during their stay in the village. There are thus clear temporal as well as spatial variations in the rhythms of consumption across the varied tourism establishments. For example, the cafe-bar in the *plaza* is an important meeting point for fishermen and elderly menfolk during the early morning who congregate here to discuss the issues of the day, usually after fishing boats have gone out to sea. A little later the first tourism workers on their way to start their shifts will pass by for a coffee with fellow workers, before the first tourists and day-trippers begin to arrive during the late morning. During the early evening after the relatively quiet siesta hours, many of the men return accompanied by women and children who socialise and chat amongst themselves on the benches scattered around the *plaza*. There is however a clear demarcation in the gendered use of space in that women do not congregate at the bar with the men. Male grandparents will however often approach their kin to play with their grandchildren. Indeed women are usually only seen inside bars or restaurants during the late afternoon when visiting those owned or run by family members. By late evening most of the women and children return to their houses to prepare the evening meal and attend to other domestic chores, whilst the



men (those who are retired or not working) will again congregate here, together with different categories of tourists who are out for the evening. Although relations are cordial there are few social exchanges beyond the odd comment on a game of football which might be showing behind the bar.

These differentiated spatial and temporal rhythms of consumption thus represent daily symbolic struggles being enacted amongst and between different categories of visitor (including longer-term foreign residents) who attempt to distinguish each others' touristic practices in accordance with an internalised set of values.<sup>24</sup> The result is both social in that certain practices are regarded by some as more 'authentic' than others (*e.g.* staying in pensions), and spatial, in that these practices take place in different parts of the village, and within specific establishments. On the one hand, day-trippers may regard a visit to Playa (*Puerto*) de Mogán as a pleasing day out to somewhere resembling a 'typical' Canary Island village (conveniently ignoring the fact that the marina is a purpose-built, commercial entity), or as a picturesque back-drop to their recreational activities, whereas the those who stay in the pensions often speak about Playa de Mogán as if it were the last bastion of an 'authentic' type of tourism and traditional way of life, holding out against the progressive encroachment of the 'ignorant' masses and large-scale urban tourism enclaves to the east. Indeed many emphasised that the fact pensions are owned by local inhabitants is important, which appeals to their sense of authenticity. Nevertheless, despite the myriad social distinctions between these categories, they each in their own way give weight to the ongoing transformation and commodification of the social and built environments of the village for tourism.

### 9.3 Tourism and the Social Structure

In a perceptive critique of the 'patron-client' model commonly applied in socio-political analyses of Mediterranean societies, Gilsenan (1977) argues that functionalist conceptualisations of patronage as a *system*, are an inadequate tool of explanation for the power relations which operate through social formations, as they say little about wider social relations and structures in which patronage occurs. In order to examine the relationship between processes of economic change and social transformation on the relations of power within Southern European societies more effectively, he thus argues that it is more appropriate to consider the changing historical conditions under which a new class or collection of strata arises (Gilsenan 1977: 181). There are clear implications of this approach for the analysis of the social configurations of tourism entrepreneurship in this study. First, it cannot be assumed that tourism merely introduced forms of modernisation resulting in the demise of local landowning classes, in conjunction with an inexorable progression towards a modern capitalistic economy driven by rational, self-interested entrepreneurs. Second, nor however can it be assumed that the descendents of the local *cacique* families continue to exercise their previous dominance as before, or that they are able to regulate access to tourism resources in a manner similar to that which enabled them to monopolise agricultural wealth during the previous era of agro-export cultivation (*cf.* Moore 1976a: 25).



The emergence of tourism-related enterprise was thus mediated by the material forces of change which have transformed the economic *basis* of power relations between different social constituencies in Playa de Mogán. However, such structural transformations also need to be examined in the context of specific strategies adopted by individuals, households and social groups at different levels of the social structure to exploit community resources within the prevailing economic circumstances brought about by tourism. Furthermore the configurations of tourism enterprise which emerged within this particular period have generated a particular set of consequences for the alignment of individuals and groups within the social formation itself. As the processes of touristification within the village of Playa de Mogán began to expand and transform the productive base of the village, the unchallenged economic and political dominance of local *cacique* families began to weaken as the opportunities for social advancement amongst the wider social strata began to present themselves. Whereas previously their dominance was largely restricted to the monopolisation of agrarian wealth, the introduction of newer and more diversified forms of economic activity related to tourism has diluted their ability to regulate access to community resources in the context of a shift from an agrarian-fishing economy to a capitalist service-based one. This was particularly evident during the early phases of tourism given the specific *type* of touristic activity which emerged in Playa de Mogán, based on the consumption of resources which could be more easily provided by members of peasant households resident in the *barrio pesquero*, rather than landowning or for that matter fishing households.

The ability to convert the new opportunities offered by tourism into a viable economic strategy varied according upon the nature of the resources particular families had at their disposal.<sup>25</sup> At the outset, the conversion of dwellings which had no economic value prior to tourism, into pensions, represented only a process of partial commodification given that the majority of these homes (mostly built by the occupants themselves) still also incorporated the family household and living space. The manner in which early visitors consumed the cultural landscape of the village, in search of a local (peasant) vernacular and 'authenticity' in contrast to that of the purpose-built, large-scale tourism conurbations, facilitated processes of informal commodification of community resources by individual households in the *barrio pesquero*. This involved the conversion of homes and property which had previously not performed any sort of economic function, into capital, further monetizing the peasant economy in areas which hitherto had been unexploited for commercial purposes. In this respect Crick (1995a) in his study of street guides and tourism enterprise in Sri Lanka, also notes how having a home in the *right* geographic location is an important asset for guest-house owners. The conversion of rooms into lodging facilities, some of which were later to become pensions, thus involved relatively little capital in return for significant income benefits for a particular household. It typically occurred once younger family members had either married and left the parent household, or in some cases, left the village entirely either to seek work elsewhere or to go and study in one of the larger towns. In the context of tourist visitation to the village, empty rooms suddenly acquired an economic value and placed those families who could exploit this potential in an advantageous position in contrast to others who could not afford to let valuable and young family members to leave the family home as in the case of peasant fishing households, who required the labour of able-bodied young men for work on fishing boats.



However, during the 1980s the increasing touristification of the locality and the adjacent coastline led to an intensification of competition between different socio-economic groups over the use and value of resources in the village. The growing interest of foreign visitors in purchasing homes vacated by departing families signalled a more complete commodification of the geography of village space, one which was instrumental in the constitution of social distinctions which began to emerge between local inhabitants, property speculators (some of whom have emerged from amongst the former), commercial business-persons and long-term expatriate residents (see Chapter Ten: *The Cultural Ideology of Tourism and Conceptions of Space*). The purchase of houses by foreigners from the 1970s onwards represented the first signs of the transformation of parts of the urban space and built infrastructure of the village into a saleable commodity, and not merely as a resource which guaranteed the material reproduction of local peasant households. Most significantly however, the increasing concentration of touristic activity in the pensions and bars of the *barrio pesquero* shifted the socio-economic epicentre of productive activity away from both the agricultural estate, which was also now in decline, and the artisanal fishing economy (although the latter continues to provide a significant source of income for approximately 25-30 families), towards a tourism enterprise economy centred around the *barrio pesquero* and the neighbourhood of Lomo Quiebre.<sup>26</sup>

### Fishermen and Tourism

It is perhaps surprising that few fishermen or those peasant households which at this time were still strongly tied to fishing were less involved in the expansion of early tourism enterprise, although fishermen also mixed freely with *los ipis* in the bars of the *barrio pesquero*. However, the social economy of fishermen is centred in and around the boats and productive activity which predominantly takes place at sea, or at the sea shore where fish are unloaded and distributed (an activity which now takes place in the section of the marina allocated to the *Cofradía de Pescadores* (see Figure 10.1, Appendix V). As such they were closely tied to a web of social and economic relations which were relatively disconnected from those associated with economic activities on the land. In a similar fashion, Zarkia (1996: 152) notes how the strong herding traditions amongst the shepherds on Skyros, also delayed their involvement in tourism development. Fishing households in Playa de Mogán have of course been tied into qualitatively different relations of production, for example where other members of the household (usually wives and daughters) have engaged in wage work in the plantations, and more recently, tourism. The point emphasised here is that the dominant form of activity in which they were engaged was one which was not as conducive to the transferral of either skills/expertise or capital into tourism as were the activities of other peasant households. Although they did come into contact with visitors in the bars and public spaces of the village, they had less incentive to transfer their attention to an alternative economic activity whose future was uncertain, and more importantly necessitated a different range of skills/expertise and knowledge than those they already possessed.

As mentioned earlier one of the most important components of the *means of production* in the peasant fishing economy consisted of *los secretos del mar*, which formed the basis of fishermen's 'knowledge capital'. The sea could not of course be owned in the conventional sense, but access to fishing grounds



(*caladeros*) was mediated by this closely-guarded 'family' knowledge which had little use in the emerging service sector. Furthermore, much of the capital belonging to fishermen was tied up in fixed assets (*i.e.* boats and fishing equipment) which could not be disposed of at short notice, although many have sold up and left or maintained a small vessel for occasional fishing trips. The difficulty of moving into a touristic venture was further compounded by the risks involved in entering unfamiliar commercial territory which in addition bore little relation to the more familiar cultural domain of an identity forged in the context of a livelihood derived from the sea (see Santana Talavera 1990a: 98). Indeed Pascual Fernández in his extensive ethnographic study of three other fishing communities situated in both Gran Canaria and Tenerife notes that:

El pescador y su familia con frecuencia no saben hacer otra cosa, y aguantarán hasta que la situación llegue a ser insoportable. (1991: 102)<sup>27</sup>

Moreover their relative inability to adapt to the changing economic circumstances to the degree that other segments of the village could, was compounded by the fact that until very recently most fishermen would dissuade their sons from continuing their education beyond fourteen years of age (the age at which they complete compulsory basic education in Spain). According to Santana Talavera (1990b: 37) approximately 40% of the village's inhabitants have not progressed beyond this stage and those who do often leave school before they complete their secondary education in order to become full-time fishermen, or increasingly, to work in tourism. Fishing households have been less able to convert their knowledge and capital into specifically 'tourist capital', in contrast to other village inhabitants, some of whom were more socially and culturally attuned to the habits and desires of the foreign visitors and able to exploit this to their advantage. Indeed it was more common for peasant fishing families to sell their houses to foreign newcomers keen to purchase second homes, rather than convert them into touristic use, such as lodgings. Some have also migrated eastwards towards the fishing village and tourist resort area of Arguineguín, which has benefitted from greater technological innovation in fishing (Santana Talavera 1990a: 79), and is home to many relatives from Playa de Mogán. Also, as a result of Arguineguín's greater proximity to the large tourism conurbations, both in San Bartolomé de Tirajana and Mogán, has a larger and more diversified economy as well as a greater quantity of affordable housing.

Fishing households have nevertheless benefitted from wage employment in the large-scale tourism developments in adjacent coastal areas than from setting up tourism enterprise in Playa de Mogán itself. In many respects this has also enabled fishing households to combine an income from tourism with their traditional economic pursuit. According to sources in the *Cofradía de Pescadores*, only around 50% of boats now fish on a regular basis during the winter months.<sup>28</sup> This is partly due to the fact that only white fish (*pescado blanco*) can be caught during this period, which although more expensive per kilo is not as lucrative as tuna. Furthermore, many of the younger fishermen who might have carried on this tradition, are increasingly working in the tourism sector at this time of year given that the Canary Islands are one of the key 'winter sun' destinations for northern Europeans. Short-term part-time contracts in the tourism sector also enable or rather, force them to work in the tourism sector for up to eight months in the winter, and return to the sea in the summer either on a regular basis in a family boat, or alternatively



on a boat belonging to relatives who may require extra crew members for the tuna season. The younger generation in particular increasingly sees fishing as a summer activity which can be undertaken during school holidays or when demand for tourism workers is slack during summer months. In reference to the occupational pluralism supported by tourism, an elderly fisherman was frank in his assessment; “*si no fuesen para las mujeres moriríamos de hambre*”.<sup>29</sup>

### Landowners and Tourism

By the early 1980s the declining importance of cultivation for export saw the estate in Playa de Mogán transformed into a patchwork of vacant tracts of land alongside a few remaining areas of cultivation for export tended by one or two local agricultural labourers as well as others brought in from the larger commercial estates in the south-east. However, despite the decline of agriculture from the 1960s onwards, the intervention of the local *cacique* families in the tourism economy was relatively limited until the early 1980s. This was partly the result of the spontaneous manner in which the early visitors arrived and their ability to interact more freely and easily with peasant villagers, and the fact that the children of local *cacique* families were for the most part resident elsewhere and working in professional careers in the city. As befitting families of higher socio-economic status, they tended to study for professional careers in law, medicine, engineering and did not look favourably upon employment in the tourism sector at this stage. Nevertheless their influence has still been of significance at a political level, and it is predominantly their interests and priorities which are reflected in decisions regarding land-use, public expenditure and the regulation of local economic activities.<sup>30</sup> Local *cacique* families are particularly able to exercise considerable influence where planning decisions and the acquisition of construction licences for major large scale tourism ventures on their land have been concerned, through informal ties and familial connections to those in positions of power and the council bureaucracy.<sup>31</sup> The internecine conflict which has emerged over the partition of the estate amongst the descendants of earlier *cacique* families, has also added to delays in the commencement of construction on the low density tourism urbanization adjacent to the *barrio pesquero* (see Figure 9.1, Appendix III). Conflict between heirs is not necessarily endemic to areas where bilateral partible inheritance is practised, as it is in many parts of Mediterranean Europe, however it is likely to occur in an economic context whose primary source of value is derived through land speculation based on its potential touristic merit, then conflict for control of particular sites can be intense (see Santana Santana 1993: 36-7; Greenwood 1976: 138). Each household is connected to a parcel of land which together represent an “*aggregate of land-based interests*” to use a phrase coined by Molotch (1976: 310), and takes on the character of an entrepreneurial coalition in order to further their common interests (*i.e.* the growth of large-scale tourism) through political channels. The conflicts which ensued over the partible inheritance of land in several of the former agricultural estates scattered along this coastline, were fundamentally precipitated through attempts by heirs to enhance the economic potential of land via its classification as land appropriate for development (achieved in 1974) which would increase its value and facilitate the construction of tourism infrastructure and facilities on it. Similar inheritance disputes emerged amongst the heirs to an estate in Playa del Cura, an adjacent valley (see Figure 8.1) which had also previously been devoted to the cultivation of



export crops (see *La Provincia* 24/5/88), as large-scale resort development in Mogán accelerated during the 1980s.

Members of the landowning families in Playa de Mogán have had a predominantly speculative interest in the land, which could also be easily combined with the pursuit of higher status professional careers in the city.<sup>32</sup> Once the export of agricultural crops diminished as the principal source of revenue for the landowning classes, the heirs to the estate were able to exercise a form of “*withholding power*” (Wolf 1966: 45), holding onto the land until such a time that it appreciated in value, which could be realised either through speculation or converting it to touristic use. Today few of the descendents of the original estate owners who initiated the export of plantation crops in Playa de Mogán are still engaged full-time in agriculture, not least due to the fact that successive partition of the original agro-export estate has left most inheritors with little more than narrow strips of land of no more than a hectare. One of the few landowners to carry on this tradition grows a variety of crops for the local market and export (aubergines), employing a small number of casual labourers on an *ad-hoc* basis. Only one of these labourers was a native of Playa de Mogán who nevertheless also worked in a bar. He had previously been a fisherman but had subsequently opted for a ‘less arduous’ livelihood on the land, where others had gone into tourism.

Conversations with local farmers revealed that few if any young men from the valley are now involved in agriculture. External market forces are partly to blame, particularly since the signing of the *Régimen Económica y Fiscal* (the Canary Islands Economic and Fiscal Regime) in 1972 which opened up many of Gran Canaria’s produce to competition from Europe and Africa (Rodríguez Martín y Sánchez Padrón 1978: 16). Others point to the ecological damage wreaked by the intensive exploitation of soils as well as the lack of technological innovation in agriculture, particularly banana cultivators whose methods of cultivation have remained unchanged since the beginning of the century (Aleman 1987). What cultivation is left is undertaken by a few remaining smallholders scattered throughout the valley, who contract casual labour from the large commercial agricultural plantations in Santa Lucía where there is a higher degree of unemployment and easier short-term availability of labour. In the small hamlet of El Cercado, which lies approximately 3–4 kms inland adjacent to the main road which links Playa de Mogán to the village of Mogán, a local farmer pointed out that none of his children had continued to farm, choosing instead to move to Las Palmas to work. He was pessimistic about the future of agriculture (polycultivation) in this area to the extent that he believed it will have all but disappeared by the beginning of the next millenium.<sup>33</sup> In a neighbouring farm the six heirs to a small estate had either sold their property to second-home buyers or else only use them at weekends and summer holidays. Together there are 369 second residences divided between the village of Mogán (80) and Playa de Mogán (289) out of a municipal total of 1,454 households, second only to Puerto Rico with 391, which is a tourism conurbation with a predominantly transient population (Istac 1993). Many smallholders have also sold their properties to the regular influx of northern Europeans who come in search of winter residences in the mild climate of south-west Gran Canaria, as well as to the foreign restaurateurs who own or run enterprises in the marina and prefer to live in the tranquil rural setting of the valley. In addition, restrictions on construction in an attempt to preserve this area’s ‘traditional’ agricultural landscape for the benefit of



tourists (in the opinion of many locals), has also forced up land prices and made it increasingly difficult for the young families of Playa de Mogán to purchase affordable land and/or housing. As a result many have been forced to move up to the village of Mogán where houses are cheaper and there is in fact some subsidised housing.<sup>34</sup>

However, the lack of productive investment in agriculture in the immediate vicinity of Playa de Mogán also needs to be seen in the context of the economic strategies pursued by successive generations of local *cacique* families. Indeed many local villagers who experienced work in the plantations often remarked on the dedication of the previous generation of landowners to the work of exporting crops, in contrast to the current neglect of agriculture by their descendants who appear more concerned with the pursuit of short-term profit through land speculation and tourism development. This contrasts with experiences of tourism development in other parts of the Spanish mainland and the Balearic Islands, where for example in Cambrils (Costa Brava) tourism played a significant role in the commercialisation of agriculture (Hermans 1981). Hermans (1981) also cites a study by Moore (1976b), of the relationship between tourism and agriculture in the village of Sa Pobla in Mallorca, demonstrating how many farmers preferred to trust the productivity and relative predictability of agriculture rather than squander profits in tourism (Hermans 1981: 464). It is significant however that Sa Pobla is situated in the island's hinterland, away from the stretches of land along coastal areas such as Calvia and S'Arenal, where the majority of large-scale tourism development is concentrated. During the pre-tourism epoch, land in these areas was considered relatively worthless and therefore passed down to the less favoured heirs of landowning families, who were subsequently able to realise its enormous market value once tourism began to expand in the 1960s. However, although Cambrils is situated on the coast, agriculture not only did *not* decline, but rather developed into a more commercialised and profitable activity. Amongst several factors that Hermans suggests contributed to this, it appears that the relatively even distribution of land, most of which also happened to be owner-cultivated, and the ability of farmers to divert profits from sales of coastal land into product diversification in the interior, were amongst the most significant in allowing agriculture to flourish in tandem with tourism development.

The decline of agriculture in Mogán cannot be attributed to tourism in an instrumental fashion or considered in isolation from a range of locally-specific factors. A far more uneven structure of land ownership particularly in Playa de Mogán itself, coupled with an excessive dependence on one or two crops for export, increased the vulnerability of this sector to fluctuations in demand, as indeed occurred in the early 1970s. In effect the actions of landowners can be seen as a calculated response to the changing economic circumstances of the era, as well as an attempt to maintain control over community resources and access to income and employment opportunities. However their ability to act as a family 'unit' has been progressively weakened as a result of the fragmentation of property in the valley to the extent that it has provoked a prolonged conflict between different groups of heirs, each seeking a profitable slice of the proposed tourism development which will be built on what was once the agricultural estate. Furthermore the expansion of tourism arrivals to Playa de Mogán coincided with the end of the first so-called 'tourism boom' due to the energy crisis in 1973, which led to a slump in demand and the stagnation of tourism



across the region. This then made it difficult to attract external investment into the area, and was one of the factors which delayed the onset of large-scale construction in Playa de Mogán. In addition local infrastructure was still very poor and the under-resourced municipal government was not equipped to provide the necessary social overhead capital to underwrite any private investment of the kind which underpinned tourism development in Maspalomas-Playa del Inglés and Puerto Rico. The combination of a lack of space to build the type of large-scale tourism accommodation and services which would be able to generate the requisite economies of scale for investors, the pattern of land tenure close to the sea and the macro-economic conditions of this period, thus temporarily halted the westward expansion of tourism facilities.

### *Peasant Entrepreneurs: Marginal Capitalists or Capitalist Entrepreneurs ?*

In a recent discussion of petty entrepreneurs in tourism, Dables (1997b: 27) asks whether they constitute a marginal layer in the social structure of emerging (and established) tourism areas, or rather a creative and innovative socio-economic force. Indeed this is perhaps one of the key questions concerning the relationship between entrepreneurial agency and changes in the social structure of tourism destination areas. One of the most fundamental changes to have been brought about by tourism development in Playa de Mogán has been to precipitate the diversification of the local economy and to institutionalise a more complex division of labour characterised by increasingly formal patterns of employment. Occupational pluralism is still however an important feature of the economy and constitutes a complementary source of income for families with little capital, enabling them to spread their income-earning activities across several sectors. Tourism has also therefore served to eradicate the previous distinction between the traditionally poorer inhabitants of the village, which includes most of those engaged in fishing and all manner of manual work, and the wealthier social strata, which includes the small merchant class and agrarian landowners. In the process it has precipitated the rise of a new division of labour and the emergence of a 'new' entrepreneurial class in which there are elements of a capitalist bourgeoisie (see Chapter Eleven: *The Social Configurations of Entrepreneurship*). The diversification of employment not only gave many inhabitants the opportunity to earn a regular and often higher wage, but it also transformed the *use* to which the accumulated savings could be devoted by a minority of individuals who realised the commercial opportunities which tourism offered. At the village level the steady influx of travellers triggered different degrees of entrepreneurial response amongst local peasant households, and to a lesser extent by members of local *cacique* families shortly afterwards. Through a mixture of circumstance and active intervention they began to coalesce into a collection or stratum of tourism entrepreneurs over the course of the 1970s, most of whom had access to little or no capital or previous knowledge of running any form of enterprise. However the presence of significant social distinctions within the emergent local entrepreneurial classes suggests that they cannot be considered as a uniform socio-economic category purely on the basis of an imputed class location.

Although the initial impetus came from a small collection of peasant entrepreneurs, given that the first villagers to open tourist-related enterprises were drawn from amongst peasant households, by the late



1970s a more diverse spectrum of actors began to become involved, which signalled the onset of a more sustained dynamic of tourism development and the entrance of external capital. The choice of terminology is always difficult where subtle yet significant distinctions between different groups of social actors needs to be emphasised. The term *peasant entrepreneur* is used here in order to define the collection of innovative villagers from within the non-landowning classes, whose informal appropriation of household and other 'non-productive' resources in the village for tourism, helped differentiate them from producers in the artisanal fishing economy and local *cacique* families. The category *local entrepreneurial classes* denotes the wider collection of entrepreneurs who originate from the village itself (as opposed to entrepreneurial migrants who later arrived from elsewhere and whose predominant interest was to open a tourism-related business once this area became established as a tourism resort by the late 1970s), some of whom are drawn from the landowning classes. Despite their distinctive socio-economic status, this latter segment of the local entrepreneurial classes shares a cultural kinship with the subordinate peasant households which has been forged over decades of coexistence and social relations (albeit mediated by status and material contrasts in wealth), which distinguishes them from the more recent arrival of a more cosmopolitan spectrum of workers and entrepreneurs from 'outside' the village, in a manner similar to that which distinguishes *Deianencs* from 'outsiders' in the village of Deia, Mallorca (Waldren 1996).

Whilst a minority have become restaurant proprietors in their own right, the landowning classes can be considered more appropriately as rentier capitalists given their ability to extract surpluses in the form of rent on the commercial space they own in many parts of the village. This is particularly evident where retail enterprise and other tourist-related services (e.g. gift shops and an amusement arcade) owned by a mixture of local and outside interests, have been set up in most of the buildings which encircle and lie adjacent to the *plaza*. Moreover the fact that the descendents of the original *cacique* family have each of them inherited a portion of the former agricultural estate has enabled them to exploit this land-based capital in the context of the expanding scale of tourism development in recent years. There are therefore two perspectives to bear in mind when analysing the evolution of responses by different segments of the social formation to tourism in Playa de Mogán. First, the distinction between different levels of tourism enterprise in terms of the degree to which tourism is central to the livelihood and material well-being of the family/entrepreneur which runs this particular establishment.<sup>35</sup> Second, variations in the social nature of the structure and ownership of each enterprise which regulates the capacity of different segments of the entrepreneurial classes and the *family economic units* to which they are bound, to transform the material circumstances of their existence.

Both the geographical context of early touristic activity and the configuration of social relations within these spaces, were therefore fundamental factors in shaping subsequent entrepreneurial responses (by peasant inhabitants in particular) to this emerging form of economic activity. The gradual expansion of tourism within the physical and social spaces of the *barrio pesquero* itself, which occurred in the space of a decade or so, began to create its own characteristic distinctions between owners and non-owners of 'touristic capital', which cut across existing social alignments in a way that distinguished it from previous forms of stratification. However the prevailing social structure of the village, shaped by the



historical legacy of capitalist development in this locality, did at the same time mediate the ability of non-landowning classes to exploit entrepreneurial opportunities. As tourism began to create the foundations for the emergence of newer entrepreneurial classes, older social distinctions and divisions did not altogether disappear. Tourism expanded individual social horizons as well as improved the economic fortunes of particular families, but it also created an additional context within which former rivalries and oppositions could be played out. Moreover the new collection of tourism entrepreneurs were by no means a coherent social segment endowed with a common set of goals and economic interests, a point which will be elaborated on in further detail in Chapter Eleven. Their capacity to exploit the expanding range of opportunities as tourism grew and changed in character, was still constrained by the differential power mobilities linked to previous social distinctions and the distribution of resources throughout the different social strata, which will be discussed further in the following chapters. Hence it is important to stress that such power relations are not predicated on merely quantitative differences in resource endowments, but are mediated by the use to which resources are put as well as access to social and political 'capital' in the form of status and strategic alliances of entrepreneurs:

the means of social control have varied through time and they have not always rested on the control of the means of production. (Meillasoux 1972: 98)

The transformation of the organisational and productive structure of the local economy from the mid-1960s onwards, was particularly significant in terms of creating the space in which a collection of peasant entrepreneurs, unconnected to the dominant classes of merchants and landowners, was to emerge. Significantly, it was a process for the most part initiated by individuals and families which can perhaps best be considered as having been of marginal social status in the village. Until the arrival of the first visitors and for some time after this (into the mid-1970s), members of these households had worked in a combination of manual occupations including plantation work and general labouring jobs in construction. Some may have also had experience of fishing and/or working as waiters, bar staff and chambermaids in the tourism resort areas to the east as in the case of the two entrepreneurs mentioned earlier, *Alberto* and *Enrique*. Elderly residents who remember this time often referred to their occupational status as *peones*, a generic term used to refer to all manner of physical labour carried out in return for a wage. It was this group of village-based peasant entrepreneurs who with very little capital and resources were the first to set up basic eating and accommodation facilities for tourists, which was to thus have a significant impact upon their social status in the village in relation to the existing commercial and landowning classes.

Research carried out in other parts of southern Europe, including the village of Deia in Mallorca (Waldren 1996) and the Greek Islands of Skyros (Zarkia 1996) and Mykonos (Stott 1973, 1996), also appears to confirm the claim by Nuñez (1989: 268) that it is often the "culturally marginal" members of a community who are the first to receive and exploit the commercial opportunities created by tourism (see Chapter Three: *Tourism Entrepreneurship and Social Stratification*). Whilst it is important not to exaggerate the concept of 'marginality', it is however clear that the many of the individuals and households who began to exploit the commercial potential of tourism in Playa de Mogán during the late 1960s and early 1970s, were marginal to the prevailing structures of economic and political power. On



the one hand they owned neither land or property (apart from the houses in which they lived) and could be considered of marginal occupational status in so far as they had little in the way of either capital or expertise which could be put to productive use in the agrarian-fishing sectors. On the other hand they were also marginal to the instruments of political power in the local council, which was dominated by the the merchant and landowning classes until the end of the dictatorship in the mid-1970s. However, as described earlier the nature of early tourism visitation in Playa de Mogán facilitated the exploitation of tourism by inhabitants who were less tied to the agrarian or fishing sectors through substantial investment in either time and energy or fixed capital and were therefore able to respond quickly to the new economic opportunities afforded by the visitors. Moreover not only did they have little to lose given their previous dependence on wage-work to sustain their meagre livelihoods, but they also had more time at their disposal than agrarian landowners and fishermen.

Where individual entrepreneurs did however originate from fishing households they were usually from families which were easily able to supply the needs of fishing crews or which had begun to abandon fishing altogether. In the case of both *Enrique* and *Alberto* both had already begun to work as waiters and bar-staff in nearby resorts in the 1960s in anticipation of a better and less arduous living to be earned from tourism. The flourishing of tourism enterprise has also benefited women, who continue to dominate the management of rented accommodation (cf. Zarkia 1996; Scott 1997; Macleod 1999). Up until this time women had occupied a subordinate social status within the village, notwithstanding their relative autonomy with respect to the management of household finances in peasant fishing households (see Chapter Eight: *Strategies of Subsistence in a Fishing Settlement*). Where once women would have found themselves subordinate to the position of men within the family household (particularly in fishing households where they could not be used as crew), and obliged to undertake complementary wage-work in the plantations in order to ensure the economic survival of the household, the conversion of the home into a valuable asset has in many cases transformed their position from one of marginal social status to that of independent entrepreneurs in their own right.

The emergence of a tourism enterprise economy from the mid-1960s onwards has therefore been of crucial significance in the transformation of the social structure in Playa de Mogán. In particular the evidence has shown that it created a number of different entrepreneurial opportunities for local inhabitants, particularly those from amongst what are recognised as marginal households, not to be confused with 'the poorest' (cf. Michaud 1997), but who were nonetheless from relatively subordinate socio-economic strata within the village. Tourism has thus created the impetus for the formation of a distinct occupational category of tourism entrepreneurs, and dramatically increased the social advancement of women. However, despite the success of the initial collection of peasant entrepreneurs in seizing the initiative, the ongoing intensification of linkages binding the tourism enterprise economy into wider structures of capital and outside business interests has been mediated by and precipitated substantial internal variation within this 'new' entrepreneurial class within the village. This and a more detailed discussion of the social configurations of entrepreneurship within the village will be taken up in Chapter Eleven.



## Conclusion

This chapter has set out the socio-economic parameters of change associated with the expansion of tourism in Mogán, and in particular the transformation of the local economy in Playa de Mogán since the arrival of the first visitors during the 1960s. At a broader level, the development of a series of urban tourism enclaves along the eastern section of the coast of Mogán, demonstrates certain similarities with the sprawling urbanization of Maspalomas-Playa del Inglés. Specifically, the construction of tourism complexes in both areas was greatly encouraged by the economic decline of the agricultural export sector in the 1960s, and both to a certain extent reflect the geographic and socio-economic characteristics of the “*plantation tourism landscape*” (cf. Weaver 1988). In contrast however, the transfer of surplus from one sector to another was led by a more unified consortium of capitalist interests in Maspalomas-Playa del Inglés than it was in Mogán, where a combination of absentee owners and local *cacique* families led the drive to develop specific enclaves of tourism. The construction of a purpose-built tourism complex in Playa de Mogán has until recently been delayed by unfavourable macro-economic circumstances and the internecine conflict amongst heirs to the estate. The presence of a prominent fishing settlement and resident population of around 600 inhabitants may also have made this more difficult given that developers have had to contend with at the very least some of the social welfare concerns of residents.

Much of the chapter has focused on the emergence of a tourism enterprise economy precipitated by the arrival of small numbers of ‘explorer-travellers’, known locally as *los ipis*. In particular, it examined the entrepreneurial responses by actors of lower or marginal socioeconomic status, who were the first to mobilise locally-specific cultural or ‘free floating’ resources in the context of tourism. For the most part this included the transferral of ‘non-productive’ resources (e.g. individual dwellings) or resources formerly used in the agrarian economy (e.g. banana/tomato packaging warehouses), into commercial use for tourism. This early form of tourism development was centred on the *barrio pesquero* where the majority of interactions were between these visitors and peasant inhabitants, for whom they represented a source of curiosity, as well as a source of potential income and liberation from the drudgery of the agrarian economy controlled by local *cacique* families. Interestingly fishermen were not amongst the earliest innovators given their commitments to artisanal fishing, nor were local *cacique* families, many of whom had migrated to the city and were more interested in professional careers.

The first phase of tourism development in Playa de Mogán was thus largely monopolised by small shopkeepers and peasant entrepreneurs who began to take on the characteristics of a ‘new’ socioeconomic stratum albeit articulated by the continued significance of the family as a unit of production and consumption. The next phase however, inaugurated by the construction of the marina which began in the early 1980s, signalled the beginnings of a more profound transformation of the spatial and socio-economic epicentre of the tourism enterprise economy in Playa de Mogán. The following chapter will examine the broader socio-political context which framed the construction of the marina of *Puerto de Mogán* and the changing spatial configurations of the tourism development associated with these changes.



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<sup>1</sup> Under powers conferred on them by the 1956 *Ley sobre el Régimen del Suelo y Ordenación Urbana* and further reinforced by the 1992 Act (*Texto Refundido de la Ley sobre el Régimen de Suelo y la Ordenación Urbana*), municipal governments are responsible for elaborating a General Plan (*Plan General de Ordenación Urbana*), the definitive document for integrated land use planning at municipal level (Seco Gómez 1985; Balchin *et al.* 1999). This gives them the authority to classify land use within the boundaries of the municipal territory according to three categories: land already developed (*urbano*), land available for development (*urbanizable*) and land excluded from development (*no urbanizable*). However in the absence of a General Plan, as indeed is the case of the *Ayuntamiento* of Mogán, land use is regulated by a less restrictive set of municipal planning regulations, known as *Normas Subsidiarias*.

<sup>2</sup> One of the principal areas of concern has been the imposition of a minimum density coefficients by the PIOT, which has also affected plans for the construction of a low density tourism urbanization in Playa de Mogán, which have been pending since their initial approval in 1973 (A.A.M. *Libro de Actas del Pleno*, No. 14: 31/8/73). The proposed construction on the estate adjacent to the *barrio pesquero* (see Figure 9.2, Appendix IV), exceeds the maximum density coefficients stipulated by the PIOT. The *Normas Subsidiarias* of Mogán permit the construction of 3,795 beds over a total surface area of 387,500 square metres, giving a net density of 233 square metres plot per bed. However this is 66 square metres short of the minimum 300 square metres plot per bed permitted in the PIOT, which stipulates that the maximum permitted bed spaces for this area (in accordance with the density coefficient), should not exceed 2,612 square metres/bed space. (Cabildo Insular 1992a: 30).

<sup>3</sup> In 1950 the illiteracy rate in Mogán was 59%, and in 1975 was still as high as 12.4% (Alvarez 1980b: 314).

<sup>4</sup> "In spite of these restrictions Arabs are still coming in this village and selling their merchandise with adverse consequences for commerce in the village" (A.A.M. *Libro de Actas de Comision Permanente*, No. 6: 28/6/36).

<sup>5</sup> For the sake of clarity I have distinguished between 'explorer-travellers' which refers to *los ipis*, the term used by inhabitants to describe these early visitors, and 'explorer-type' tourists, which refers to the more regular influx of visitors, who although are still essentially self-reliant and stay in local pensions, can be distinguished from the former category, as done by villagers, particularly once the construction of the marina was underway.

<sup>6</sup> A.A.M. *Libro de Actas del Pleno*, No. 12 (11/12/64 - 26/4/68).

<sup>7</sup> It is interesting to note that local residents make a clear distinction between *los ipis* and *los turistas* (tourists) when referring to past and present foreign visitors to the village.

<sup>8</sup> Some of the elderly menfolk of the village tell the story of a famous incident which illustrates quite clearly this aspect of Playa de Mogán's isolation. During the Civil War (1936-39) a political activist on the run from the fascist authorities, known as *el corredero* (literally "the runner") went into hiding in the valleys around Mogán and survived thanks to the food brought to him by villagers until he was finally captured by the authorities several months later.

<sup>9</sup> Well-known 'outsiders' have however been associated with the development marina of *Puerto de Mogán* due to the fact that it was designed by a prominent Spanish architect who also held shares in the management company until his death. Indeed he often hosted many parties in his house in the *barrio pesquero* (prior to his death a few years ago) together with the principal investor behind the current time-share company which has taken over the majority of accommodation space in the marina. In addition these parties were often attended by prominent members of the regional government, some of whom were rumoured to have financial interests in the marina. However the context and purpose of this involvement is of an entirely different nature and owes more to the speculative interests of politically and economically powerful elites, rather than a desire for intellectual inspiration or rural tranquility.

<sup>10</sup> For the sake of anonymity the names of all persons used in this thesis have been changed.

<sup>11</sup> Most informants who are old enough to remember *los ipis* are keen to emphasise that they were "*buena gente*" (good people) who caused no trouble. One informant even suggested to me that even Jesus had long hair, as if to say that he was also a good person despite his appearance!

<sup>12</sup> Residents of windward and urban areas are referred to locally as *los rusos*, literally 'Russians', in reference to the northerly location of larger concentrations of population in and around the city of Las Palmas, from where a significant proportion of day-trippers and summer visitors (*veraneantes*) originate.

<sup>13</sup> The author wishes to thank Luis Morales for his insights into aspects of social history during the early 20th century in Gran Canaria.



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- 14 "Playa de Mogán is in the ass of the world"... "the post arrives here before it gets to San Mateo!"
- 15 The plot was eventually annexed and enclosed by a concrete wall by both the landowner and owner of the adjacent restaurant, together with the local fish merchant whose property also backed onto this space (and who was ironically one of the key spokespersons for the fishermen during the construction of the marina) via an "*expediente de dominio*". This process enables individuals to claim exclusive ownership of a particular parcel of land if during a specified period of time no-one else produces evidence of ownership or asserts a counter-claim to the property.
- 16 When access was requested to records of opening licences for some of the earlier enterprises, staff in the municipal registry responded with incredulity, and furthermore claimed to be unaware of whether or not any of these early businesses had ever been registered.
- 17 A.A.M. *Libro de Actas de Comisión Permanente* (1980-1984).
- 18 Significantly, when several informants were asked whether or not they were upset at the demolition of this building - built in a traditional style with wooden eaves and a sloping tiled roof - most of them appeared unperturbed. One informant in fact emphasised that the old building was rat-infested and therefore in need of demolition. As in other parts of the rural Mediterranean and southern Europe where tourism has transformed not only social structures, but also urban and architectural norms (e.g. Rozenberg 1995; Williams and Papamichael 1995), it has brought with it a transnational modernist/functionalist architectural style which many associate with modernization and progress. However what did appear to bother them was the fact that the arcade is also selling snacks at lower prices than adjacent eating and drinking establishments run by locals. Nevertheless one elderly informant remarked stoically that, "*todo el mundo está buscando un duro*" (everyone is looking to make a buck), as if to say, that it is the inevitable consequence of economic development.
- 19 See *La Provincia* (suplemento *Canarias Económica*, 27/6/94; 7/9/94 and 24/5/95).
- 20 *Hoja Informativa del Ayuntamiento de Mogán*. Septiembre 1997, No. 34
- 21 In April 1997, one of the pensions adjacent to the *barrio pesquero*, which is owned by an ex-mayor, had rented all of its rooms out to staff of Hotel Taurito and was ostensibly closed for business.
- 22 A recent survey by the Canary Island Statistical Institute (Istac 1997d) indicates that the Spanish - who spend 1,925 pesetas per capita, almost equal to the Germans at 1,926 - spend less per capita on food and drink than the Swedish who at 3,103 pesetas/head spend the most, the Danish (2,105), the Dutch (2,054), the Swiss (2,288) and the Irish (2,784). However if these figures were calculated for Playa de Mogán alone, the pattern might be quite different. Several of the locally-run bar-restaurants are often full at week-ends and during holiday periods. In addition, these figures do not distinguish between resorts, therefore foreign tourists may concentrate their expenditure in particular resort areas where prices may also be higher, thus artificially inflating the figures.
- 23 Most pensions charged between 2,000 pesetas/night/double room in 1993-94, whilst for the same period the room rates for apartments in the marina started at 5,000 pesetas for a two bedroom apartment in low season (May 1st - Sept. 30th), rising to 7,000 pesetas in high season (Oct 1st - April 31st). Moreover the brochure which advertises time-share apartments, emphasises that the marina is fully-equipped with up-to-date facilities (including insurance services, both public and private health clinics, supermarkets and lawyers).
- 24 See Mowforth and Munt (1998: Ch. 5) for further elaboration of this theme in the context of tourism in the Third World.
- 25 Crick (1995a: 139) refers to these as "*free floating resources*", in light of the fluid and often cultural nature of what constitutes a viable resource in the 'informal' tourism sector.
- 26 It is difficult to contrast the *economic* significance of the different sectors at a local level using available statistical data due to the fact that figures are not disaggregated beyond the municipal level. This is especially significant in the case of tourism where figures would be misleading as they would include the contribution of the large-scale tourism centres such as Puerto Rico. In addition the accuracy of figures for local tourism enterprise in Playa de Mogán may be questionable if, as some informants suggested, revenues are not consistently declared. Moreover what is significant is the degree to which the *barrio pesquero* and certain households within it, took on a socio-spatial importance manifest in the increase in the number of bars and restaurants that began to open here in the 1970s, in conjunction with the decline of the agro-export economy. It is therefore a question of examining the *social* nature of changing economic activity rather than merely quantifying economic data according to scale or sector.



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27 "The fisherman and his family often have few other skills and will tolerate economic hardship until such a time that it becomes unbearable"

28 In 1994 there were a total of 29 fishing vessels registered as 'active' (*Cofradía de Pescadores*), up from 25 in 1990 (González *et al.* 1991: 5). Although many younger inhabitants no longer wish to pursue a livelihood in fishing, subsidies from the regional government have facilitated the upgrading of boats, most of which are now fitted with sonar equipment, and thus enhanced the productivity of individual crews in spite of this (Pers. comm. by the secretary of the *Cofradía de Pescadores*).

29 "If it wasn't for the women we would die of hunger."

30 This is reflected in the ongoing discussions between the council and landowners to develop a low-density tourism infrastructure on the land adjacent to the *barrio pesquero*. When asked why he didn't attend one of several meetings to discuss the implications for adjacent enterprises, the owner of one establishment (the oldest restaurant in the village) suggested that their views (peasant entrepreneurs) would make no difference to the outcome anyway.

31 The chief planning officer for the council also happens to be the heir to a significant amount of land in neighbouring Playa del Cura and Tauro which has been developed for tourism. He has been implicated in numerous corruption scandals in recent years involving the development of tourism infrastructure and facilities on land belonging to him and his family (see Cabildo Insular 1989a: A2-A6).

32 The fact that local *cacique* families could draw on the expertise of kin employed as lawyers and engineers, provided them with 'educational capital' which endowed them with a superior knowledge of the intricacies of planning regulations and so on, in contrast to many peasant entrepreneurs without formal education.

33 Figures demonstrate that in 1991 only 217 persons were registered as full-time employed in agriculture, 200 in fishing and 1,968 in hotel and catering related employment, which does not include other sectors which are strongly linked to the tourism sector such as transport, retail and construction. Although the figures cannot be regarded as comprehensive as there is a lot of undeclared and itinerant labour which goes undetected by official data, it is not so much the figures that are significant but rather the relative distribution of employment across sectors. Hotel and catering alone contribute up to 50% of Mogán's income while agriculture and fishing provide 4% and 8.5% respectively; as a whole the service sector accounts for nearly 80% of the municipal product (Istac 1995, 1997b).

34 *Hoja Informativa del Ayuntamiento de Mogán*. No. 33, 1997.

35 These can be differentiated according to the following matrix: enterprise which exists 'for tourism' alone; 'because of' tourism, but also serves a non-tourism market; and finally, 'in spite' of tourism, whereby its existence is almost entirely unconnected to the tourism economy.



# CHAPTER TEN

## *Playa de Mogán: From Community to Commodity ?*

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### Introduction

This chapter examines the shift from the predominantly household tourism enterprise economy which had emerged in Playa de Mogán during the 1970s to a more complex division of tourism production stimulated by the construction of a tourist marina along the waterfront of the *barrio pesquero* (see Plate 10.1). This development, which commenced in 1983 and was completed in 1989, gave rise to a substantial reconfiguration of space in the village, whose significance goes beyond the spatial expansion and reconstruction of the built environment. Moreover, in contrast to other areas of tourism development along the coast of Mogán, the development of the marina took place within the context of a locally-operated tourism infrastructure within the geographic and social boundaries of an existing nucleus of population. This was fundamental to the relationship between the different modes of tourism development and socio-economic change in the village. Although the household tourism enterprise economy remains a significant component of the village, the construction of the marina transformed the epicentre of the village and shifted it away from the *barrio pesquero*, towards the commercial tourism enterprises in this purpose-built section of the village.

The construction of a purpose-built or 'integrated' (cf. Pearce 1989: 67) tourist complex and marina signalled the acceleration of the incipient processes of commodification of the built environment in the village and its increasing transformation into a formalised tourism resort, integrated into and promoted by wider economic and political institutions. This chapter therefore examines the broader political context which framed the construction of the marina and in particular highlights the challenge to the relative autonomy of local cliques presented by the intervention of external economic and political interests into the tourism landscape of Playa de Mogán. However it is stressed that much of this chapter could only be based on secondary sources given the principal focus of the ethnography on local entrepreneurial responses to tourism, and thus is limited with regard to the elaboration of detailed empirical evidence concerning the relations of power at qualitatively different levels of interaction. Nevertheless sufficient evidence is gathered from a combination of archive sources, newspapers and council minutes which provide a clear indication of some of the dominant discourses and tendencies which have mediated the changing focus of tourism development in the village.

It is stressed however, that this process of transformation is not envisaged as an inevitable linear progression from an earlier stage of local involvement to one characterised by large-scale infrastructure and a transferral of control away from the locality into the hands of external investors and decision-makers, as depicted by many of the models discussed earlier (see Chapter One: *Models of Tourism Development*). The social processes which underlie the transformation of the village from a household tourism economy into a more institutionalized tourism resort have given rise to new configurations of tourism space mediated and shaped by local responses from an individual to institutional levels. The



construction of the marina and commodification of the built environment is thus examined in the context of the changing nature of social relations and conceptions of space amongst the social groups who live, work and visit in this locality. The changes in the appropriation and use of space in the village are also conditioned by and reflected in the uneven nature of entrepreneurial agency, which provides a link to a more detailed discussion of the dynamics of entrepreneurship in the following chapter.

### 10.1 *Refugio Pesquero* or ‘Quality Tourism’ ?

One of the most significant outcomes of the transition to democracy in Spain was the creation of seventeen regional political administrations of varying autonomy (*comunidades autonomas*) and political complexion (Heywood 1995: 142-157). Most regions however, including the Canary Islands, ushered in socialist administrations in the early 1980s, which reflected the instrumental role which PSOE had played in the transition to democracy, and their electoral dominance at a national level throughout the remainder of the decade. The construction of the marina in Playa de Mogán thus took place within a period of rapid ideological and political changes at national and regional levels, which mediated the emergence of democratic political institutions and renewed emphasis on liberalising economic development. Plans to develop a tourist marina and apartment complex in Playa de Mogán arose during the early 1970s in the context of proposals to develop harbour facilities for the benefit of local fishermen (*Plan de Refugios Pesqueros*) which were put forward by the *Mancomunidad Provincial Interinsular de Las Palmas* (Inter-Island Association of the Province of Las Palmas) as part of a national plan to assist Spanish fishing fleets, many of which had suffered the loss of mooring rights in the Spanish Sahara as a result of Spain’s withdrawal from these African territories. In addition, Spain and the Canary Islands were endowed with a significant body of artisanal fishing fleets, whose protection in the face of competition from larger more commercial fleets and the influx of imported fish from North Africa, was an important rationale behind the development of *refugio pesqueros* in those areas where such activities were concentrated (Rodríguez y Rodríguez de Acuña 1978: 59). Attempts by the state to protect artisanal fishing fleets can also be seen as a reflection of the conservative ideology of Franco’s regime, concerned with “*the nationalist glorification of peasant life*”, as exemplified by rural/fishing villages (Behar 1986: 335).

Unlike similar ruptures with dictatorships in Greece and Portugal the transition to democracy in Spain was characterised by a remarkable continuity in both a political and economic sense (Zaldívar and Castells 1992: 21-22). Indeed by the time of the triumph of the *Unión del Centro Democrático* (UCD) in 1977 in the first democratic elections since 1936, and later the Spanish Socialist Workers Party *Partido Socialista Obrero Español* (PSOE), which assumed office in 1982, the modernisation of the Spanish economy had already been instigated by the liberalising policies of the ‘Opus Dei’ technocrats (Casanova 1983). As a result the plans to develop a *refugio pesquero* in Playa de Mogán were unaffected by the political changes at a higher level, although the changing economic and political context of the early 1980s accelerated and emphasised the rationale of corporate-capitalist fuelled tourism development, above other social and political considerations. Despite the ascendance of PSOE to power in 1982, their





**Plate 10.1:** Playa [Puerto] de Mogán in 1994. (Photo: R. Bianchi)



social democratic goals were tempered by the immediate reality of the structural crisis in Spain's economy which was still remarkably uncompetitive in most sectors apart from tourism,<sup>1</sup> and a macro-economic environment in the throes of a neo-liberal revolution driven by conservative governments in the United States and Great Britain, whose essence was dictated by an attack on the kind of corporatist/interventionist economic policies which had been so prevalent in Spain under Franco. Seen in this context, although the policy of financing *refugios pesqueros* continued, they had no choice but to recognise the importance of tourism as a motor of economic development in Spain (Oliver-Smith *et al.* 1989: 348), fuelled by foreign investment and labour market flexibility.<sup>2</sup> PSOE's acceptance of the prevailing economic orthodoxy of this period accelerated after Spain's accession to the European Community in 1986, and was instrumental in the tourism-construction boom of the 1980s. It was in this context that plans to construct a *refugio pesquero* for the benefit of the artisanal fleet in Playa de Mogán became gradually subordinated to those of the coalition of private investors who were to develop the touristic infrastructure of the marina.

Plans to build a *refugio pesquero* in Playa de Mogán were initially tabled by the mayor (who was married to one of the descendents of the local *cacique* family) in 1972, together with proposals to develop tourism accommodation in the valley which were approved in 1974 (see Chapter Nine: footnote no. 2). The construction of tourism facilities envisaged in these plans were to be situated on the land adjacent to the *barrio pesquero* and would have been largely of benefit to the local landowning households which by this time had all but abandoned plantation agriculture. One or two of those who had inherited family homes and dwellings near the *barrio pesquero* became involved in tourism through the conversion of these premises into bars and restaurants for tourists whilst others continued to migrate towards well paid professions in the city. As mentioned earlier, plans to build tourism facilities adjacent to the *barrio pesquero* were put on hold due to macro-economic circumstances at the time, but were also eclipsed as a result of prevailing political imperatives and increasingly vocal requests of fishermen who were pressing for the construction of the *refugio pesquero*. Furthermore, during a plenary meeting held in the municipal council on the 30th of June 1971 the mayor alluded to the complications presented by the fact that the land was divided up into many property owners:

...no cabe pensar que la iniciativa privada lo realice, por hallarse dividido entre diferentes propietarios, no existe otra posibilidad sino que por el ayuntamiento se afronte a este,...<sup>3</sup>

Significantly, these plans were being drawn up just as the Spanish and Canary Island economy was entering a recession due to the prevailing macro-economic conditions provoked by the energy crisis in the 1970s (Cáceres 1988: 65). Nevertheless it precipitated the entrance of capital from the mainland and foreign multinationals, who benefited from the bankruptcy of Canary Island firms which had invested in tourism during the earlier phase of expansion in the 1960s (García Herrera 1987: 30). It is unclear precisely from which level of government the initiative to incorporate a tourist marina into the project originated, however minutes from council meetings, newspaper cuttings and oral sources suggest that it was supported by a combination of municipal politicians, members of the island council (*Cabildo*) and pressure from outside investors, many of whom had close links to high ranking government officials in



the *Cabildo*. The report compiled by the *Cabildo* indicates that proposals made by the investors to the council for the construction of a luxury tourist complex-marina in conjunction with the fishing port similar to other more 'quality' tourism investments which were beginning to emerge in the Mediterranean at that time (e.g. Puerto Banus on the Costa del Sol), were enthusiastically received by councillors given that an injection of private capital would guarantee that such a project would go ahead (Cabildo Insular 1989b: 56). Thus it was in this context of the growing economic recession at an international level and the political turmoil of the transition to democracy that the municipal government sought to attract inward investment which would combine the construction of harbour facilities for local artisanal fishing craft, with the appropriate infrastructure for a combined tourist marina and apartment complex, (*puerto deportivo-pesquero*). As such it would place Playa de Mogán on the map as the first major 'quality tourism resort' in Gran Canaria. Three other marinas already existed on the island but were not however integrated nodes of tourism-centred accumulation centred on a mixed retail/leisure/accommodation infrastructure as in the case of *Puerto de Mogán* (cf. Britton 1991: 466-473).

According to some sources, increasing demands by local fishermen in the village, who had presented a petition to the council in 1971 in support of the *refugio pesquero*, were sparked by an incident which occurred between fishermen and a foreign resident who was unhappy with the fact that fishermen used the area adjacent to his beachfront property (which he had purchased from the ex-mayor and member of the local *cacique* family) to repair nets and undertake routine maintenance. In order to displace them this particular resident thus proceeded to annex a portion of the beach by drawing up an "*expediente de domino*", whereby a parcel of land can be appropriated by any claimant after a period of time in which there are no alternative claims to its ownership (Cabildo Insular 1989b: 47). This then intensified demands by local fishermen on the municipal council to press ahead with the construction of harbour facilities. Their views were articulated by *Alberto* and *Enrique*, who were also closely involved with the local neighbourhood association, and who were amongst a minority of residents from the *barrio pesquero* who have had some influence in the local council, bolstered by their success as tourism entrepreneurs (see Chapter Eleven: *The Social Configurations of Entrepreneurship*).

The plans for a mixed port-marina were drawn up by an engineer in 1975 and approved by the Directorate-General for Ports and Coasts in Madrid in 1979, whereupon permission to begin construction on the first stage of the *puerto deportivo-pesquero* was finally granted by the state to the municipal council on the 27th of February 1981 (Cabildo Insular 1989b: 36). The touristic aspect of the marina represented a clear departure from existing forms of tourism urbanisation along the southern coastline in a physical and aesthetic sense, although like these it was still a predominantly capitalist venture controlled by a coalition of external private investors who had set up an anonymous company for the purposes of financing and developing the marina.<sup>4</sup> In particular the apartments are restricted to two-storeys and are planned in a low-density manner interspersed with passage-ways and small squares and gardens. The façades are designed according to a combination of supposedly local (village), Canary Island and southern Spanish architectural vernaculars, by a well-known architect and designer from the mainland with



influential contacts amongst tourism investors in the south of Spain, and who had previously worked on similar prestige tourism projects in other parts of the Mediterranean. The first phase of construction began in 1983 and was completed towards the end of 1987. This comprised the foundations and jetties of the marina and fishing port, 208 moorings for tourist yachts (approx. 2,500 pts/day), the first row of buildings along the marina waterfront, in which space was provided for 60 commercial units (retail and restaurant), and an initial accommodation infrastructure of 400 bed spaces (Smettan 1990: 59). The second phase consisted of a further 240 apartments and commenced in 1987 amid considerable controversy due to the fact that the council appeared to be acting in favour of commercial interests at the expense of local residents and fishermen (see below). The marina was finally completed in 1989. Altogether the *puerto deportivo-pesquero*, the majority of which is built on land reclaimed from the sea across the village waterfront, measures approximately 48,000 square metres, of which nearly half (22, 278 square metres) is dedicated to touristic use (Cabildo Insular 1989b: 72) (see Figure 10.1, Appendix V).

Although the development of the *puerto deportivo-pesquero* was accompanied by certain infrastructural improvements, not least the provision of a sheltered harbour for fishing craft, a number of important requirements were still lacking (see below). Moreover, in the context of renewed economic optimism and tourism growth in the 1980s, it became increasingly evident that the marina conformed to the characteristics of a “*speculative place construction*” (Harvey 1993: 8), rather than the civic-led project which might have been favoured by either traditional corporatist or social democratic approaches to development. Indeed the recent proliferation of *puertos deportivos* in Spain under the banner of ‘quality tourism’ has been heavily criticised for the ecological degradation they have caused as well as the fact that they have become a convenient vehicle for property speculation in the ‘post-mass tourism’ age (Garrido 1994):

Hotels, *marinas* and the like are a special niche in the commercial property market because of their asset specificity, low economies of scope, need for constant renovation to maintain competitiveness as an investment asset, and volatility of tourist flows. (Britton 1991: 472) [emphasis added]

It thus constituted the vehicle by which different coalitions of locally and externally-based investors have been able to ensure the distribution of community resources in their favour, and in so doing render their investments profitable. Hence the ownership structure of the marina itself perpetuates the logic of commercial property-driven development, thus reinforcing the structures of capitalist accumulation within the tourism enterprise economy of Playa de Mogán.

The administrative concession to develop the commercial-tourism infrastructure of the marina was granted to the private company behind which are a coalition of assorted investors, predominantly from the mainland, which derive their revenue from numerous leaseholders as well as mooring fees on the 25% which belong to them. The remaining berths were sold to the hotel and individual entrepreneurs, some of whom also run restaurants. The most important source of revenue is derived from the commercial units which have been leased or sold to individual business proprietors and other property development companies. Different constituencies of entrepreneurs therefore make-up the mosaic of ownership whose interests are dependent upon the continued ability of the marina to guarantee a profitable return on their



investments.<sup>5</sup> Many of the apartments were also sold to private individuals for their own personal recreational use or else lease them to one of several foreign tour operators which sell packages to Puerto de Mogán (which may help recoup the cost of purchase). The hotel is leased to tour operators by the concessionary company, usually for a period of three years, and therefore targets a slightly different category of tourist to those who stay in the apartment complexes. The commercial units were either sold off (some in blocks) to private investors (including municipal politicians according to oral sources) and property companies who either lease these spaces or have sold them on to the actual proprietors of the individual businesses themselves.<sup>6</sup> An expatriate restaurant proprietor suggested that most individual entrepreneurs in the marina prefer to rent commercial space so that they have the option of leaving with relative ease should the business not be as profitable as expected. Indeed, informal conversations with several proprietors did reveal a high degree of rented properties amongst the enterprise situated in the marina. Thus it is possible to distinguish on the one hand, between the different coalitions of financial interests who seek to appropriate rent directly from the leasing of apartments (through tour operators) and commercial units, including the concessionary company itself, other property companies and private individuals to whom blocks of apartments and commercial holdings were sold, and the individual proprietors of tourism enterprises on the other. The latter gain their income via the exploitation of a particular business concern (retail, bar, restaurant) situated within the marina developed and 'owned' by the concessionary company.<sup>7</sup>

The incorporation of Playa de Mogán into wider circuits of the international tourism system, in particular to tour operators and time-share companies with direct access to international markets, has thus intensified competition over the use of space in the village. This has therefore placed the municipal council at the interface between the different groups of investors and entrepreneurs who control a range of assets and individual businesses in the marina and *barrio pesquero* for the purposes of extracting profit, and other interest groups including, fishermen, local entrepreneurs, landowners and finally, residents. Despite the earlier emphasis of the authorities on the wider civic purpose of the *refugio pesquero*, it was not long after the construction had begun that the priorities had begun to shift in favour of the commercial investors over those of the village and fishermen. The pressure to complete the tourism infrastructure was increasing, given that by this time the tourism economy was beginning to enter a new and more vigorous cycle of growth, which reached its height between 1985 and 1990 (Macías and Rodríguez 1995: 428). Much of the political conflict surrounding the development of the *puerto deportivo-pesquero* centred on the fact that Mogán was, and still is, one of the remaining local councils on the island which lacks an Urban Development, or General Plan (*Plan General de Ordenación Urbana*) and thus could only draw up a land use plan using the provincial planning standards (Cabildo Insular 1989b: 97; see also Chapter Nine: footnote no. 1). However, beyond the mere technical shortcomings, the planning and development of the marina revealed deep-seated social and political fissures between local cliques and the emergent institutions of the democratic state bureaucracy at an island and regional level.



## 10.2 Tourism, Politics and the Contours of Dissent

One of the principal areas of concern was the fact that the construction of tourism infrastructure in the marina went ahead in the absence of any strict planning criteria regulating the use of space, given that the classification of land use had been drawn up prior to the construction of the marina. The local council had therefore allowed the construction of tourism facilities to go ahead in the absence of the appropriate planning documentation, which enabled the developers to proceed at the expense of the wider needs of the fishermen and village inhabitants.<sup>8</sup> This is not a surprising revelation in a country and region where the intervention of local government in favour of commercial interests in the absence of or in contradiction to a General Plan, has been a relatively common occurrence:

En muchos casos, se trata de terrenos calificados como no urbanizables en el Plan General; la práctica urbanística española ha permitido que sobre estos suelos rústicos se haya aprobado Planes Parciales en contradicción con el Plan General. (Cals 1986: 158)<sup>9</sup>

Municipal intervention in favour of commercial interests was further exemplified by the fact that the council agreed to grant the concession to build and manage the tourism facilities in the marina to the company, prior to having been given this authority by the authorities in Madrid, thus in effect privatising land which should have remained in the public domain (Cabildo Insular 1989b: 71).<sup>10</sup> In addition, one of the principal agreements which governed the granting of permission by the state to the municipal government for the construction of the marina, was that the provision of facilities for fishermen should be completed *prior to* the commencement of the construction of the tourism apartments and commercial units. However the council allowed the construction of these facilities in the marina itself to proceed before the fishing quay had been fully completed and equipped; in particular it lacked electricity, refrigeration and storage facilities for boats and nets (*La Provincia* 15/9/88). The provision of public amenities, which would have been a valuable boost to the social economy of the village, most important of which were public housing and funding for the training of locals to be able to take up the jobs which were to be available in the tourist marina, also lagged behind the construction of commercial installations in the marina. Attempts to ensure that these concessions were agreed upon by the developers, were according *Enrique*, consistently obstructed by the municipal government. To date neither training facilities for tourism nor public housing have been provided for the local inhabitants in Playa de Mogán. Indeed, land earmarked for the construction of public housing near Lomo Quiebre was eventually sold to a different development consortium in order to build an access road to the proposed tourism urbanisation in the neighbouring valley of Veneguera, a development which has also been mired in controversy since the late 1970s (see *La Provincia* 17/5/91, 15/1/98).

A combination of the weakness of planning regulations and the complicity of the municipal government were crucial factors in the ability of powerful political and economic actors to appropriate space both within the existing boundaries of the village and in the newly created urban spaces of the marina itself. In the report compiled by the *Cabildo*, the developers are accused of having encroached upon 1,200 square metres of the marina, upon which it was stipulated in the original plans that there should be no buildings of any description. This was in order that the marina should comply with the Coastal Law



(*Ley de Costas*) of 1969 (subsequently revised in 1988), which stipulates that 25% of the first one hundred metres of the coastline should be dedicated to non-commercial use. Whether or not the detail of such claims, in terms of the precise surface area, were correct, what is important is the fact that they were rejected by the developers (*La Provincia* 25/9/88), and that the overall thrust of the construction of the marina was one which put commercial rationale before civic interests.<sup>11</sup> Such was the extent of municipal negligence that many commercial establishments subsequently opened without the appropriate licences, whilst the council was still embroiled in a battle over the provision of services and infrastructure for fishermen; indeed, it was a relative 'free for all' according to one of the protagonists of the fishermen's opposition. A further indication of the extent to which many believed the municipal council to be acting in the interests of the development company rather than those of fishermen and local residents is made clear in this extract from a letter sent by a resident of Mogán, which is highly critical of the development and appears in a report compiled by the urban planning department of the regional government:

...y lo más grave es que eso se hace bajo la sibilina coartada de crear una infraestructura pesquera para defender los intereses de los pescadores, mientras la realidad opera en el sentido de minusvalorar la actividad pesquera manteniéndola en cotas tercermundistas, en beneficio de un turismo de lujo que la Corporación no sabe ni abordar.<sup>12</sup>

However despite these isolated protests from certain quarters and the attempt by fishermen to press their demands on the municipal council, civic protest against the proposed development was muted. Indeed Playa de Mogán was still a largely pre-capitalist social formation with few horizontal social relations, dominated by local *caciques* families and political cliques, although the emergence of a small number of peasant entrepreneurs was beginning to challenge these established elites. Nevertheless, the fishermen continued to exert pressure through the local neighbourhood association which managed to collect three hundred signatures to back their demands. The protest between fishermen and the coalition of councillors and commercial interests behind the marina not only reflected pragmatic concerns regarding the continuing lack of facilities in the fishing section of the marina. It also reveals deeper contrasts in the conceptions of space between fishermen, residents and different factions of capital and entrepreneurial interests, each of which are engaged in a struggle to define the use to which space can be devoted. The outcome of such competition is conditioned by the economic and political resources each has at its disposal, but which are unevenly distributed amongst them.

The recreational section of the marina constitutes a space of *consumption* from which the respective investors and entrepreneurs derive value in the form of profit from their commercial holdings. In contrast, for fishermen and their families the marina constitutes a space of *production* associated with the specific nature of their work, although they have also become part of the 'product' as evidenced by the emphasis on the rustic appeal of this 'fishing village' in tourist promotion brochures (see below). Their concerns are centred on the fixed capital of the marina for the purposes of *production*, and thereby the appropriate technological and infrastructural endowments which will improve their levels of productivity and thereby ensure the continuing reproduction of the artisanal fishing economy and their livelihoods. In this respect certain informants voiced their concern regarding the lack of moorings set aside for fishing



boats, which would limit future expansion of fleets (see also *La Provincia* 15/9/88). It was suggested that this was an intentional strategy so as to limit the future expansion of fishing craft and thus eventually force many into accepting the 'inevitable' growth of commercially-driven tourism development. Some fishermen are also concerned at the lack of space in the dry dock areas which are being increasingly filled up by pleasure yachts and whose maintenance is controlled by a foreign-owned yachting company based in the marina. Although the number of fishing vessels has remained relatively stable over the past decade, many have left fishing to work in tourism-related employment. This has prompted the regional government to invest in the upgrading of infrastructure in the port, such as the provision of refrigeration facilities and grants of up to 60% of the cost towards upgrading fishing vessels, which led to six newly refurbished boats being completed in 1997 (see Chapter Nine: footnote 28). Sport fishing (*pesca deportiva*), a pursuit which has attracted some fishermen from the village including one person who operates his own boat out of Puerto Rico, is singled out by others for particular criticism (see Chapter Eleven: p.248).<sup>13</sup> Although there are no territorially-defined rights at sea, sport fishing is seen by the rest as assisting in the appropriation of their traditional fishing grounds by 'outsiders'. It therefore represents the continuation of the commodification of this locality for tourist consumption into the sea itself, which then becomes a space of pleasure rather than production. Many are particularly critical of sport boat owners who sell their catch directly to restaurants below market rates, a practice whose economic importance is however diminished by the fact that they catch very little in comparison to the working boats (Santana Talavera 1990b: 36).

The conflict over the use of space was also manifest in a dispute regarding the use to which an empty plot adjacent to the fishing section of the marina was to be devoted (Figure 10.1, Appendix V: Block B-7). The original intention of the investors was to build a further block of apartments, however this would have had the effect of reducing valuable space for maintenance work on boats, as well as presenting a physical and psychological barrier between the fishermen's place of work, and the social and civic spaces of the *barrio pesquero*. Moreover, the municipal government had also failed to deliver on the provision of a winch for pulling fishing boats out of the water in order to carry out necessary maintenance and repairs. The fishermen continued to exert pressure on the municipal government, which was given added legitimacy by the *Cabildo* inquiry, until the control of this site was eventually ceded to the *Cofradía* by the council. The *Cofradía* also eventually acquired a mechanical hoist which greatly facilitated the removal of boats from the water; in addition it allowed them to charge the owners of tourism yachts which needed to be brought into the dry dock for repairs and maintenance. Nevertheless in 1991 the *Cofradía* was still voicing criticism of the council's neglect of fishermen's concerns:

Queremos hacer llegar a la opinion pública que estos señores no han creado la cofradía de pescadores ni que tampoco la han dotado de servicios. (*Canarias* 7 17/5/91)<sup>14</sup>

Overall the actions of the municipal council were favourable towards the coalition of capitalist interests backing the commercial/tourism-focused development of the marina. On occasion it had also acted to quell dissent amongst some of the more prominent spokesmen for the fishermen, through a combination of bribery, coercion and manipulation. Some of the principal protagonists were enticed with material



rewards to encourage the fishermen to drop some of their more vociferous protests, including houses, cars and even lucrative jobs within the marina. Indeed some were coopted into positions of influence, including the position of *patron* (head) of the *Cofradía* (several of whom have been local councillors or subsequently entered municipal politics), and head of the crew responsible for maintenance in the marina; many of these as well as the gardeners are indeed ex-fishermen. Failing that, the council attempted to discredit them through the suggestion that they were only interested in the protest as a vehicle for their own political ambitions.

The incorporation of some of the more vocal local residents into the benefit structure of the tourism development process the council and developers enabled to appease some of the protests and exploit internal rivalries within the village, thereby ensuring that the overriding interests of the developers (and local councillors) were unaffected. In a conversation between an ex-fisherman who claimed to have been the first to work for the marina in maintenance (one of his brothers was also one of the few fisherman to have entered municipal politics during the early 1980s), and the owner of a local pension, the former was accused by the latter of having succumbed to the developers. In reply to the ex-fisherman's suggestion that the marina had benefited the village, the owner of the pension argued that, "*si pero ustedes han beneficiado de esto*".<sup>15</sup> Thus beneath the veneer of tranquility and coexistence between the increasingly diverse groups of itinerant and permanent residents who now reside in the village, there lies a modicum of veiled resentment towards the few locals such as himself, who gained personal benefit from the marina as a result of their collaboration with the authorities and investors. Nevertheless this is also accompanied by an almost stoic acceptance of the inevitability of tourism, which is hardly surprising given that it has enabled most residents to escape a life of meagre subsistence, and cynical resignation to the unaccountability of local politics. Indeed voting irregularities have not been an unusual feature of local elections since the transition to democracy. During the 1987 elections for the Canary Island parliament, reports suggest that in the neighbouring valley of Veneguera where only 200 people were registered to vote, 600 votes were actually cast. In another incident it was reported that a fisherman had returned from work at sea only to find that his vote had already been cast for him (*La Provincia* 11/6/87)!

It is commonly suggested, particularly in the context of the rapid and large-scale tourism development across the Spanish coastal littoral in the 1960s (e.g. Morris and Dickinson 1989), that local governments such as the municipal council in Mogán, did little to control or regulate the spread of extensive tourism resort complexes along the coastline, and that in fact they often collaborated closely with developers in a process of bargaining for favours and trade-offs. Indeed it cannot be denied that the south coast of Gran Canaria is littered with the concrete outcomes of political negligence and private greed, an observation confirmed by Santana Santana:

En Canarias, alcaldes y grupos de gobiernos locales han actuado en muchas ocasiones en favor de intereses privados y en contra de leyes de protección de espacios singulares. (1993: 70)<sup>16</sup>

However the alliances forged between external investors and local political cliques needs to be seen in the context of the specific structures of capitalist development within which tourism has emerged and the



establishment of a devolved system of planning in the post-dictatorship era. Although Franco abrogated many municipal decision-making powers which had been won during the Second Republic (1931-36), the reconstruction of democratic political institutions at different levels was grafted onto pre-existing social structures and thus in some cases exacerbated antagonisms between local and regional or national levels of governance, rather than facilitate consensus-building. As discussed in earlier chapters (see Chapter Eight), economic resources and political power in Playa de Mogán have been dominated by a small clique of local *cacique* families, and more recently wealthy entrepreneurs, some of whom are closely related to the former. Since the ascendance of the first democratically elected cohort of municipal councillors in 1979 (which did little to alter the fundamental social composition of local governing elites) there has been a core group of councillors who are not affiliated to regional/national political parties. Rather, they constitute a series of politically expedient coalitions of local cliques, associations of kinship groups and prominent entrepreneurs from Arguineguín, Mogán and Playa de Mogán, whose primary motives are the mobilisation, accumulation and control of municipal resources rather than the implementation of a strategic (tourism) policy based on a coherent set of ideological principles. Indeed the political culture and ideological outlook of those who are affiliated to the recognised national political parties do not necessarily correspond with those of their counterparts at higher levels. In reality, the significance of their positions is determined by their ability to convert political capital into economic gain for both themselves and their allies. The most prominent of these are, the *Grupo de Amigos de Mogán* (the rather explicitly-titled, Group of Friends of Mogán) who put up candidates in the 1979 and 1983 municipal elections; the *Centro Independiente de Mogán* (Independent Centre of Mogán) who put up candidates in the 1987 municipal elections, many of whom were previously part of GAMO; and finally, the *Agrupación Moganera Independiente* (Independent Group of Mogán) who fielded candidates in 1991 and 1995, and was the main governing party until 1995. (*La Provincia* 10/5/83; 10/6/87; 30/5/95 and A.A.M.)

An indication of the degree to which the activities of municipal government and the parochial concerns of local cliques intersect became evident during the period of rapid tourism expansion in Mogán in the 1980s. Although, the municipal council was under-equipped to prevent the scope of planning infringements which were subsequently committed by large coastal developments, newspaper reports regarding the spectacular construction boom along the coast of Mogán in the 1980s suggest that it was also exacerbated by the negligence and partisan interests of key members of the council planning department with access to strategically situated land holdings in these areas (*La Provincia* 11/5/88). Moreover the planning regulations (*Normas Subsidiarias*) passed by the council in 1987 permitted all but one small stretch of coastline between Playa de Mogán and Veneguera (already declared a 'Natural Park' and thus off limits to development) to be developed. As a result this period of construction culminated in an inquiry into corruption at the local level led by the island and regional government, resulting in an attempt by the *Cabildo* to suspend certain municipal planning powers (*La Provincia* 28/5/95). Shortly before the construction of the marina itself came under public scrutiny, the *Cabildo* was prompted to call a temporary halt to construction which signalled the consolidation of a long-term and ongoing dispute



between the municipal government and both the *Cabildo* and regional governments over tourism policy and planning in this municipality.

On one level the antagonisms between the local and island/regional governments reflect the degree to which prominent members of local cliques in Mogán, some of whom are heirs to potentially suitable land for tourism development adjacent to the *barrio pesquero* in Playa de Mogán as well as along the coast, intersect with the 'formal' instruments of planning at a municipal level. On another level, it also highlights the battle between local political cliques, which articulate the concerns of powerful local entrepreneurs, and bureaucratic elites at an island level who were attempting to impose their authority over tourism development through the newly constituted democratic powers of the island and regional bureaucracies. The aforementioned inquiry conducted by the *Cabildo* (1989) was carried out with the assistance of the college of architects (*Colegio Oficial de Arquitectos*)<sup>17</sup> which comprised known PSOE supporters who were well represented in the *Cabildo* and regional government at that time. In contrast, supporters of the marina were local councillors and the development company, some of whom had links to high-ranking members of UCD, the centrist political party and principal architect of the transition to democracy in Spain. Hence it was suggested by informal sources inside the *Cabildo* that the dispute was motivated by political concerns due to the fact that nature of the infringements documented in the report were insignificant compared to the extent of unregulated construction and environmental destruction further along the coast in the same municipality (see *Cabildo Insular* 1989a: A1-A35).

The increasing competence of the regional government in the arena of tourism planning, has been counter-balanced to some extent by the increase in autonomy and jurisdiction conferred on municipal governments under the 1978 constitution and the subsequent Local Government Act in 1985 which provided a more precise legal foundation for municipal authority in the following areas; public security, passenger transport and traffic management, public health and consumer protection, housing and town planning, leisure and cultural amenities, building regulations, social services and school buildings (Canel 1994: 49). However, the General Plan does little more than to designate land use and is insufficient to qualify as an instrument of *strategic* tourism planning (Seco Gómez 1985: 415). The area perhaps most indicative of the degree to which parochial concerns are concealed behind the facade of municipal sovereignty, which local councillors claim is being violated by the intervention of the regional government in 'their own affairs' (*Canarias* 7 17/7/95), is one which concerns the attempt by the island and regional authorities to implement the insular plan, the PIOT (*Plan Insular de Ordenación del Territorio*) (see Chapter Nine: *Costa Mogán...*). Whilst this appear to be a straightforward technocratic dispute between different levels of government with constitutionally-defined roles in this respect (although admittedly this is the subject of ambiguity and hence partly responsible for the dispute itself), with regard to the precise scale and nature of tourism development that would be most appropriate to the area, when examined in the context of the long-standing autonomy of local *cacique* families in the economic and political affairs of this area it becomes apparent that the conflict is underpinned by historical rivalries between local and island and/or regional power bases. This particular dispute thus reveals competing claims over the ability of different groups to regulate the future direction of tourism



development in Mogán, which has specific implications for the ability of local cliques to monopolise tourism wealth in the locality. It is perhaps indicative that the only councillor to uphold the legitimacy of the PIOT and declare her opposition to the continued development of tourism in Veneguera has been the representative of the socialist PSC-PSOE which tends not to be as closely linked to local cliques (*La Provincia* 15/1/98).

The interpenetration of municipal governing classes and dominant local business concerns has also been heavily criticised by the island and regional political authorities responsible for promulgating the PIOT, evidenced here by a statement made by the councillor for territorial planning in the *Cabildo*:

hemos intentado superar la típica política de tierra quemada utilizada por aquellos agentes a los que sólo les interesa el rendimiento a corto plazo. (*La Provincia* 28/5/95: 25)<sup>18</sup>

Indeed twenty-nine local business persons supported the municipal government boycott of the PIOT when it was published (but not yet approved by the regional government) in 1992 (*La Provincia* 31/5/95). Moreover, in 1995 the chief executive of the property company which controls the tourism resort complex of Puerto Rico, although not from this area but a prominent lawyer from the urban metropolitan elite in Las Palmas, invoked a set of populist arguments against the PIOT which demonstrates the degree to which the apparent aspirations for local autonomy articulated by the municipal government, coincide with large-scale external commercial concerns, which disguise underlying speculative interests in a rhetoric of 'development':

el PIOT no desarrollo el turismo de una forma lógica...porque paraliza las inversiones y las desvia a otras islas que cuentan con una normativa más sensata; incrementa el paro, sobre todo en la juventud; y provoca inseguridad jurídica. (*La Provincia* 12/5/95: 25)<sup>19</sup>

The degree to which prominent business concerns are directly involved in the make-up of the municipal government,<sup>20</sup> is further illustrated by the results of the last municipal elections held on May 1995, which saw seven prominent local businessmen (out of a total of nine councillors) elected onto the town council (*La Provincia* 31/5/95). Six of them have financial interests in the service sector, and a further two - both of whom are from Playa de Mogán - the councillor for Tourism and the deputy mayor/councillor for Education, Fishing and Social Services, have a variety of business interests spread across the catering, retail and property sectors, most of which are concentrated in Playa de Mogán itself (see Chapter Eleven: *The Social Configurations of Entrepreneurship*). Most of these activities are in any case dependent on the fortunes of tourism, apart from the fishing sector in which the latter also has a considerable stake as the principal fish merchant in Playa de Mogán. Even their respective portfolios gives an indication of the extent to which their political positions coincide with their private business interests.

The development of luxury tourism facilities in Playa de Mogán offered the municipal government an opportunity to channel central and regional government subsidies as well as private capital, into the development of port facilities for fishermen and simultaneously generate significant tourism revenue both for the municipality and for themselves through their private business concerns. Indeed, 80% of the actual



physical infrastructure upon which the tourism facilities were built (by private capital), was predominantly financed by public investment (Cabildo Insular 1989b). Nevertheless, council minutes suggest that prominent members of the government, including the incumbent mayor (himself a descendent of a prominent local *cacique* family), were concerned about the pressure from investors to press ahead with development. The following statement from the mayor during a meeting concerning the decision whether or not to grant permission for the construction of the marina, suggests an element of animosity towards what he referred to as, “*the powerful interests behind Puerto de Mogán*” :

siempre fui yo personalmente, y mi partido, firme defensor del Puerto Pesquero para Playa de Mogán y así mismo del Puerto Deportivo-Pesquero..., con la preocupación de que fuera a prevalecer intereses particulares sobre los generales y superiores del pueblo y la Corporación que presido..., nos importa la iniciativa privada pero no una iniciativa privada que vaya a anteponer sus intereses a los del pueblo...*Se que esta actitud firme mia y de mi partido mi acarrea enmistades y persecuciones, de gente poderosa, que está detras del tema del Puerto de Mogán.* Pero ne me asusta porque sé que *lucho por mi pueblo* y desde luego en lo que sea justo la empresa privada tendrá su beneficio en la obra inmensa que se realice. Pero aquellos que esperan beneficios desproporcionados o que confían en maniobras especulativas, que se olviden. <sup>21</sup> [emphasis added]

Despite a rhetoric of ‘community interest’, often invoked by those in a pivotal position of power at the interface between those below them and powerful ‘outside’ interests, such attitudes also reflect the continuation of the tradition of *caciquismo*, or paternalistic style of local politics, which has been a feature of this locality for over a century. By invoking concerns to do with ‘public welfare’, local cliques are able to reinforce their authority in the face of potential opposition, whilst appearing to guide development in a manner that would be of benefit to the ‘local community’, rather than to ‘outsiders’ and ‘distant’ political agencies in Las Palmas and the mainland. Thus, in contrast to some of the mechanistic assumptions which surround the literature on tourism development (see Chapters One and Two), the ambiguous disposition of the municipal government towards tourism development (who are enthusiastic proponents of large-scale commercial development yet are rooted in intensely parochial political loyalties) can also be interpreted as an attempt by local cliques to challenge the legitimacy of the island and regional governments and thereby to exercise control over the benefits and future direction of tourism development in Mogán which [in their view] is being threatened by the intervention of decision-making institutions at a higher level.

### *The Politics of Local Tourism Development: Preliminary Conclusions*

The municipal government does not therefore act merely as a functional conduit for ‘external’ capital from a position of subservience to the interests of external investors who wish to exploit the touristic potential of this area. Such rhetoric is commonly used by journalists and nationalistic politicians, keen to apportion blame to those who have ‘betrayed’ the interests of ‘local communities’, usually depicted in the language of ‘outsiders’ - specifically, higher levels of governance and in some cases, groups of investors, who threaten the interests of local cliques. This points to the dangers of pandering to notions of local participation in tourism development without an adequate understanding of the relations of power which mediate access to resources at a municipal and village level. Indeed the interaction of state agency and private interests need to be seen in the context of the local/regional characteristics of the peripheral capitalist formation, which has parallels with other parts of Southern Europe:



The creation of political parties [in Southern Europe] comes about, with many contrasts and conflicts, as a result of them being given the possibility to intervene in the construction of market mechanisms. Elsewhere, market forces developed before the democratic parliamentary political classes. (Sapelli 1995: 115)

From a political perspective, island and regional authorities questioned both the legitimacy and direction of tourism development being pursued by the municipal government, whilst at the same time the economic dominance of those closely associated with the municipal government was threatened by larger capitalistic concerns pursuing their own specific agenda of capital accumulation. Nevertheless, given the period of economic stagnation during the late 1970s, whose impact was predominantly felt in higher levels of unemployment due to the contraction of the construction sector (Rodríguez and Sánchez 1978: 27),<sup>22</sup> the municipal administration would have been unlikely to resist any proposals for tourism development regardless of the social and environmental consequences. In addition there is always a danger with integrated mega-projects of this kind, that any uncertainty or civil protest would lead investors (who had no prior social or historical link to this locality) to transfer their proposal elsewhere. For example the Disney corporation threatened to do just that in Long Beach, California, if 'suitable financial arrangements' (public infrastructural investment) were not put in place by the city council. This highlights the inherent dangers of seeking geographically-mobile capital (Britton 1991: 473), particularly where tourism constitutes the main source of income and employment for a particular locality. However it is also important to recognise that the marina is a source of pride and prestige for the municipal authorities (in contrast to the indifference of many residents) for having incorporated Playa de Mogán into an international circuit of 'high quality' tourism resorts alongside well-known Mediterranean destinations such as Puerto Banus (Costa del Sol) and similar projects in Sardinia.

The intervention of the different levels of government and manifold coalitions of investors in the development of larger-scale, formal tourism facilities has thus been of crucial importance in shaping the particular character of the tourism landscape in Playa de Mogán. The political institutions and actors concerned, are not neutral actors 'external' to the process of tourism development, who merely created the necessary regulatory environment (or not, as the case may be) in which investment can flourish. Nor can the governing institutions involved be interpreted as uniform actors with coherent goals in the manner suggested by those studies which do not look beyond the concrete outcomes of formal decision-making practices (cf. Edgell 1990). In particular, it would be difficult to fully comprehend the substance of the conflict between the municipal government and the regional authorities, without situating it in relation to the historical evolution of capitalist development in the locality and wider processes of social change. The various forums of decision-making which exist at different levels of state agency thus constitute the political terrain competing socio-economic interests struggle over the control of key economic resources:

the state possesses no power on it's own; it is, instead the primary site or field for the exercise of different modalities of power. (Surin 1996: 199)

The municipal government in Mogán has therefore played a constitutive role in the reproduction of a corporate-capitalist fuelled tourist enterprise economy manifest in the increasing privatisation and



changing configuration of space in Playa de Mogán. Overall local state agency reflects the priorities of a particular coalition of investment interests and political actors, at the expense of civic-based priorities. Furthermore, there is a significant degree of interpenetration between political actors and competing factions of entrepreneurial and capitalistic interests which has engineered spatial patterns of tourism development more favourable to the interests of large-scale commercial enterprise.

The development of tourism in Playa de Mogán has emerged in the context of an undercapitalised agrarian economy within a peripheral capitalist formation. Furthermore, rather than lead to the erosion of parochial political cliques in Mogán, tourism has gone some way to exacerbating local-regional tensions, a factor which has been intensified in the context of the construction of democratic political institutions through which the intervention of the state into the economic affairs of this locality has been further legitimised. As a result, locally dominant cliques have sought to convert their political capital into economic gain through the facilitation of investment by external capital in the marina as a means to ensure their role as local ‘power-brokers’:

De esta forma la función económica fundamental del caciquismo es la producción de la ideología capaz de hacer coexistir a ambos sistemas de valores local y nacional; esto es, asumir (y legitimizar) la corrupción local. (Quero 1977, cited in CIES 1977: 231).<sup>23</sup>

This role is also indicative of the fact that the rapid development of a modern tourism economy has occurred in the almost complete absence of indigenous capitalist development within the locality itself. Hence the ability to forge alliances with external sources of capital has become a key mechanism enabling local cliques and political factions to reinforce their overall position of authority over the flow of benefits from tourism.

However, just as the increasing diversification of the economy and concomitant expansion of public institutions has led to the growth (albeit incomplete) of horizontal social and political ties and increasing social mobility, at the same time it has also broadened the scope of political action. There is thus no simple divide between the pre-capitalist (clientelistic) society in Playa de Mogán on the one hand, dominated by the local landowning classes, and the emergent capitalist society brought about to a large extent by tourism, on the other. As Mouzelis has argued, it is important that we “*understand how ‘modern’ clientelism is linked to the process of capital accumulation and to the changing class structure...*” (1978: 481). In Playa de Mogán tourism has enlarged the context and transformed the terrain within which the passage of political favours and factional conflict occurs. In this respect Kenny (1961) has suggested that the trading of votes for favours (the nature of which depends upon the specific context - for example, in Playa de Mogán this commonly involves overlooking the absence of a construction licence in return for political support) is commonplace at the village level in Spain. However, the assumption that these constitute relationships of ‘patronage’ has been attacked by Gilsenan (1977) as a functional-consensus view which only serves to obstruct deeper analysis of the internal characteristics of the social structure. Often ‘patron-client’ relations are in fact relations of “*alliance and consolidation at the top*” [emphasis in the original] (1977: 182). Rather than a system of face-to-face



exchange whereby those who occupy more powerful positions in the social and/or political hierarchy help advance the standing of others less powerful than themselves in exchange for votes and loyalty, a closer analysis may in fact reveal that those who are trading favours occupy a “*common structural position*” (Gilsenan 1977: 182) in the social hierarchy and are merely consolidating their own positions of power in the face of threats or challenges from other factions of relatively equal or perhaps superior social status and power.

Indeed, Mouzelis argues that lateral exchanges of illicit personal-political favours characteristic of peripheral capitalist formations, are not necessarily weakened by the decline in vertical patron-client relationships (1978: 497). Further to this, he argues that the factionalism of local cliques in peripheral capitalist formations demonstrates an inability on their behalf to articulate a coherent hegemonic ideology or framework for political praxis in the context of under-developed capitalism (Mouzelis 1978: 480). Instead the political strategies of local cliques are rooted in temporary and fragile alliances of common short-term interests, which often revolve around personalistic disputes over the distribution of local resources and claims regarding the upholding of local decision-making ‘autonomy’. Thus contrary to pluralist notions of planning and policy (cf. Inskeep 1991; Gunn 1994) the expansion of the powers of planning at regional level and the intervention of wider levels of bureaucracy in tourism has reinforced parochial loyalties at the expense of local inhabitants excluded from the channels of municipal power.

The development of the marina in Playa de Mogán occurred against the backdrop of shifting arrangements of economic and political power. In particular the development of tourism had precipitated the expansion of new intermediate entrepreneurial classes and the transition to democracy across Spain was leading to the emergence of a pluralist political system and most importantly, the establishment of democratic procedures through which tourism development planning could take place. The traditional monopoly of local cliques over community resources and municipal power, has thus been progressively eroded by the increasing jurisdiction of both the *Cabildo* and the regional government of the Canary Islands (both of which were dominated by PSOE during the mid-1980s), in planning and economic development at a regional and local level. These constitutional changes represented a growing challenge to the power base of local cliques, who had been long accustomed to manipulating local affairs through the municipal government.

Nevertheless, the previously stable and unchallenged authority of local *cacique* families has been disrupted by the intervention of the state through the expansion of the decision-making powers of different levels of government, and the emergence of the ‘new’ entrepreneurial classes which reflects an increasingly intense arena of competition for the touristic resources of the village, which local *cacique* families are no longer entirely able to regulate. There has however been little change in the composition of those who control land-based assets in the locality; indeed, it has been the ability of the landowning families to continue to monopolise this particular resource in Playa de Mogán, which underpins their current drive to attract larger-scale commercial tourism development to this area. There are thus significant contrasts in the social configurations of tourism entrepreneurship on the basis of the resources



to which they have access and the manner in which these are converted into commercial use, which have clear implications for their ability to dictate the overall development of the tourism enterprise economy in Playa de Mogán (see Chapter Eleven: *Social Configurations of Entrepreneurship*). In this regard the following section will examine the increasing intervention of capital and state agency into the built environment of Playa de Mogán itself, in order to identify the specific spatial manifestations of distinct forms of entrepreneurial agency and local responses to tourism, which are then analysed further in Chapter Eleven.

### 10.3 The Cultural Ideology of Tourism and Conceptions of Space

The underlying structural changes in both the local economic base and political institutions, in the context of unfolding tourism development, have also been reinforced by a social discourse of place which serves to construct a cultural geography of space (see Saarinen 1998), around the landscapes of tourism development in Playa de Mogán. Notions of ‘civilisation’ and ‘development’ are implicit in the formal touristification processes which have transformed the village. They are also evident in the tourism discourses promoting ‘quality tourism’ (*turismo de calidad*) which pervades official attitudes to tourism in the 1990s and is clearly expressed in this statement from a former president of the Canary Islands during the inauguration of the Hotel School in Gran Canaria:

no podemos privar a nuestra tierra de contar con unas instalaciones como las de estos centros de formación, que permiten atraer un turismo de calidad y culto, que tiene nada que ver con sol y playa. (Hart 994: 440)<sup>24</sup>

Furthermore, in a recent reply to an intervention by the president of the autonomous government in order to seek a political solution to the conflict generated by the PIOT, the mayor of Mogán assured the president that they were only in favour of a quality tourism product; “*que promocionen en la región el turismo de calidad*” (*La Provincia* 5/5/95).<sup>25</sup> Arguably however, this represents a convenient mask for the continuation of land speculation and the appropriation of space by other means. Despite moves to bolster the development of peripheral regions through a variety of schemes (*e.g.* the EU-sponsored rural development programme, LEADER), Hadjimichalis (1994: 25) argues that current EU policies (and those of its member states) are often consistent with free market restructuring and thus reinforce the dominance of “*corporate-regional interests seeking improved structures of capital valorization and new modes of regulation*”. The ideological discourse which sets notions of ‘quality tourism’ in opposition to ostensibly less favoured forms of ‘mass tourism’ (*cf.* Wheeler 1993), can therefore be seen as an act of symbolic power through which policy-makers and developers are able to subtly shift the terrain of media and promotional discourse surrounding tourism, with little or no change to the underlying power structures. As Wolf has argued, in effect paraphrasing Gramsci’s notion of hegemony:

The ability to bestow meanings - to “name” things, acts, and ideas - is a source of power. Control of communication allows the managers of ideology to lay down the categories through which reality is to be perceived. (1982: 388)

The response of both investors and the Spanish authorities to the growing standardisation and rigidity of the tourism supply on the Spanish coastlines towards the end of the 1980s, exacerbated by increasing



competition from other Mediterranean destinations, was to switch the emphasis of tourism development onto the rather ambiguously defined area of 'quality tourism' (MCT 1994; Marchena Gómez 1995; Cabildo Insular 1995b). Indeed the marina of *Puerto de Mogán* has been re-christened "*la Venezia de Canarias*" (the Venice of the Canary Islands) by the time-share company which took control of 119 apartments in the marina in 1994, demonstrating quite clearly the aspirations of promoters, and is regarded by the authorities as the prime exemplar of such in Gran Canaria. The following extract from an official promotional publication sponsored by the island's tourism authorities, demonstrates further the shifting discourse of promotion towards an elitist 'tourism product':

El Puerto de Mogán, con una pequeña playa de arena negra y un delicioso barrio marinero es uno de los enclaves más románticos de la isla...La *calidad* de los servicios, el estilo del entorno y el ambiente del puerto deportivo le confieren un toque de *clase especial*.<sup>26</sup> [emphasis added]

Although the planning and development of the *puerto deportivo-pesquero* in Playa de Mogán was already under way prior to the structural crisis in the Spanish tourism sector at the end of the 1980s, the low-density arrangement of tourist apartments (two storeys high) and the aestheticized appearance of the marina coincided with the changing emphasis of Spanish tourism authorities which began to emphasise the need for a tourism product based on 'quality'. The precise substance of 'quality tourism' is however rarely explicitly defined beyond the need to embellish the tourism infrastructure and to attract a higher spending tourist (implicitly regarded as more 'discerning'), to the more serene and 'sophisticated' ambience of *Puerto de Mogán* (e.g. there are no late night clubs or bars in the marina or Playa de Mogán).<sup>27</sup> The ex-councillor for tourism in the local government is more explicit when he argues, "*nuestro municipio tiene un tipo de clientes que son completamente diferentes a los de Maspalomas-Playa del Inglés*".<sup>28</sup>

It is thus important that we recognise the mutually reinforcing role played by the economic and political spheres in the construction of the ideological discourses which reinforce certain notions of community well-being and benefit surrounding 'new' forms of tourism development. In effect these discourses represent a continuation of a developmentalist discourse in a culturally and historically-specific context, one which has been articulated throughout history in various ideological guises, and whose overriding purpose is to organise societies and peoples for the principal purpose of extracting value from community resources (see Lummis 1991). The origins of such discourses can be traced back to the imperialist rhetoric which underpinned and legitimised European intervention into African societies (Pratt 1992), and have been redefined throughout various development contexts, including urban processes of gentrification and state intervention into run-down inner-cities in the formerly industrialised countries of the West (see Harvey 1990).

More specifically, tourism has also acted as a catalyst for state intervention into processes of urban renewal, resulting in the commodification of ethnic cultures and the suppression of local cultural diversity, in order to shape the 'culture' that is presented to tourists (Wood 1984; Leong 1989). A similar approach to the construction of the cultural environment of Playa de Mogán was demonstrated by a former head of the marina-port authority, who remarked in an informal interview with the author, that



prior to the construction of the marina, Playa de Mogán was “*el culo del mundo*” (the ass of the world). He then went on to refer to its inhabitants as ‘barbaric’ and ‘uncivilised’, and likened the *barrio pesquero* to an open sewer. In addition, he claimed that the artisanal fishing economy was backward and inefficient, suggesting that the inhabitants should look to newer and more modern economic activities such as tourism, for their economic well-being. The subtext of his argument was that the coalition of investors who had proposed the construction of the tourist marina were merely acting out their [legitimate] right to intervene in the social and material environment of the village, and re-shaping it in accordance with the requirements of ‘development’ by making it ‘safe’ for tourist consumption and attractive to investors. The construction of the marina-resort of Puerto de Mogán has thus transformed a ‘primitive’ fishing village into a desirable weekend and summer destination for the affluent urban middle-classes and foreign tourists alike, many of whom arrive by yacht or boat and enjoy the atmosphere of ‘sophistication’ in the marina’s many bars and restaurants. This pattern of domestic tourist behaviour reflects not only the rising affluence amongst Spain’s ‘new’ middle-classes (see Petras 1993), but also corresponds with the professed desire of the national and regional tourism authorities to foster the development of marinas (amongst other ‘products’) as a form of ‘*quality tourism*’ in order to regenerate and sustain Spanish and Canary Island tourism into the future (see Garrido 1994). The restructuring of space at both an insular and village level has thus been accompanied by and legitimised through a discourse of spectacle, fun and demarcations of status which conceal a more forceful appropriation of resources by capital.

In a similar vein, the expatriate owner of a popular eating establishment in the marina referred to the locals as “*savages*” and the “*most uneducated human beings that exist*”, due to the fact that he experienced a certain amount of hostility from locals when he first arrived. He went on to recount how local children would come into the restaurant shortly after it first opened in 1985, accusing him of “*taking bread out of their mouths*”, as a result of exploiting tourism in their village. During the initial period after it had been built, local children playing in the marina were often removed by local police at the request of the proprietors of commercial enterprise, who would also try and discourage tourists from entering the *barrio pesquero* on the pretext that it was dangerous! Such claims are without foundation in an area which experiences little if any street crime. It is more significant that it not only represented an explicit attempt to ensure that tourists would spend their money inside the marina and not in the bars and restaurants run by local entrepreneurs, but it also reflects a continuation of the cultural-ideological discourse through which the destination of *Puerto de Mogán* (in contradistinction to the village of Playa de Mogán) has been and continues to be constructed.

The appropriation of space for the purposes of economic exploitation by capital is therefore not simply an economic process, but is accompanied by subtle yet powerful shifts in cultural discourses, underpinned by political praxis. Beauregard, in an examination of the forces of gentrification in inner-cities (in many ways similar to tourism, see Britton 1991), argues that such processes are situated “*at the conjuncture of production, reproduction, and consumption [...] Gentrification is not simply a facet of capital accumulation*” (1986: 41). Indeed, tourism cannot take place (at a level appropriate for the requirements



of returns on investment for developers and government revenue generation), unless the social and cultural landscape of a resort has been made 'suitable' for tourism consumption by the different agencies of tourism promotion and marketing, in particular, the municipal council and the time-share company which controls a large share of the property in the marina. Furthermore, the allocation of substantial public funds to the construction of the first phase of the marina constitutes a significant investment in social overhead capital for the purposes of *production*, which underwrites the commercial investment. This is particularly significant where marinas are concerned, due to their asset specificity, low economies of scope and the need for constant renovation (Britton 1991: 472). Although the fishermen have benefited from the improved harbour facilities and associated infrastructure in the long-term, it would not have happened without their consistent demands or the support of the regional government which has subsidised the purchase of fish stocks during periods when world market prices have dropped, as well as the construction of refrigeration facilities (pers. comm. *Cofradía de Pescadores*).

The processes of touristification which have been experienced in Playa de Mogán since the end of the 1970s, particularly the construction of the marina and its subsequent purchase by a time-share consortium, and the continuing construction of low density tourism urbanisation in the valley, represents the culmination of attempts by a constellation of interest groups (members of the municipal government/capitalist investors/ prominent local entrepreneurs) to organise the socio-spatial *consumption* of space for tourism aimed at a particular type of tourist. The interventions by these factions in the physical and built environment of the village thus serve to legitimate the prevailing political and ideological commitment to the development of 'quality tourism'. The brochure put out by the time-share company, exemplifies the commodification and presentation of the village for consumption by specific segments of visitors. With the motto "*La Venezia de Canarias*" emblazoned on the front, it contains a number of glossy colour photographs depicting the flower-strewn alley-ways and apartments in the marina, together with attractive young couples sipping cocktails amid further photographs of luxurious yachts. Of particular interest is the text positioned just above an old photograph of the village prior to the construction of the marina (as seen in Plate 8.3) which reads; "*No es una urbanización creada artificialmente para especular con ella sino que es una urbanización dentro de un pueblo de pescadores*" [emphasis added],<sup>29</sup> thus giving the impression that in fact the apartments are situated in and surrounded by the infrastructure and inhabitants of the village itself rather than a purpose-built tourist resort complex built on land reclaimed from the sea *adjacent to* the village. Furthermore, it explicitly attempts to disassociate itself from any relationship to a corporate-capitalist driven speculative venture (which, as the phrase "*urbanización..para specular*" demonstrates, are terms more commonly used to describe the large-scale urban resort enclaves such as Puerto Rico and Playa del Inglés). This conception of the opposition between conventional tourist urbanisations and 'quality tourism' is reflected in the following editorial from a local newspaper around the time in which notions of 'quality tourism' were beginning to be propagated in the Canary Islands:

Es vital controlar las licencias de nuevas obras..., para evitar *estrategias especulativas* que desembocarían en *monstruosas urbanizaciones turísticas*, completamente alejadas de la nueva concepción de ocio, del *turismo de calidad*, de alto poder adquisitivo. (*El Día* 25/11/90) [emphasis added]<sup>30</sup>



Rather it evokes a connection of sorts with the fishing village, “*pueblo de pescadores*”, and by implication its rustic and hardy peasant inhabitants, some of whom are pictured sitting watching the world go by in the same set of photographs. This reflects an image of ‘peasant authenticity’ which adorns the promotional brochures of other islands such as La Gomera (Macleod 1997: 133), inhabitants few of whom the time-share tourists will ever come into significant contact with (see also Santana Talavera 1993). The “*surface fetishism*” of commodities discussed by Bourdieu (1984) is thus evident in this representation of the village/marina, and goes to the heart of the symbolic struggle waged on behalf of these new and ‘discerning’ fractions of tourist-consumption classes by the promoters and property companies. The underlying motives of corporate-capitalist fuelled development are rendered opaque through reference to the location of the marina *in* (not adjacent to) a tranquil peasant fishing village, and appeals to a ‘sophisticated’ domain of taste in contrast to the more ‘vulgar’ form of mass resort tourism more commonly associated with the Canary Islands. Indeed there are direct parallels here with the processes of urban renewal and conspicuous consumption analysed by Harvey (1990) in the USA (*e.g.* Baltimore’s Harbor Place), and the preservation of a small sanitised, re-constructed area of the historic China Town in Singapore, for consumption by tourists (Leong 1989). In Playa de Mogán, there is an attempt to reduce the village and its inhabitants to passive components in the overall package on offer, which legitimises consumption and the reconfiguration of space whilst neutralising any social conflicts beneath the veneer of ‘quality tourism’. There are however myriad forms of opposition to the formal discourses of place and patterns of intervention by public and private interests.

### *Contested Spaces and Oppositional Practices*

Although direct opposition to the development has been at best muted, there are a number of subtle oppositional practices through which local inhabitants have resisted these processes of commodification, some of which correspond to tactics adopted by inhabitants of receiving areas elsewhere in southern Europe (see Boissevain 1996a). Of course the variations of entrepreneurial agency precipitated by tourism represent concrete strategies of response, however there are also signs that adaptation to tourism is manifest in other forms of behaviour amongst even those who are not able to exploit the full economic potential of tourism. Nevertheless there are few if any outwards signs of aggression directed towards tourists themselves, who are seen as a vital source of income by most inhabitants. Rather, the two principal groups at which criticisms are usually directed include, the local governing classes and *cacique* families on the one hand, and ‘external’ capitalistic concerns on the other, the latter of whom are becoming increasingly prominent in the tourism make-up of the village. In some respects however the position of prominent local entrepreneurs also tends to be ‘contradictory’ in the sense that they themselves may be implicated in the ongoing transformation of village space into one of consumption as entrepreneurs, whilst at the same time exercising more covert forms of resistance to tourist intrusion through their social behaviour and cultural adaptation to touristification. For the most part however, much of the local entrepreneurial ‘support’ for the ongoing touristification of the village, co-exists with displeasure at the activities of corporate investors in the marina who many locals argue, are unconcerned with the wider social and economic well-being of inhabitants, but rather only with short-term profits and



the conversion of the village as a whole into a saleable commodity (see Chapter Eleven: *The Marina and Metropolitan-Foreign Entrepreneurs*).

It is also important to bear in mind that conservative attitudes towards authority and work still pervade many aspects of contemporary life in the locality, particularly amongst those old enough to remember life before tourism (fifty years of age and above). Indeed it is suggested by Martínez-Alier (1971: 222) that rather than speak out against authority, a strong undercurrent of pragmatism prevails across many rural areas in Spain, where those in subordinate positions of power see that the odds against social change are steeped against them. Despite the rapid changes and numerous regional government inquiries into local government corruption related to tourism development, previous deference to the authority of the local *cacique* families may have simply been replaced by a resigned 'acceptance' of the dominance of the 'new bosses' (e.g. commercial developers, real estate promoters, foreign entrepreneurs). In some cases this cynicism comes to the surface and is revealed in day-to-day conversations, as evidenced by the following remark by one informant who suggested that local councillors are self-serving opportunists who are only concerned with looking for "*dinero para chupar*" (literally, "money to suck")!

However, local inhabitants are not merely passive objects being progressively subordinated by the ever-increasing scales of tourism development, rather they have confronted the reconfiguration of civic space for tourism, through what may often appear to be mundane, but nevertheless significant forms of social behaviour. As argued above, one of the principal effects of the construction of the marina was to transform the economic and spatial epicentre of the village towards the built environment of the marina with the result that the former village waterfront is now flanked by bars, restaurants and commercial enterprise along the access road which separates the *barrio pesquero* from the marina. At the entrance to the marina facing the *barrio pesquero*, is a small square surrounded by carefully manicured gardens in which sits the main sales office of the time-share company. However, in a rather disingenuous manner an ambiguously-titled sign over the entrance indicates that it is simply an 'Information Office' thus luring in unsuspecting tourists who believe it is a tourism information centre for the village as a whole.

Increasingly, given the lack of recreational amenities and space in the village, during the late afternoons this space is taken over by young children playing football, sometimes accompanied by their mothers who at this time of the day come out from their houses to socialise and visit relatives between shifts in tourism establishments. During one particular incident a young boy from the village who was attempting to rescue a football from one of the gardens, was chased away by the owner of an adjacent apartment after trying to pick bananas off one of the 'ornamental' trees in the garden. This occurred on numerous occasions and despite efforts by the time-share company to appear friendly it is evident that they are not best pleased by such antics yet do not want to provoke any reactions amongst locals which might jeopardise their delicate rapport with the inhabitants of the village who are wary of their commercial activities. Some inhabitants, and in particular local entrepreneurs, have been critical of the aggressive selling techniques employed by the time-share company in the village (which have now been restricted to the marina), as well as their attempts to pressurise the council into granting them the



management concession for the beach and the off-hand manner in which they have treated certain local entrepreneurs in the marina.<sup>31</sup>

Explicit criticism of the encroachment and power of corporate interests in the village was voiced by *Nildo*, the son of a fisherman and one of the only local restaurant proprietors in the marina, and whose establishment is situated adjacent to the time-share offices facing the *barrio pesquero* at the entrance to the marina. He and another brother were fortunate enough to have been educated in Las Palmas and is thus one of the few individuals from a fishing family to have made up his own mind to pursue a livelihood in tourism. He worked for several years in numerous jobs before he was able to accumulate enough savings and borrow the rest from other family members in order to purchase the premises in which this restaurant is situated. It opened in 1989 and more recently he has been able to purchase the adjacent locale from the time-share company in question in order to expand his business. Despite his apparent success in being able to 'penetrate' the socio-economic barrier between the village and the marina, he is doubtful as to whether many others will be able to do so. He suggested that this was due to not only the intensely competitive environment which now prevails in the tourism enterprise economy given the increasing spectrum of capital investment, but more specifically it is due to the political intransigence of the council and the heavy-handed tactics employed by the powerful investors who control the time-share company.

He thus reserved particular hostility for the owners of the time-share company who argued, "*quieren ser los dueños y los señores*",<sup>32</sup> rather than the overall process of tourism development in the village from which he evidently prospers. He argues that the time-share company sold him the additional space at an inflated price and have tried to force him out of business using numerous tactics, including serving free drinks (without a licence) to tourists who visit the time-share offices next door. Nevertheless his resilience has demonstrated a more concrete form of *economic* adaptation and resistance to the domination of tourism by 'outsiders' on the one hand, and the powerful clique of local entrepreneurs and landowners on the other by standing his ground in the marina as an independent entrepreneur. In addition he employs mainly locals from the village which together with the mere presence of his locally-run owned establishment in the marina, has reduced the social barrier between these two spaces. During the evening local families congregate nearby and those who have family members working in the restaurant, who are predominantly from Playa de Mogán itself, visit and sit outside during the late afternoons. On the whole however there is little overt display of hostility by the majority of villagers towards the marina or individual metropolitan-foreign entrepreneurs, although to a certain extent the range and nature of social behaviour which used to take place in the public spaces of the village has partly retreated into the back alleys and even into the houses themselves.<sup>33</sup>

When asked, some informants did however venture surreptitious criticism of tourism, including a sarcastic reference to the marina by one elderly pension owner who quipped, "*nos dicen que aquí tenemos una pequeña Venecia..!*"<sup>34</sup> Local inhabitants thus continue to mock official aspirations (as some did a recent campaign to 'beautify' the *barrio pesquero* by supplying residents with paint that corresponded to



the colour of apartments in the marina ) to mould the village into a 'quality tourism' resort, and continue to use and represent village spaces in a manner to which they are accustomed wherever possible. In this respect many are explicit in their distinction between Playa de Mogán, which refers to the nucleus of housing and family-run commercial establishments outside the marina in the *barrio pesquero*, and *Puerto de Mogán*, which denotes the physical infrastructure and commercial establishments inside the touristic spaces of the marina. However in official discourses, bus timetables and tourist guides, the name *Puerto de Mogán* is used to identify the whole area encompassing both the marina and the areas of settlement behind it.

Although in many respects Santana Talavera (1990a: 94-102) is correct to suggest that tourism represents a considerable force in the transformation of local socio-cultural practices in Playa de Mogán, and in particular gender relations, certain daily rituals and social behaviour can also constitute forms of covert resistance and adaptation to the continuous intrusion of tourists into the village. These are particularly evident amongst young fishermen and local youths (a group to whom the author had easier access to than others due to the similarity in age), a segment often seen to be the first to abandon 'traditional' values in favour of the cultural and behavioural attributes brought in by tourists (Harrison 1995: 26-27). These conceptualisations both idealise local culture and present the inhabitants as powerless to interpret, negotiate and adopt 'external' cultural influences in their own way, thus oversimplifying the processes of social and cultural exchange which take place within the context of tourism (cf. Black 1996). In Playa de Mogán young men sometimes hound and harass young female tourists in public areas where local men congregate at certain times of the day. One of the most important of these is in a spot known as the *mentidero* (literally a place where lies are told!), where retired fishermen and their male kin tend to play dominoes and heatedly discuss the issues of the day, whilst maintaining a watchful vigilance over the comings and goings of tourists and other visitors (see Plate 10.2b). This space is important for both its physical location, situated as it is directly between the *plaza* and the entrance to the marina, but more significantly for its symbolic value. It is situated at the entrance to the marina directly on the site where fishermen and villagers would gather to watch boats returning, mend nets and socialise, prior to the construction of the marina (see Plate 10.2a).

Quite often, more subtle yet still aggressive strategies of seduction take place in the local bar frequented by independent travellers, foreign resort workers/residents and locals alike, which is situated in the village rather than the marina. The owner of this establishment once proudly recounted his previous sexual conquests and how, "*aquí les puedo echar un polvo salvaje*" ,<sup>35</sup> as he pointed to the pool table. German and Scandinavian girls in particular are the target of local male desires and advances, as they are perceived by many local men to display a more liberal attitude towards sexual relationships. Some even went so far as to display acts of bravado to each other, through boasting that they had contracted sexually-transmitted diseases from foreign women they had slept with on previous occasions. These attitudes do not constitute explicit strategies of resistance which are exercised in a geopolitical context in the manner demonstrated by Bowman (1989). It does seem however that the objectification and badgering of female tourists also reflects a certain amount of frustration amongst young men who find themselves at the





**Plate 10.2a:** Fishermen repairing nets on the beach in the late 1960s, long before the construction of the marina. This precise spot lies adjacent to one of the oldest seafront houses in the village and has since been converted into a restaurant (see Plate 10.2b). (Photo kindly donated by an informant)





**Plate 10.2b:** This photograph shows the same congregation spot, as it is today (seen from another angle). The seafront building is now a pizzeria, whilst the two men in the foreground are standing on what used to be the seawall which ran along the front of the buildings. (Photo: R. Bianchi)



interface of a consumption-oriented and hedonistic society (a situation perpetuated by the hedonistic lifestyles of foreign casual workers temporarily resident in the village, with whom many are on friendly terms), and the more reserved values of the peasant social formation rooted in the rigorous experiences of work on the land and at sea. Indeed it is often the elderly and retired fishermen who appear more resigned to the passing of fishing as central to the economic fabric of the village, whilst many of the younger fishermen (some of whom also work in tourism jobs at certain times of the year) who were questioned on this issue, were adamant that fishing is an activity which is central to their self-definition and is what defines them as *moganeros* (natives of the village). Although fishing is less economically significant for many of them, it still constitutes a common cultural heritage which sets *moganeros* apart from foreigners and the inhabitants of the village of Mogán further inland.

### *The Commodification of Space in the 'barrio pesquero'*

Nevertheless these forms of resistance are ultimately *reactive* and relatively ineffectual in the face of the increasingly commercial-fuelled tourism development in the village, which is largely unchecked by political institutions and the dominant classes within the local social formation. Indeed the extent to which the prevailing ideological commitment to market-based notions of *quality* and *competitiveness* has been internalised by planners and politicians, can be seen in the recent Excellence Plan (*Plan de Excelencia*), which is part of the nationally-approved PLAN FUTURES (MCT 1994) which aims to upgrade and improve the quality and competitiveness of Spanish resorts. Eighty-four million pesetas (£420,000) have been spent on 'cleaning up' and embellishing the *barrio pesquero* in order to enable tourists to move around its narrow alley-ways and back streets more freely, and thus admire the typicality of this 'traditional' Canary Island fishing village (*Ayuntamiento de Mogán*). Although improved street lighting and the construction of stairs up the steep inclines of the village have undoubtedly benefited residents, the construction of an panoramic viewing platform above the houses in the *barrio pesquero*, serves no significant purpose other than allowing tourists to take photographs of the village and marina from above, something which they could already do before by merely ascending the narrow alley-ways past the houses.

The policy of improving the physical state of the built environment presents residents with the illusion of creating an attractive living space, while until recently the village (in contrast to the marina) continued to lack many important amenities, including adequate sewage treatment and recreational facilities (*La Provincia* 10/7/91). Above all it camouflages the interests of different factions of capital seeking to commodify the built environment of the village as real estate or as an attractive backdrop for tourists staying in the marina. The extent to which the authorities will go to mould Playa de Mogán into a marketable commodity for tourism is demonstrated by the fact that local residents in the *barrio pesquero* were once given paint by the council and encouraged to adorn their houses in the colours and design of the apartments in the marina. The latter are modelled on a combination of styles which draw on the square and symmetrical form of a former landowner's house which stands by the shoreline, and other local and southern Spanish architectural styles (e.g. traditional Andalusian and Canary Island



balconies), whilst the colours are said to represent those which used to adorn local fishing boats in order to identify the family to which it belonged. The rhetoric of 'quality tourism' in Playa de Mogán has appropriated and reconstructed certain symbolic markers of a local vernacular, manifest in the design of the marina, which has then been re-adopted by some residents in a sanitised form in order to beautify their village for tourist consumption.

In addition, the facilitation of tourist access into the narrow alleys of the *barrio pesquero* is not only unnecessary in economic terms, given that the few remaining locally-owned shops which used to be located here have closed down due to the competition of newer and larger supermarkets in the village and the marina, but it also encourages the intrusion of visitors into what used to be quiet 'back-stage' spaces of the village which were beyond the gaze of all but the most adventurous tourists staying in locally-owned pensions or apartments, and several long-term foreign residents. The fact that local inhabitants have shared in the use of some of these infrastructural improvements may account for an overall lack of resentment, however some have ventured criticisms of the scheme based on the fact that if the authorities have money to spend on such aesthetic embellishments then surely they could provide better social infrastructure for the village (in particular schools and public housing).

The commodification of space in Playa de Mogán has also been accentuated in the context of increasing competition for scarce resources within the built environment, in particular housing. As other authors have suggested (Harvey 1982; Beauregard 1986), the value of land and in particular housing in different neighbourhoods is affected not only by the abstract laws of the market, but also by the nature of consumption opportunities and the condition of surrounding houses and the neighbourhood as a whole. In this respect the influx of foreign visitors and entrepreneurs seeking to purchase houses in the *barrio pesquero*, perform a similar role to that of the gentrifiers who transform the socio-economic character of urban neighbourhoods in the inner-city. The completion of the marina has acted as a spur to the municipal council to 'clean up' or embellish the physical and aesthetic appearance of the village, witnessed by numerous improvements to building façades, pavements and other 'ornamental' features. Since the early 1990s the *barrio pesquero* has progressively become a more attractive place of residence for affluent members of a northern European bourgeoisie who find the large-scale resorts of Puerto Rico and Playa del Inglés distasteful, yet in Playa de Mogán can find just the right combination of modern amenities and picturesque, rustic looking homes for purchase (although many have spent considerable sums on modernising the interiors). Indeed it is possible to identify the foreign-owned homes within the *barrio pesquero* as they tend to be brightly painted and often adorned with 'traditional' features of Canary Island architecture such as ornate wooden balconies.

Underlying this seemingly benign process of urban embellishment is the struggle over the meaning and value of the built environment, between the different social groups which have intervened in the tourist landscape of the village. Increasingly, young adults from formerly peasant households are finding it difficult to find suitable accommodation in the village due to the escalation of house prices over the past twenty years. According to oral accounts by informants, individual dwellings acquired by foreigners



during the 1970s were purchased for prices as low as 30-50,000 pesetas. Today it is hard to find even the smallest of dwellings for less than 15 million pesetas, whilst some (for instance those in attractive locations, particularly close to the *plaza*) are being sold for as high as 30 million pesetas (c.£150,000) to long-term foreign residents, some of whom are involved in commercial enterprises locally. Although some families have benefitted from selling their houses to foreigners and moved out to other areas, the result for most inhabitants has been that often two to three generations of one family have been forced to reside in one household or else relocate as far away as Arguineguín or into the interior towards Mogán. Indeed a recent survey indicates that Playa de Mogán and Lomo Quiebre have one of the highest occupancy densities per household in the municipality; 4.125 and 4.158 respectively [highest = 4.3 / lowest = 1.0; municipal average = 3.47] (Istac 1991).

Whilst long-term foreign travellers and young, single migrants looking for work in the village can often find apartments to rent, young families and even fishermen have been forced to move inland to areas where cheaper modern housing is being built. Alternatively young couples may have to share cramped living quarters with parents and even grandparents in the *barrio pesquero*. For example, *Nildo*, the entrepreneur referred to above, is forced to live with his wife and small child in an extension he built onto his parent's home, while one of his brothers lives together with his family in his mother-in-law's home. Remarkably, one of his cousins who is still a fisherman has been forced to move out of Playa de Mogán altogether and lives in the village of Mogán, thus necessitating a commute of several kilometres in the early mornings. The housing shortage has been exacerbated by a series of inter-related factors which have begun to create an imbalance in favour of private interests who value the built environment in terms of its market value, or as a second home, the two of which are often closely related. Interestingly the commodification of the built environment in the *barrio pesquero*, which has been precipitated by a combination of the private renovation of individual dwellings by long-term foreign residents, local state intervention and the commercial activities of entrepreneurs, has also aroused interest amongst the landowners who still own many of the buildings which are situated in and around the *plaza*, and which are rented mostly by several small retailers from the village itself, and the Danish art gallery. The latter sits in one of the oldest most picturesque buildings in the *plaza*, thus its proprietor, a descendent of the local *cacique* family, is seeking to exploit this commercial potential by increasing the rent or evicting its current tenant altogether.

These factors include, first, the historical monopoly on space in the village exerted by the landowning classes which has prevented any urban expansion onto the flat area of land adjacent to the *barrio pesquero* which has furthermore been earmarked for the further construction of tourism accommodation and commercial facilities by the landowning heirs, once the inheritance dispute has been resolved. The segment of the local social formation which owns land in this area has for the past two decades exercised 'withholding power' on this territory until such a time that they can maximise the market value of their land in the tourist economy. This in turn has reduced the space available for the construction of affordable housing for other locals with little or no access to capital in the physical or built environment, although the tourism development plans do contain provisions for the construction of such housing.



Second, the opportunity to maximise the potential exchange value of this land has been bolstered by their ability to exercise an important degree of political influence as a unit (despite internecine struggles regarding the precise allocation of facilities to each parcel, belonging to separate households/landowners) in order to ensure the appropriate public investment in social overhead capital goes ahead. Third, the municipal council has indirectly benefited speculators and landowners, through its control of the planning process which has placed further restrictions on the construction of housing in the *barrio pesquero* and in the valley between the coast and the village of Mogán. Local planning regulations have declared much of the *barrio pesquero* as 'zona verde' (green area) and restrict the height of houses to two storeys plus an attic or terrace (in order to maintain the picturesque appearance of the village), which has prevented many families from building extra rooms such as those inhabited by *Nildo* and his family, either for themselves or in order to rent to tourists. In addition, a minimum of 10,000 square metres per dwelling are required in order to build on rural land (*suelo rústico*), which has restricted the majority of housing construction in the valley to the children of landowners and wealthy, long-term foreign residents.

In conclusion, it is important to stress that these processes are not part of a nefarious political and/or corporate 'plot' to deprive locals of their means of subsistence or access to resources. Rather it constitutes an already internalised belief in the logic of corporate-capitalist driven development amongst dominant political actors and investment concerns, whose combined actions have added increasing momentum to the transformation of the material basis of the economy, leading to substantial realignments amongst the different social groups in Playa de Mogán. However this ignores the unintended consequences for the civic use of space and ability of locals to exploit their own resources, as a result of the capitalist driven reconfiguration of this locality into a fashionable tourism resort. The acceptance of the logic of corporate-capitalist driven tourism development thus increasingly polarises the village into those who are still predominantly linked to non-capitalist family enterprises who also derive a significant component of use values from its built environment and other resources (e.g. the sea, public spaces), and those who are primarily concerned with the natural and built environment of the locality as a marketable commodity. The organization of tourism enterprises and composition of entrepreneurial classes which are a central component of the changes undergone in the socio-economic fabric of the village, will thus be the main focus of the following chapter.

## Conclusion

This chapter has examined the context in which the development of the *puerto deportivo-pesquero* emerged, and the manner in which it both reflected and precipitated an intensification of commodity relations within the tourism enterprise economy of Playa de Mogán. Moreover it has shown that the subsequent socio-spatial configuration of the tourism landscape is not the result of an inevitable expansion in the scale of tourism development, but rather, the outcome of the historical imprint of uneven development in this locality and the ongoing competition between social actors for the appropriation of space. However this chapter has not merely attempted to describe the transition from a



'locally-operated' mode of tourism development to a large-scale institutionalized form owned by 'outsiders', on the grounds that such linear interpretations fail to contextualise development and specify the social forces of change. Rather it has situated the analysis of these processes in the context of the changing political environment and in particular the degree to which local state agency and external capital investors have been complicit in the increasing commodification of Playa de Mogán. Significantly, the planning and development of the *puerto deportivo-pesquero* was also shaped by the wider political context during the transition to democracy in the late 1970s which led to significant changes in the structures of political administration and governance. At the same time the macro-economic circumstances associated with the second tourism boom during the 1980s, saw increasing levels of foreign investment injected into tourism as well as a marked shift of emphasis in the nature of tourism policy towards the upgrading of physical infrastructure accompanied by tighter planning restrictions.

Whilst the intensification of linkages to wider circuits of capital and markets has increased the range and scope of entrepreneurial intervention into the economic fabric of the village, the expansion of the island and regional bureaucracies has deepened the scope of legitimate government intervention into tourism, thus bringing local and regional administrations into conflict with each other. At the same time these changes have rendered the structures of power which regulate such interventions, increasingly opaque. Previously, decision-making with regard to the exploitation of local resources in the agrarian-fishing economy was clearly demarcated and rested largely in the hands of a minority of local *cacique* families and merchant families who monopolised economic and political power. The construction of the marina has precipitated the penetration of increasingly capitalist social relations into the tourism enterprise economy, which has been accompanied by the increasing surveillance and regulatory powers of the regional and island state bureaucracies. Tourism along with the emergence of democracy, has been a catalyst in opening up the local economy to outside interests with all the contradictions and opportunities that this entails. Long accustomed to relative autonomy at the local level, dominant local cliques have not only been faced by the emergence of a tourism entrepreneurial class from within the village, but they have also had to confront the intervention of a wider spectrum of economic and political agencies from outside.

However despite the increasingly diverse composition of ownership and the emergence of a more institutionalised and larger-scale phase of tourism development in Playa de Mogán, locally dominant classes nevertheless still retain strong links to the institutional structures of power in the local council. The legitimate right of the island and regional bureaucracies to intervene in tourism planning and development issues, conferred on these institutions by the Spanish Constitution of 1978, has thus been challenged 'from below' by a coalition of local business interests (which also includes members of the 'new' entrepreneurial classes as well as traditionally more powerful landowners) and municipal politicians, under the guise of protecting municipal autonomy. However their actions effectively constitute an attempt to monopolise the exercise of influence and access to valuable resources at the local level without 'interference' from state bureaucracies at a higher level.



The transformation of Playa de Mogán into a marketable commodity is not the result of the inevitable logic of capital accumulation nor of tourism destination development (cf. Butler 1980; Keller 1984). Rather it has been conditioned by the historical legacy of uneven capitalist development and subsequent social structure which emerged out of these processes, in tandem with the emergence of specific forces of tourism development which emerged during the late 1970s during Spain's transition to democracy. Thus the spatial transformation and expansion of the locality are the product of social agency and the endless search for the fulfilment of social and economic needs in the context of new forms of tourism development. Attempts by commercial interests, mediated by state agency, to create a coherent space of tourist consumption in Playa de Mogán reflect wider changes in the ideological environment which has underpinned a shift towards a more commercial mode of tourism development. The more recent phase is thus distinct from the informal appropriation of land and buildings which characterised the earlier period of tourism in the village, and which to a certain extent is still significant for some segments of the local population. This chapter has also therefore highlighted the division between production and consumption interests which is putting increasing pressure on the use of space for civic purposes, and the continued ability of local inhabitants to retain control and/or access to community resources. On the whole however, opposition to the construction of the marina and the subsequent commodification of the built environment in the village has been muted, with the exception of the fishermen's petition, which did not question the logic of the development but merely argued for better infrastructural provision. Resistance to the touristification of the village for the most part takes the form of less overt social practices rather than direct protest. This is perhaps unsurprising given that tourism has grafted a capitalist service economy onto an agrarian-fishing social formation in which subordination to the dominance of local *cacique* families was underscored by a harsh and precarious economic existence for the majority of inhabitants.

The next chapter will elaborate on the continuing and varied strategies of response by different socio-economic groups to the ongoing processes of tourism development, with particular regard to the patterns of entrepreneurial agency and the ability of the local tourism entrepreneurs to adapt to the requirements of the tourism economy. Using a combination of the ethnographic data and the conceptual framework derived from Chapter Four in particular, it endeavours to provide a processual analysis of the social and economic configurations of tourism-related enterprise and configurations of entrepreneurship. In particular, it examines the internal social structure of tourist-related enterprises and the social composition of the different entrepreneurial factions, focusing principally on those controlled by descendents of the peasant and landowning classes. It also examines the relationships between the different entrepreneurial factions in the village and marina, in relation to the overall structure and dynamics of touristification. In this way it endeavours to further the analysis of local patterns of tourism development in Playa de Mogán in the context of the wider social forces of change and processes of capitalist development.



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<sup>1</sup> This is especially significant in the case of the Canary Islands whose economy was less protected and subject to a different set of fiscal and monetary policies from the mainland, and at this stage was already highly dependent on the service sector, and in particular tourism, which to a certain extent attenuated the effects of the global energy crisis and economic recession of the 1970s (Macías and Rodríguez 1995: 426-427).

<sup>2</sup> Between 1986-1990 10 billion pesetas worth of capital flowed into the country - a tenfold increase over the previous five years (Camiller 1994: 255). In 1990 total foreign investment in Spain reached 3.7% of GDP (Heywood 1995: 223).

<sup>3</sup> "It is inconceivable that private interests should undertake this venture, as it is divided amongst many landowners there does not appear to be any option other than that the council should tackle this issue." (A.A.M. *Libro de Actas del Pleno* No.13: 30/6/71)

<sup>4</sup> An attempt was made to interview one of the principal financiers behind the project was met with a refusal to answer any questions regarding the structure and financing of this venture. Consequently what detail there is has been ascertained from the published Cabildo inquiry, council minutes, newspaper reports and some ethnographic data gathered from a limited number of local informants willing to talk about this aspect of the marina. Later on an interview with the director of the marina-port authority did provide further information regarding some aspects of the investment and structure of the marina which is provided here as well as insight into the rationale underpinning its construction. However here too there was a reluctance to discuss detailed aspects of investment and in particular, dealings with the different political agencies involved. It therefore demonstrates the shortcomings of an interview-led approach to an analysis of power as well as the limitations of an ethnographic approach given the complex hierarchies of social relations that exist within even local development contexts.

<sup>5</sup> It is not the intention of the author to provide an exact historical overview of the transactions between different companies; indeed much of these data is inaccessible and the company concerned did not wish to be interviewed (see Chapter Five and the commentary on the usefulness of critical ethnography in the Conclusion). In any case this data is not central to the approach adopted in this analysis. There are currently around 55 commercial tourism establishments in the marina, notwithstanding yearly fluctuations due to closures or mergers between two locales. Of these, there is 1 hotel; around 34 eating and/or drinking establishments ranging from small coffee-shops to bars and restaurants; 14 assorted retail establishments (mainly clothes boutiques and souvenir/gift shops); the remainder are devoted to commercial enterprises, including exchange bureaux/banks, travel agencies, a telephone exchange and a yachting shop which also runs yachting tours and hires labour to undertake yacht maintenance.

<sup>6</sup> More recently, 119 apartments situated in the row of buildings constructed during the second phase (see Figure 10.1, Appendix V), have been purchased by an Anglo-Italian coalition of investors with links to the marina's architect and investments in similar ventures in other parts of the Mediterranean, and who have converted them into time-share apartments. They acquired these assets at a cost of 750 million pesetas (£3.7 million) from the receivers (*La Provincia* 11/3/94), into whose hands the ownership of this block has passed as a result of the economic recession at the end of the 1980s, which had made it difficult for the original owners to render this investment profitable.

<sup>7</sup> This concession is only guaranteed to the contractor by the state for fifty years, in whose hands lies the ultimate ownership and responsibility for regulating coastal land use.

<sup>8</sup> The municipal council was heavily criticised in an exhaustive inquiry compiled by the Cabildo Insular (1989b) for proceeding with such a development in the absence of sufficient technical or planning expertise. Indeed the engineer in charge of the project who had presented the plans to the council, was insufficiently qualified to undertake a project of this nature (Cabildo Insular 1989b: 44). However he happened to be a key shareholder in both the development company and an architectural consultancy with links to the council, and was well connected to important members of both the municipal and island council involved in the transition through the political party UCD (other members included the incumbent mayor and the head of the *Caja Insular de Ahorros* at that time - the principal lending agency of the Canary Island government - who is a prominent lawyer with links to prominent tourism investments and is currently Minister for Tourism in the regional government). The list of planning infringements documented in the inquiry is exhaustive, however it is also reflects an underlying tension between different conceptions of space and the appropriate type of [tourism] investment that should be allowed to proceed within it.

<sup>9</sup> "In many cases it involves land which is classified as unsuitable for development in the General Plan; processes of urban development in Spain have allowed *Planes Parciales* (site plans) to be approved in contravention of the General Plan."

<sup>10</sup> Many villagers lamented that the marina was built along the waterfront, thus obscuring their view of the sea (particularly amongst lower lying houses) and destroying the shallow marine shelf which extended outwards



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from the seashore. Villagers, particularly women and children, had traditionally been able to catch fish and shellfish for their own personal consumption in this area.

11 This is perhaps more clearly demonstrated where buildings designated for civic or non-commercial use were converted to touristic use without adequate planning permission. For example, this is evident in the case of the hotel which was originally designated for storage use by fishermen (although it is oddly situated away from the fishing quay), and a restaurant at the southern end of the jetty which protects the marina from the sea, which was originally intended as a lighthouse and service building (Cabildo Insular 1989b: 41-43).

12 "and most serious of all is that it is being promoted on the pretext of creating an infrastructure for fishing and defending the interests of the fishermen when in fact the reality of the matter is that it is motivated by a desire to undermine fishing and to maintain it at a third world level in the interests of luxury tourism which the council does not even know how to address". (Archivo sobre el *Plan Especial de Reforma Interior de Playa de Mogán* - Reforma de NN.SS. 15/7/87, Consejería de Política Territorial, Gobierno de Canarias; letter dated 20/7/85)

13 Santana Talavera (1990b: 33) suggests that up to 42% fishermen moved into tourism from the fishing sector during the second half of the 1980s.

14 "We would like to make it known that these gentlemen have not created a fishermen's cooperative nor have they endowed it with amenities."

15 "yes but *you* have benefited from all this".

16 "In the Canary Islands, mayors and groups of local government councillors have often acted in a manner that is favourable to private interests and against laws which serve to protect unique spaces."

17 In major development projects of this nature the *Colegio de Arquitectos* is usually involved in order to ensure that projects given the go-ahead by municipal councils conform with all manner of planning and building regulations (Balchin *et al.* 1999: 140).

18 "We have tried to transcend the usual scorched earth policies adopted by those whose only interest lies in short-term gains."

19 "The PIOT does not develop tourism in a logical manner...because it blocks investment and channels it towards other islands which benefit from more sensible regulations; it increases unemployment, above all amongst the youth; and it exacerbates legal ambiguities."

20 Precise figures are not available, however a series of informal conversations with municipal civil servants during archive research in the council, revealed that a substantial number of them are related to local landowning classes, municipal councillors and prominent business interests. There is little tourism in the village of Mogán itself (the seat of local government) and agriculture has experienced a general decline since the early 1970s. Consequently work as public servants offers one of the few channels of worthwhile employment in the village for the descendants of the rural bourgeoisie who do not wish to migrate out of the area.

21 "Myself and my party have always been firm supporters of a fishing port for Playa de Mogán, as well as the marina-fishing port..., with the preoccupation that private interests would subordinate the wider public interests of the village and body over which I preside..., we are concerned with private initiatives but not one that is going to put its interests before those of the village... *I know that this stance of mine and of my party will make enemies and attract criticism of myself, by the powerful interests who are behind Puerto de Mogán.* But it does not worry me because I know that *I am fighting for my village* and that of course, in so far as it is appropriate, the private company will benefit through the large development which is being realised. But those who are hoping to profit disproportionately or who place their faith in speculative strategies, should forget it." (A.A.M. *Libro de Actas del Pleno* No. 17: 28/11/80)

22 In 1984, unemployment in the Canary Islands was higher than in any other part of Spain (Parsons 1985: 29).

23 "In this manner...the fundamental economic function of clientelism is the production of an ideology that is capable of maintaining the coexistence of both value systems; that is, to accept (and legitimize) corruption at the local level."

24 "we must actively strive to equip our islands with training centres which will allow us to attract a refined, quality tourism far removed from the sun and sand tourism of the past". (trans. Hart 1994)



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- 25 “...that they should promote quality tourism in the region”
- 26 “Puerto de Mogán, with its small black sandy beach and marvellous fishing quarter is one of the most romantic enclaves on the island...The *quality* of facilities, the style of the surroundings and the ambience of the marina puts it in a *class of its own*. (*Diario 16* “Mogán, el paraíso del sur”, miércoles 25 de enero 1985).
- 27 In the municipalities of San Bartolomé de Tirajana and Mogán, a total of 800 million pesetas has been earmarked for urban renewal and the renovation of tourism infrastructures under the *Plan de Excelencia*, 25% of which has to be provided by the councils themselves (figures provided by the *Oficina de Intervención*, Ayuntamiento de Mogán 1996).
- 28 “our municipality attracts a completely different type of client to those of Maspalomas-Playa del Inglés.” (*La Provincia*, domingo 14 de agosto 1994). Interview with Sebastián Hernández Curbelo, ex-councillor for transport and tourism.
- 29 “It is not an urbanization artificially created for the purposes of speculation but rather an urbanization within a fishing village.” (*Puerto Mogán Development Marketing S.A.* , promotional brochure)
- 30 “It is crucial to control the number of licences for new developments..., in order to avoid *speculative strategies* which result in *monstrous tourism urbanizations*, completely divorced from the new conception of leisure, *quality tourism*, based on high income groups.”
- 31 At present the local council is responsible for the cleaning and maintenance of the beach whilst individual entrepreneurs are responsible for the renting of beach chairs. During a storm in 1986 much of the sand was washed away and had to be replaced by the council at a cost of 10 million pesetas (*Canarias* 7 9/4/86). Presently the beach is used by everyone although many local families from the village find it crowded and dirty and prefer to go elsewhere, particularly at week-ends. Many of those who remember the village as it was before the construction of the marina prefer the ‘natural’ state of the pebble beach and beach breakers, as it was then (see Plates 8.1-8.3). The attempt by private interests to control access to the beach would greatly restrict the use of the last open public space in the village. Furthermore, it is already over-crowded and will be put under increasing pressure by the construction of the additional tourism facilities in the zone immediately behind the shoreline.
- 32 “They want to be both the owners and managers.”
- 33 Some informants did remark that they tend to shout and swear far less often than they used to in public, a phenomenon common to fishing communities, as it disturbs and intimidates the tourists! The advent of the telephone has also reduced the need to shout from one house to another in order to communicate with friends and relatives, although on occasion the intense bellow of local men and women echoes around the walls of the *barrio pesquero*.
- 34 “They (*i.e.* the authorities/developers) tell us that we have a little Venice here..!”
- 35 “I can give them a quick screw right here”



# CHAPTER ELEVEN

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## Towards an Analysis of the Socio-Structural Dynamics of Tourism Enterprise

### Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to examine the contemporary dynamics of tourism entrepreneurship in relation to the social basis of ownership, and the degree to which this reflects as well as conditions the shifting configurations of power which mediate access to tourism resources/capital. This approach to the analysis of local tourism development also serves a platform from which to examine the relationship between the patterns of tourism entrepreneurship and changes in the social structure and organisation of the village itself. 'Locally-owned' touristic enterprise in Playa de Mogán is to a large extent dominated by the family economic unit in which non-capitalist social relations predominate, and through which the access of village inhabitants to resources, expertise and influence is mediated. However, not only does access to significant resources (principally land and buildings) and the presence of capitalist social relations vary amongst tourism enterprise in the village, there are also a number of non-material factors which are equally and often more important in terms of analysing the local dynamics of tourism entrepreneurship. These include variations in the nature and type of 'free floating' cultural capital, as well as political capital, which is regulated by the networks of kinship relations that link certain local entrepreneurial factions to the local council.

This chapter will examine the social basis of tourism enterprise ownership in relation to the relative level of internal cohesion within the new tourism entrepreneurial classes and the extent to which entrepreneurial agency is mediated by the wider structural context (economic and political). In this regard it builds on the ethnographic material presented in Chapters Nine and Ten in order to examine the structure of social relations within and between different groups of tourism entrepreneurs. Moreover it explores the the implications of the emergence of a wider spectrum of commercial tourism enterprise since the development of the marina, for the continued reproduction of family-owned tourism businesses and the relations between different groups of entrepreneurs. The approach adopted here also situates the exploration of the social relations between different entrepreneurial groups in relation to the appropriation and use of space in the village, and a consideration of the factors which regulate particular strategies of entrepreneurial response to tourism. In this respect, it attempts to transcend the simple categorisation of enterprise according to residual categories such as capitalist/non-capitalist, local/foreign or formal/informal sector dualisms, by further developing the analysis of the historical and social forces which have mediated and influenced local entrepreneurial involvement in tourism, already discussed to some extent in Chapter Nine. These include an examination of the use to which capital and other resources are devoted; the organisation of work within particular enterprises; the nature of social and political relations across entrepreneurial factions, kinship networks and the significance of cultural-educational capital (cf. Long and Richardson 1978: 191-193).



## 11.1 The Organization and Structure of Tourism Enterprise

The social forces of change precipitated by the different modes of tourism development in Playa de Mogán, have underscored the emergence of new configurations of entrepreneurship and social relations between different segments of the community. In general there is an underlying similarity in the origin, structure and organisation of the locally-run and managed touristic enterprises. For the most local tourism enterprise is concentrated in the provision of lodgings, bar-restaurants and several small grocery stores/shops, in which the principal organizational structure is that of the small-scale, family-operated business. However, the growing scale of tourism development along the coast of Mogán during the 1980s coupled with the construction of the marina has led to the proliferation of tourism enterprise in Playa de Mogán encompassed by manifold social and economic relationships. In 1998 there were approximately one hundred and fifteen separate businesses in Playa de Mogán of which most are dependent upon the tourism economy to a considerable degree, and some are linked through either lateral and vertical kinship ties, or in some cases a single absentee owner may control one or more businesses. They are roughly divided between the *barrio pesquero* and Lomo Quiebre on the one hand, where there is a total of 50 different establishments, and within the marina itself where there are 65 different commercial establishments, of which only one or two are owned by entrepreneurs from Playa de Mogán, although several others are run by inhabitants from the village of Mogán.<sup>1</sup> According to the criteria derived from the formal-informal sector model, many of the establishments run by local entrepreneurs of one kind or another, might well fit into the category of the *tourism informal sector*, in contrast to the bars, restaurants and shops in the marina which might be considered as part of the *tourism formal sector*. However, there is a greater degree of internal differentiation within the tourism enterprise economy which does not fit easily into dualist categories of enterprise (cf. Dahles 1997b: 27). Nor however does locally-owned tourism enterprises correspond exactly to one particular mode of production (*i.e.* pre-capitalist) or unitary form of family-based enterprise. There are therefore significant variations in their overall ability to maintain access to and control of the means of tourism production, which cannot be deduced from the economic structure of the economy. However, before looking in closer detail at these patterns of internal variation, this section will briefly synthesise the principal elements which define the organizational structure of family-run tourism enterprises which are central to the reproduction of local households.

### *The Family Enterprise*

Western Mediterranean societies have at times been noted for their social fragmentation and in particular what Banfield (1958) famously termed their “*amoral familism*”, in reference to what he saw as a lack of cooperation and mutual solidarity amongst the peasant communities he studied in the *mezzogiorno* of southern Italy. Indeed certain Mediterranean scholars have been critical of the exultation of the family above all else in Mediterranean social and economic life, including the Italian anthropologist Tullio-Altan (1986), who claimed that this phenomenon lies at the heart of an almost zealous disdain of civic sensibilities in Italian society as a whole (Ginsborg 1990: 2). These notions have however been extensively criticised elsewhere (*e.g.* Silverman 1968, Schneider *et al.* 1972, Miller 1974), in particular



Banfield's argument, for presenting a rather simplistic view of an atomised society where horizontal ties are all but non-existent. Although at first it may appear that family concerns tend to subordinate any potential horizontal solidarity or cooperation amongst workers and/or entrepreneurs in the tourism enterprise economy of Playa de Mogán, to accept this at face value would be to ignore the horizontal networks and relations of cooperation which *do* exist. More significantly, it would also fail to situate the existence of family-centred tourism enterprise in the material context of the historically-specific pattern of peripheral capitalist development, which has conditioned the development of tourism in Playa de Mogán.<sup>2</sup> Thus what is relevant for the purpose of this study is not the genealogy of the family itself but rather the manner in which certain aspects of the peasant social formation have structured the social organisation of tourism enterprise and how they have in turn been transformed as a result of the changes brought about by tourism.

The family-controlled business can therefore be conceptualised as an historically-contingent arrangement of kin relations which regulates the access of its members to the means of production within a given historical context of development. During the 1970s several French anthropologists argued that it is possible to conceive of such entities in class terms insofar as they operate as mechanisms which mediate access to the resources necessary for their material reproduction (Bloch 1983: 162-4). Business activities based on the family economic unit thus condition the emergence of social alignments predicated on a division between those who "belong" and those who do not (cf. Wolf 1982: 386). Given the uneven development of capitalism in Gran Canaria, particularly outside the urban centres, the emergence of family-operated tourism enterprise emerged as one of the most effective organizational forms for peasant households to seize the economic opportunities provided by tourism, in the absence of deep-seated horizontal solidarities and an autonomous, self-regulating civil society. The family-owned tourism business is thus a socially and historically-specific mechanism which regulates access to the means of production and reinforces the particular configuration of social and class relations in the local tourism enterprise economy. In Playa de Mogán, when asked who belonged to which family, informants often replied with the refrain, "*es uno de los nuestros*", (s/he is one of us), indicating that the specific person in question formed part of an association of extended kinship relations whose boundaries were recognised by its members.

The response cited above also however demonstrates a certain ambiguity with regard to the status of a particular individual in terms of biological kinship affiliations. It is relevant to note that voluntaristic ties may be equally significant to the family economic unit with respect to their contribution to the total "*family labour product*" (Chayanov 1966), as well as certain social obligations. Usually, the extension of familial ties to non-biological kin have occurred in instances where their parents or remaining family have left the village, or in other cases, were no longer alive. The family economic unit thus comprises an extended network of biological and sometimes fictive kin relations, often scattered across several households in the village. For example, in the case of *Santiago*, his four children make up three separate households bound together by three different tourism-related businesses, the pension, the bar-restaurant, and a flower shop. Although there has been some dissolution in the importance of both vertical and



lateral kin ties due to the increasing diversification of the tourism enterprise economy and the ability of young couples to become increasingly independent of the family economic unit (cf. Kousis 1989), there is still a considerable degree of cohesion between separate households. Indeed for several years, *Santiago* still remained the proprietor of the bar-restaurant even after his daughter had taken over the running of this establishment. Further to the involvement of vertical kin in the running of family enterprises the extent of inter-dependence among family members also includes the occasional provision of labour; lateral kin and even friends of the family often provide additional staff during busy times of the year and weekends, often in exchange for one-off payments or simply as a favour. This practice also extends to foreign-owned establishments who often employ younger family members during summer vacations or on an ad-hoc basis over the season. Some family enterprises may also have access to basic foodstuffs via links to either agriculture or fishing. For example, whilst members of the *Santiago's* extended family who still farm in a neighbouring valley, often provide *Bar Santiago* with fruit and vegetables, his brother *José*, the local fish merchant and part-owner of a local restaurant, is able to purchase stocks of fish below the market price, in a form of rudimentary 'transfer pricing'! In considering the importance of the family economic unit to the tourism enterprise economy in Playa de Mogán, kinship relations should not be considered as merely a mask for class relations which obscures underlying structures of inequality. Rather it constitutes a fundamental component structuring the unequal relationship of different social groups to the necessary resources to exploit the opportunities afforded by tourism.

One of the principal characteristics of family businesses is the fact that they fulfill a number of different and complementary functions beyond the need to secure the material well-being of the household(s) dependent upon it for their livelihood. In particular, it combines both *use values* and *exchange values*, enhanced by the close proximity of the place of work and place of residence. This is particularly relevant where the provision of lodging facilities are concerned given the proximity of the family household and paying guests within the same building (cf. Willimas and Papamichael 1995: 138). The built environment thus serves both a socio-cultural function, in terms of providing communal family resources, and as a commercial space in the form of a tourism business. Nevertheless the internal boundaries between family and tourist space are relatively clearly defined, although the family may well relax these for long-term repeat guests. During the early years of tourism development domestic facilities (e.g. kitchen, bathroom) in lodging establishments such as *Pension Santiago* were often shared by the family household and their 'guests'. Even today after the addition of another two floors and several more rooms, the roof terrace constitutes both one of the central assets which attracts many travellers to this particular pension (as it offers panoramic views over the village and marina), and also serves as a storage and recreational space for the family. The close social proximity between early visitors and the owners of such facilities should not however be confused with relations of customary reciprocity that has often been associated with the early stages of tourism development (see Cohen 1984: 379-382). They have always constituted relations of a fundamentally commercial nature, indeed earlier relations of hospitality were more to do with the lack of space and resources rather than a genuine desire to take in *guests* as opposed to *clients*. Moreover owners of these establishments tend to reflect back on this era as one of greater prosperity, both in a wider socio-cultural sense (i.e. there was less noise, overt consumption, fewer



tourists crowding into the village on a daily basis), as well as in an economic sense. They argue that the earlier visitor would spend more per head than today's 'cheaper' tourist which contradicts the official policy of promoting 'quality tourism' related to the marina.<sup>3</sup>

As discussed earlier (see Chapter Nine: *Peasant Entrepreneurs and the Informal Appropriation of Tourism Resources*) many of the homes which subsequently became extended into pensions, were built and/or refurbished by the occupants themselves and often with a significant proportion of the materials obtained at little cost. More recently, particularly since the completion of the marina, 'entry costs' would be prohibitive to all but a small segment of wealthier local entrepreneurs and commercial investors who could afford the high property prices and rents.<sup>4</sup> This fact is of crucial importance when considering the ability of the family economic unit to reproduce itself in the face of the increasing penetration of capitalist social relations into the local tourism enterprise economy, as it significantly reduces the (fixed) material costs of production. This is further helped by the fact that different generations live in close proximity which enables scarce resources to be pooled, and several daily obligations to be fulfilled at once during business hours. For those who run pensions, particularly women, this enables them to look after small children whilst at the same time attending to the needs of the family business. Alternatively it allows grandmothers to look after young children whilst their daughters go off to work, whether they are part of the workforce which supplies the larger resort hotels, or else, as in one or two cases, managers of local bars or restaurants and/or shops in the *barrio pesquero* or in the marina itself. A similar reciprocity between generations was noted by Kousis (1989: 324), which here is also returned by the manager of one particular restaurant who also advertises her mother's pension in the *barrio pesquero*. In this type of small local enterprise, although some have become quite prosperous and in some cases taken on a demonstrably more capitalist organizational structure employing several waiting staff and sometimes a manager (more on this below), their over-riding concern is towards the reproduction of the family economic unit, rather than accumulation of capital and expansion of investments.

Given the overriding preoccupation with family welfare rather than growth, the expansion of family-based tourism enterprise thus tends to be more gradual than in the more commercial sectors of the tourism enterprise economy (cf. van der Werff 1980). In Playa de Mogán this is evidenced by the fact that the number of family-based enterprises has changed very little since it peaked towards the end of the 1980s. This period coincided with the recession in north European economies and structural crisis in the Spanish tourism sector, as well as the completion of the marina in the village itself. There was therefore a tendency amongst those who were not linked to a family business in any way to seek employment amongst the increasing variety of tourism-related jobs on offer in the village, rather than risk a business venture which would have to compete with tourism businesses run by outsiders with superior capital and expertise. Once they became established risk-taking and expansion has been relatively rare amongst the existing range of family-run tourism-related businesses, with the exception of a small cluster of dominant entrepreneurs. The latter have been able to capitalise on their early entrance into the tourism economy, and in some cases, access to other assets, including property in the *barrio pesquero*, from which they have generated valuable investments (more on this below). The expansion of a large proportion of



enterprise in the *barrio pesquero* above all, is constrained by the 'family nature' of the enterprise which is often reluctant to expand beyond the capability of the family economic unit to control it (cf. Massey 1995: 27). Indeed the large majority of enterprises, particularly pensions, bars and restaurants, are owned and run by members of particular associations of kin. In some cases where investments *are* spread across a number of different units, the control and management of these enterprises is still retained within the family by passing them onto younger family members.

Hierarchically-ordered social relations thus tend to predominate throughout the family enterprises run by peasant entrepreneurs, in which there is little separation between capital and labour due to the high level of dependence on (often unpaid) family labour. Few of the smaller enterprises, and in particular pensions and the remaining family grocery stores, few of which contract any labour whatsoever, rely on their immediate family in conjunction with a wider network of friends and relatives to assist in the everyday running of these facilities. Criteria derived from market economics such as output, profitability and employment which are commonly deployed as benchmarks for measuring economic 'success' of a particular enterprise or sector, cannot be easily applied to a significant proportion of tourism enterprises in the village, and would be misleading in terms of assessing the contribution of these business activities to the social and economic well-being of local households. It is also a characteristic of informal economies that such enterprises are excluded from official economic data, thus compounding the problematic nature of statistical measurements of entrepreneurship (cf. Dahles 1997b: 25). Strictly speaking the concept of unemployment can only be conceptualised in the relation to the capitalist mode of production (and its corollary, the welfare state) where access to the world of work, necessary in order to acquire the income to purchase the resources required for maintaining one's livelihood, is denied (Weeks 1978: 25). Indeed some inhabitants often appear to be out of work for short periods of time, or indeed are employed simultaneously in a number of different establishments, or appear to earn little if anything at all. Work may also be undertaken in exchange for goods in kind or as a favour, therefore it is important to situate this category of 'worker' in relation to the kinship networks to which they belonged.

Although the increasing availability of wage-work in tourism in the village and elsewhere has reduced the number of individuals dependent upon a particular enterprise, the ability of the non-capitalist family economic unit to draw on the support structures of the extended family and vertical kin in particular, is a crucial component in their continued survival in the face of growing competition within the local tourism enterprise economy. In this way small businesses are able to substantially reduce the material costs of production (in particular, labour costs), enabling them to survive during lean periods. Where local families do not own or manage tourism-related businesses themselves, members of the immediate family have increasingly sought wage employment in the tourism sector whereupon their earnings will contribute to the material well-being of the family unit (cf. Santana Talavera 1990a). This constitutes one of their particular strengths and means of resilience against the increasing penetration of capitalist social relations among tourism enterprises in the village, which may simultaneously provide complementary sources of employment for other family members. This is in marked contrast to the majority of commercial enterprises run by outsiders in the marina, which are forced to incorporate bank loans, high



commercial rents, as well as labour costs and social security payments into their balance sheets, with the result that there is a higher turnover of enterprise in this segment of the village. Some of them do however manage to reduce labour costs via the employment of illegal foreign workers who are paid below the market rate which also enables them to avoid social security payments. Individual job responsibilities also tend to be rather less rigid or even non-existent within the smaller family-based units of tourism enterprise - workers are often required to perform all the functions of the restaurant during the same shift - which allows them to undertake several jobs at the same time and avoid the bureaucratic hassle of negotiating formal contracts of employment, and the payment of taxes by workers, and social security contributions by proprietors. The significance of occupational pluralism is not restricted to wage-work alone, but also includes entrepreneurs, such as *Santiago's* son who is the owner of a small flower shop. During the morning he tends to the shop after which he then works as a gardener in a nearby resort during the afternoon. Occasionally however, his sister will look after the shop for him while he is away working, allowing him to gain an income from two different activities at the same time. He also continues to live in his parents house enabling to reduce his material costs of reproduction even further. The family enterprise which predominates amongst locally-owned tourism establishments in Playa de Mogán thus reflects and reproduces non-capitalist social relations within a substantial sector of the tourism enterprise economy of the village, enabling many local households to benefit in some way from the continuing expansion of tourism. However these benefits are not evenly distributed amongst family tourism enterprises and local households. The following section will thus examine the social relations between different entrepreneurial factions and the nature of the antagonisms which they reflect.

### *Internal Dynamics of Cooperation and Conflict*

Despite the shortcomings of the family-centric anthropological view of Mediterranean societies referred to earlier, the fieldwork did however reveal evidence of competitive practices and attitudes of mistrust between different family businesses. According *Santiago's* daughter, who has been running the well-known bar-restaurant he began for several years, there is little cooperation amongst local entrepreneurs and a significant degree of jealousy and resentment between different units of family enterprise in Playa de Mogán. This underlying animosity also extends to the relations between the largely locally-owned village-based establishments and the commercial enterprises in the marina, and increasingly in the *barrio pesquero* itself (see Chapter Ten: p. 213). Such attitudes are of course not uncommon where family or artisanal modes of production prevail, and reinforce hierarchical as opposed to horizontal social relations (cf. Chayanov 1966; Marx 1977: 317). Despite the importance of lateral kin ties in artisanal fishing production Pascual Fernández (1991) has also argued that inter-familial rivalries and jealousy are found throughout Canary Island fishing communities, and is often exacerbated by the penetration of capitalist social relations into the local economy.

However it is important not to accept the existence of a lack of cooperation *a priori*, purely on the basis that small, family businesses are the prevalent form of enterprise outside the marina. Rather, it is important to examine the social relations in the context of the rapid transformation of the economy from



one based on the predominantly hierarchically ordered social relations, to a tourism enterprise economy in which capitalistic relations of production dovetail with existing configurations of household production. Furthermore the rapid and recent transformation of the pre-capitalist agrarian social formation into a tourism enterprise economy has not been accompanied to the same degree by the development of an autonomous civil society wherein individual welfare is seen as being regulated by the market and underpinned by the state. A remark made by *Alberto*, one amongst a prominent group of local entrepreneurs, that unemployment does not exist in Playa de Mogán or anywhere in Gran Canaria for that matter, illustrates a perception shared by a number of other local entrepreneurs also. He claimed that if people were out of work it is the result of their own laziness, in contrast to individuals such as himself who have been able, through adversity, to lift themselves out of relative poverty. This view was also reiterated by the former councillor for tourism in an interview in the local press who remarked that, “*En Mogán no hay paro, y el que no tiene trabajo es porque no quiere*” (*La Provincia* 14/8/94).<sup>5</sup> The lack of cooperation amongst villagers was also remarked upon by a fisherman from Galicia who had spent time fishing on local boats, as well as *Lars* the resident Danish painter referred to earlier. Whereas symbolic oppositions prior to tourism revolved around the internal cleavage between *los ricos* (landowners) and *los pobres* (peasant households), it appears that tourism has engendered an increasingly diverse range of antagonisms within the social formation. What these informants, ostensibly ‘outsiders’, interpreted as selfishness and social atomism, may in fact reflect an intensification of competition over scarce resources (which may include space in the marina or premises suitable for the establishment of a family business), both in fishing and tourism. Given the historical absence of horizontal social institutions (e.g. trade unions) and weakly developed civil society, the family offers one of the few institutions through which many locals are able to protect against economic uncertainty and resist external ‘interference’ in the local economy (cf. Goffee and Scase 1983: 153-154).<sup>6</sup>

Resistance to systematic and formal cooperation, particularly between smaller family enterprises, cannot therefore be explained by resorting to schematic arguments regarding the persistence of ‘backward’ familist attitudes. *Enrique*, the owner of another successful bar-restaurant and one of the protagonists of the fishermen’s petition discussed in Chapter Ten, emphasised that the conservative and family-centric attitudes of many locals can also be understood in the context of the precarious material circumstances experienced by most village residents in the recent past. The combination of the absolute dominance of local *cacique* families in conjunction with the high levels of local illiteracy, left little room or desire for dissent. The relative social isolation and lack of communication with other parts of the island which characterised this peasant fishing society prior to the arrival of tourism, also mitigated against the development of horizontal solidarities between the labouring classes, of the kind which for example underpinned strikes by agricultural labourers in the larger commercial plantations on the windward face of the island, where traditionally there have been larger settler communities of migrant agricultural labour (Suárez Bosa 1995: 292-8). In this respect, life for all but the wealthiest strata of landowners has always revolved around the material welfare of the family economic unit. Hence even amongst those inhabitants who have exploited entrepreneurial opportunities in tourism, most have continued to concentrate on the maintenance of the well-being and day-to-day survival of the family unit of enterprise rather than attempt



to forge ties across different factions amongst the entrepreneurial classes, something which does not present any evident benefits to them.

There is no formal association of local entrepreneurs or small businesses, nor according to one entrepreneur any inclination to form one given the strength of familial loyalties and informal associations and groupings of entrepreneurs united by 'common interests'. The informal links between landowners and local councillors are reinforced by the inter-penetration of the two, as demonstrated for example by one particular bar-restaurant proprietor who is also the councillor for tourism (see Chapter Nine: p.169). Such links are underpinned by the historical legacy of entrenched class interests which binds landowning households together and sets them apart from other socio-economic groups in the village. The organisation of economic interests around kinship networks is also reflected by the creation of a property owners association (*Junta de Propietarios*) by landowners, a body which brings together the group of landowning households or 'land-based' interests, for the purpose of ensuring that the proposed tourism development in this area will be of relatively equal benefit to them all (see Chapter Nine: footnote 2). There is also a business association of entrepreneurs who own or manage enterprise in the marina (*La Provincia* 4/8/94). However, as the British proprietor of a restaurant in the marina recounted, there is little common outlook amongst this collection of entrepreneurs either. This particular situation is however more related to the high turnover of businesses and the intense commercial competition between individual enterprise, which will be examined in the following section.

At a political level the consolidation of democratic institutions and the growth of different levels of the state bureaucracy has to some extent however challenged the previous dominance of local cliques. Although the composition of an expanded strata of administrators, bureaucrats and technical experts dependent upon the council bureaucracy still reflects the former educational superiority of local *cacique* families. Moreover the evidence suggests that their previous oligarchic dominance has been superseded by a form of 'bureaucratic' or 'party-oriented' patronage whereby coalitions of powerful economic interests (which may also include other prominent members of the local entrepreneurial classes) attempt to manipulate the outcome of tourism development in their favour within a new institutional context (cf. Weingrod 1977). This is reflected in the efforts of landowners to develop commercial tourism facilities on their land and the high proportion of powerful local entrepreneurs (70%) amongst the local councillors and who control party bureaucracies at a local level, many of which in fact are not linked to regional or national party machines (see Chapter Ten: p.200-201)

Smaller-scale establishments run by peasant entrepreneurs have often complained of excessive interference by the local council and the state bureaucracy at a regional level. The increasing institutionalization of tourism has been accompanied by a variety of regulations including licensing requirements, taxes and insurance costs, something which larger units can avoid or balance against income from another sector and/or enterprise. Such hostility towards state 'interference' in the affairs of local enterprise owners was explicitly demonstrated on one occasion by *Santiago*, who complained vociferously at the excessive



regulations and taxes which have been imposed on small tourism enterprises since the emergence of the new democratic institutions and the expansion of the regional state bureaucracy:

Cuando llegan los tres meses tengo que pagar...me cobran por las mesas, por las sillas, por la acera, por el radio, por el televisor, por hablar, por sentarme en la acera...!<sup>7</sup>

Furthermore, *Santiago's* son who runs a small flower-shop in the *barrio pesquero*, complained that he was once charged 30,000 pesetas (£150) for a fire inspection, to which his reply was that his shop was so small (approximately 12-15 square metres) that he could blow a fire out in sufficient time! More significantly, his point was that these sorts of regulations (which he also felt were enforced more rigorously amongst smaller entrepreneurs) together with other running costs, would require him to achieve a monthly revenue of around 500,000 pesetas (£2500), a figure he rarely achieves, in order to be able to employ the additional employee which would be needed to increase this revenue! Furthermore, inter-family enterprise rivalry is often expressed in the criticism of others who (supposedly) flaunt licensing regulations (*e.g.* for the expansion or renewal of a business) and/or fail to declare employees or revenue in order to reduce their tax burden. Where many of the smaller entrepreneurs are in agreement, is in their criticism of the council and state bureaucracy with regard to what they perceive as their apathy towards enforcing licensing regulations in foreign-owned enterprises and the monitoring of foreign casual workers who are employed illegally in the marina.

Although local grievances are rarely directed at foreign entrepreneurs in an overt manner, particularly those who run restaurants in the *barrio pesquero* (as opposed to the marina), some proprietors did however remark that the marina has led to an excessive increase in the number of bars and restaurants in the village and is thus damaging their trade through competition. Overall most informants, regardless of the specific nature of their involvement in tourism and socio-economic status, recognise the importance of tourists and tourism to their continued economic survival. Indeed the very success of a peasant entrepreneur such as *Santiago*, has been built upon his role as an early intermediary or culture-broker between the social world of the village and tourists, to the extent that he still invites some of the guests staying in his family's pension to social gatherings and barbecues on the odd occasion.

However, hostility towards the municipal government is indicative of the fact that many councillors are seen by local entrepreneurs as an obstacle to their well-being. This is not only because, according to many local entrepreneurs, they fail to carry out their responsibility for ensuring the proper and efficient regulation of tourism establishments, but it also reflects an animosity towards the strategic coalition of interests which binds certain members of the municipal government to factions of powerful entrepreneurs and landowning classes, as well as the increasingly diverse coalitions of capitalist concerns with tourism investments in the village and the marina. Together these local cliques or power-brokers are seen as a conduit for external capitalist interests with vested interests in an increasingly large-scale of tourism development in the village, which may ultimately reduce many local residents and perhaps entrepreneurs to a more menial position in the division of tourism labour.



Although one or two prominent tourism entrepreneurs have emerged from within the *barrio pesquero*, which has served to break down the monopoly of landowning families on political power (more on this below), the continued ability of this latter segment of the population to articulate their strategic concerns at a municipal level often elicits isolated protests from amongst one or two locals. Despite the intervention of an increasingly diverse range of commercial and political interests into the tourism landscape of the village, there is a tendency particularly amongst less powerful groups of entrepreneurs such as *Benito* and the ice-cream vendor, to direct their criticisms towards the “*mafia*”, the collective term used by both of these men to describe the bi-partisan interests in the council and amongst landowning families. There is however little concerted attempt to articulate opposition to the ongoing transformation of the locality into an increasingly large-scale resort, promulgated by the latter as well as the commercial interests represented in the marina, at a strategic-institutional level. Arguably, this reflects the continued prevalence of segmented interests in the context of the increasing commoditization of social relations which has drawn many into the tourism workforce, in the absence of the formal institutionalisation of horizontal organisations at the local level, capable of transcending parochial family and village loyalties (e.g. trade unions, political parties).

On the whole, competition between family-controlled enterprises is not based on a calculating commercial-capitalist rationality, but rather on the need to maximise family welfare. Once established all but a few family tourism enterprises have expanded if at all. Assets tend to be concentrated in one or two activities (e.g. a pension, shop, bar or restaurant) depending upon the size and composition of the immediate family unit. The ownership and management of these businesses are usually then passed on to younger family members rather than allowed to expand beyond the ability of the family economic unit to manage these assets, or be removed from their control altogether by being sold. For those amongst the local entrepreneurial classes with little managerial expertise and/or access to capital, either in the form of property or other businesses, there is little concerted or strategic attempt to market their enterprise, accumulate assets, or expand the range of services on offer in order to capture a wider share of the market. Despite the modest expansion of some businesses, particularly by the few prominent peasant entrepreneurs who were fortunate enough to have consolidated their businesses before the marina transformed the nature of competition, the majority are less concerned with acquiring a portfolio of tourism investments and the maximisation of profit than with maintaining the overall social and economic well-being of the extended family and the continued survival of the family business. This is compounded by the fact that few peasant entrepreneurs have had previous experience of tourism, nor any formal training or management know-how, a factor which Kenna (1993: 81) claims led to the usurpation of entrepreneurial opportunities by migrants from the Greek mainland, in her study of tourism on one of the Cycladic islands. However, in the case of *Alberto* and *Enrique*, their experience as waiters in the larger resorts which opened during the 1960s, enabled them to acquire relevant experience and insight into tourism prior to opening their own establishment(s) in the village itself. Interestingly, *Nildo*, the son of a local fisherman who is one of only two entrepreneurs from the village involved in the running of enterprise in the marina, gained his experience from working in the beachfront bar-restaurant adjacent to the *barrio pesquero* which belongs to a landowning family. Due to its size and turnover the latter has



also become a *de facto* training ground for many young tourism workers from the village as well as elsewhere. Paradoxically this reconstitutes the former social relations between peasants/fishermen and landowners, but in the context of a predominantly capitalist service economy.

Nevertheless, there exists a number of social antagonisms within this collection of local entrepreneurs, based upon contrasts in the social configurations of ownership. In some respects this reflects the legacy of previous socio-economic divisions inherited from the recent past, which serves to reproduce inter-familial competition and hierarchically ordered social relations centred around family economic units. It is important therefore to conceptualise the local entrepreneurial classes as a broad spectrum within which there are a range of underlying tensions and cleavages which may distinguish one faction from another. Thus despite apparent similarities in the structural location of entrepreneurs the evidence suggests that there are differences which indicate important contrasts in the internal organisation and social configurations of tourism enterprise, including the degree to which individual entrepreneurs are involved in the direct production of services on offer, the relative importance and degree of exploitation of wage labour within these establishments, and the use to which surpluses are devoted. These contrasts demonstrate significant differences in the ability of individual entrepreneurs to mobilise capital and put it into productive use, which is indicative of previous social distinctions as well as emergent social alignments. They also confirm that particular configurations of tourism entrepreneurship cannot be separated into dualist categories or deduced from their position in the overall economic structure.

### *The Social Configurations of Entrepreneurship*

The contrasts in the social nature of ownership and entrepreneurial agency are to a certain extent manifest in the *type* of enterprise controlled by different local entrepreneurial factions, as well as its geographical location in the village. Pensions are situated both in the *barrio pesquero*, and more recently in Lomo Quiebre (Plate 8.4), given the lack of available (cheap) space in the former. They are predominantly run by small family economic units, often just a husband and wife with the assistance of sons and/or daughters, with little capital beyond the buildings and the facilities which were required to convert their dwellings into touristic use. Prior to opening these establishments, many of the owners were engaged in various forms of manual and/or agricultural labour and as a result tend to have little if any management or similar expertise, which made the conversion of their dwellings into lodging facilities the easiest of all the economic options available to them given the limited means of production at their disposal. Two of the first pensions to open in Lomo Quiebre are both run by elderly women in their sixties, one of whom is the daughter of a fisherman and worked for many years in the plantations whilst her husband (a non-fisherman) was able to find work as a security guard in Puerto Rico once this area began to be developed in the late 1960s. Like others who have subsequently set up tourism-related businesses she too worked for several years in the beachfront bar-restaurant in the years just prior to opening the pension in the mid-1980s.



Given that most of the accommodation facilities in the village are self-catering establishments and provide only the minimum of service for their guests, their respective owners are directly involved in the production of these services and require very little additional labour. Most tend not to contract any labour at all, using members of the family to change bed linen and clean the rooms, when it is necessary. In some cases however pensions occasionally employ long-term resident travellers who may be seeking casual work to extend their stay in the village, to undertake basic cleaning chores in exchange for free accommodation (particularly in the low season) when there are rooms to spare). One such establishment is the pension which belongs to a former mayor and as such is not a family business upon which one or more households are dependent for their livelihood, but rather a useful additional source of income. However *Benito*, the former owner of the early beach-bar who now runs one of the pensions in Lomo Quiebre, will cook *paella* for his guests upon request and indeed runs the only small lodging establishment with a bar attached to it. The inside walls of the bar in this particular pension are covered with photos which document his close relationships with tourists since he first became involved in the running of tourism-related businesses in the early 1970s. One regular visitor from Germany has even named his own bar in Berlin after this particular establishment! As a an 'outsider' (he is originally from the neighbouring valley of Tauro) with no family links to the fishing economy, tourism has not only provided him with a steady income, but perhaps more significantly it has endowed him with a social status in the village (notwithstanding his previous run-in with certain powerful entrepreneurs/landowners discussed earlier) that belies his relatively modest livelihood and previously marginal status. He is on very friendly terms with many of the long-term resident foreign workers in the village, some of whom have stayed in his pension, and is little concerned with expanding his enterprise further. Moreover the reputation he has built up over the past three decades has made him a household name, particularly in Germany where most of his clientele are from, which provides him with a steady flow of visitors many of whom have been coming to stay in his pension for many years.

The evidence from Playa de Mogán thus also appears to confirm some of the findings from other parts of the Mediterranean where tourism has precipitated the participation of women in the economy, and legitimated their access to previously male-dominant spaces such as bars and cafes (e.g. Zarkia 1996; Stott 1996). The majority of pensions are managed by local women as are one or two other tourism-related enterprises, including *Bar Santiago* and the fishmongers, owned by *Santiago's* brother but managed by his daughter. The pension is both a commercial and domestic establishment and therefore enables elderly women who run pensions to go about their daily domestic chores, look after their daughters' children, and to gossip with neighbours and friends in the alley-ways of the *barrio pesquero*, whilst attending to clients and look after the business at the same time. However, in contrast to the patterns of entrepreneurship uncovered in other parts of southern Europe where the gradual growth of tourism has enabled men to carry on traditional occupations in agriculture and fishing while the women took control of family-based tourism business (e.g. Hermans 1983; Zarkia 1996), this does not appear to have been the case in Playa de Mogán. Indeed, a large proportion of the pensions are run by women whose husbands no longer work, or indeed share the burden of running the pension, often undertaking the more manual maintenance tasks. However, most of the proprietors had already given up or were forced to



abandon their previous employment (due to the decline of agricultural wage-work) in order to run the pensions. Many are over the age of fifty which suggests that few young entrepreneurs are opening lodging facilities, due to a combination of the lack of space and increasingly high entry costs which have been precipitated by the speculative activities and expansion of commercial enterprise in the village since the opening of the marina. Furthermore, higher levels of educational attainment combined with the increasing expansion of tourism has meant that their children are better able to find paid work in a wider variety of commercial tourism enterprise, which also has the attraction of paying regular wages without the risk and uncertainty involved in setting up and running a small tourist establishment.<sup>8</sup> In the case of both *Santiago's* and *José's* daughters, the success of their fathers in establishing their respective business ventures early on, enabled them to educate their daughters as well as give them the opportunity to take over the management of businesses which had already become well-established. Had their families been less economically self-sufficient they perhaps would have been more restricted to the pursuit of wage-work in larger tourism establishments which conform to pre-existing patterns of gender subordination.

It is clear therefore that amongst the local entrepreneurial classes there is a prominent faction of well-established entrepreneurs, who from a position of relative marginal socio-economic status have achieved considerable economic success through their tourism-related businesses. Of modest appearance on the outside, inside their homes are often fitted with the latest kitchen appliances, smart modern furniture and other consumer goods.<sup>9</sup> As discussed in Chapter Nine, one of the principal basis upon which they have built their influence is the fact that they seized the opportunities to open small tourism-related enterprises some years prior to landowners and more recently foreign entrepreneurs. This has enabled them to accumulate a certain amount of experience of working with tourists in their role as 'culture-brokers' and owners of well-established businesses. In concrete material terms they also acquired valuable local resources (e.g. packaging warehouses) at a time when such property was of little recognisable monetary value and thus relatively cheap. Broadly-speaking they occupy a similar position within the economic structure of the tourism enterprise economy but are socially distinct from other dominant entrepreneurial factions (landowners, foreign and metropolitan entrepreneurs), principally due to the fact that they are the direct descendents of peasant households and indeed were once general labourers or fishermen themselves. However, it is possible to distinguish 'local entrepreneurs' which includes those members of local *cacique* families who have established themselves also as tourism entrepreneurs, from 'metropolitan' entrepreneurs, on the basis that the former are more intimately connected to the social world of the village through a shared experience of the historical development of the village prior to tourism.

For the most part this dominant faction of peasant entrepreneurs own and manage bar-restaurants which, unlike pensions, are characterised by a more complex division of labour and often requires them to contract wage-labour beyond the immediate family and employ intermediate workers in a supervisory role. Some employ a combination of both, depending upon the size of the family unit in relation to the specific requirements of the enterprise, as well as the number of establishments across which the family 'labour product' needs to be allocated. Although the enterprise may be 'family owned', in that the capital



(buildings and finance) is controlled and regulated by a particular household, the structure of the labour process may then become more akin to that of a capitalist enterprise. Despite taking on the characteristics of capitalist employers in this respect, most of those run by local families still prefer to contract workers whom they know personally or are related to local families. Thus for example, *Bar Santiago* for the most part relies on the labour of the immediate family (sometimes restricted to the owners alone during the low season), whereas *Alberto's* bar-restaurant, had employed a foreign couple to manage the restaurant so that he could concentrate on other activities. This also however reflects the higher turnover of this particular establishment given its strategic location in the former waterfront row of buildings facing the marina, a factor which is significant in terms of the future trajectory of locally-owned enterprise (see below: *Tourism Enterprise and Social Change*). Further contrasts exist between these establishments and the one or two bar-restaurants owned and operated by members of the resident landowning classes. The restaurants run by resident landowners are in effect forced to contract wage-labour by virtue of the fact that few of their children have remained in the village and have sought professional employment in urban areas. They are however still tied to the village economy through their ownership of land-based capital in the village, which allows them to exercise considerable influence over the direction of tourism. Consequently, the more capitalistic organisation of labour in the popular beachfront restaurant has converted it into a *de facto* training ground for many younger members of the village who wish to find employment in tourism as mentioned earlier.

Since initiating these enterprises between 20 to 30 years ago, a small number of peasant entrepreneurs have moved through the social structure to occupy positions of status within the village and in some cases political influence. During the early 1970s the fact that these residents of the *barrio pesquero* began to manage tourism-related facilities brought them into regular face-to-face contact with landowners and local politicians, many for the first time in their lives, and thus transformed the nature of social relations between landowners and the *barrio pesquero*. In some cases this interaction had a negative outcome, as in the case of *Benito's* beach-bar, but for others such as *Santiago* who, in significant contrast to the former, purchased his premises from a landowning family, led to a new-found socio-economic status. As a result of being the first restaurant to open in the village (in 1969), *Bar Santiago* began to host the mayor and several local councillors on a regular occasions (proudly displayed in photos on the walls of the restaurant), which has progressively enabled *Santiago* and others (e.g. *Alberto* and *Enrique*), to deal with members of the local *cacique* family and political classes on a more equal basis. Arguably the fact that his daughter is one of the few independent women entrepreneurs in the village, is also linked to his success as one of the first tourism entrepreneurs.

Not only were the changing economic circumstances precipitating a transformation in the relations between classes and social groups in the village, the wider political transformations in Spain's political-institutional structures were also playing their part in reducing the semi-feudal distinction between peasants/fishermen and landowners. As the birth of the democratic era gave rise to new political parties it began to create a platform for the involvement of previously marginalised socio-economic groups in the political system. Although the local council was still overwhelmingly under the control of local *cacique*



families, the relative economic success of this group of peasant entrepreneurs catapulted them into position whereby they could begin to articulate the interests of the residents in the *barrio pesquero*. Thus for example, *Alberto* and *Enrique*, both sons of fishermen and owners of their own tourism-related establishments, played a prominent role in leading the fishermen's dispute against the marina developers and local council (see Chapter Ten: *Tourism, Politics and the Contours of Dissent*). *Alberto* was later elected onto the local council between 1986 and 1991, during which time he continued to voice concern over plans to expand the development of Playa de Mogán into a large-scale resort promulgated by the coalition of landowning interests. He and others, including *Nildo*, have been critical of the decision to locate the marina adjacent to Playa de Mogán's waterfront, arguing that tourism should be best left to local entrepreneurs, which also excludes the speculative interests of the local landowners. Equally influential in this respect, has been *José* (*Santiago's* brother), who capitalised on the decline of the *factorías* to monopolise the distribution of (white) fish prior to the establishment of the *Cofradía de Pescadores* in the early 1980s. His involvement with the local council goes back to the early 1960s when he used to undertake a number of maintenance tasks for them. However, in the late 1970s he also became involved in local politics and was elected to the council in 1979 and again more recently in 1995. Council records show how he became one of the key mediator between the concerns of fishermen and the local government, a role facilitated by his experience as a fish merchant and his humble socio-economic background.<sup>10</sup>

Although this group of prominent peasant entrepreneurs share a similar background and experience of having been the first to establish tourism enterprise in the village during the 1970s, they do not constitute a coherent class with a common set of interests. Friendly encounters on a day-to-day basis between entrepreneurs, often conceals underlying tensions and intense competition between them. Furthermore, the contrast between this group and those from landowning families was demonstrated by the refusal of the owners of *Bar Santiago* to attend any of the meetings convened by the landowners to discuss the planning implications of the next phase of tourism development for this part of the village (see Chapter Nine: footnote 2). Both *Santiago* and his daughter regarded these meetings as nothing more than an attempt by the coalition of landowning interests to consolidate their economic control of the village's resources once more, and argued that their opinion would mean little to them anyway. Entrepreneurial rivalries are also demonstrated by the degree of gossip and the importance of informational networks whereby different factions monitor the activities of their competitors. For example, a petty rivalry is often played out between *Santiago* and *Alberto* with regard to who opened the first bar-restaurant in the village (council records suggest it is the former), which also reflects the degree of importance they attach to their role as *tourism* entrepreneurs. The exchange of small pieces of information concerning rival enterprises was also demonstrated by *Santiago's* son-in-law who works in the adjacent beachfront restaurant owned by a landowning family. He had overheard that *Santiago's* brother, the powerful fish merchant and tourism entrepreneur, was selling cheap fish to a restaurant owned by a close friend in which he also has a share. Intra-family rivalries are significant, however such gossip confers little in the way of competitive advantage to the beneficiaries of such knowledge, than



does the ability to mobilise political support and economic resources in order to expand the range of resources and opportunities at the disposal of particular families.

Further to the contrasts in the organizational structure of tourism-related enterprises and access to political means of control, there are variations in the social configuration of tourism enterprise and the relative strategies of investment/accumulation employed by different groups. This can be demonstrated for example in the contrasting social nature of investment employed by Santiago and his brother *José*, both of whom are prominent local entrepreneurs in the village. On the one hand, *Santiago* has consolidated his family's control over a number of different enterprises, which has been predominantly regulated by the need to secure his family's welfare rather than accumulate capital for the sake of commercial re-investment and speculation (cf. Massey 1995: 27). In particular he has always been reluctant to extend the range of business concerns beyond the capacity of the family economic unit to manage them, which at present comprises the bar-restaurant run by his daughter and son-in-law, the pension (run by his wife) and a flower shop (run by his son); two other daughters are dependent upon their husbands' income, both of whom work as chefs in two separate locally-owned restaurants. During the late 1970s he was offered favourable terms for the purchase of a pension adjacent to the restaurant which he could have easily afforded. He nevertheless turned the offer down because, as he explained, by then he already had sufficient capital at his disposal in order to secure the material well-being of his family, nor did he wish to be seen as a property speculator or greedy entrepreneur. Furthermore both the bar-restaurant and the family home which also houses the pension run by his wife, are now worth millions of pesetas. However neither the prospect of an instant windfall (which has tempted many other families who have not developed tourism-related businesses to the same extent or at all) nor the acquisition of other businesses has tempted him or any member of his family to consider offers to sell their family-controlled assets.

In contrast, his brother, a prominent local politician and business person, has built up a significant portfolio of assets in the village across the tourism and fishing sectors and more significantly in property-based capital, in which capitalist relations of production have become more prominent. As one of the most powerful members of the local entrepreneurial classes he controls the commercialisation of white fish in the village, as well as additional distribution outlets in Las Palmas. He also owns part share in a successful restaurant together with the owner of the café-bar in the *plaza*, which is situated adjacent to *Alberto's* restaurant on the old waterfront, as well as several large properties in the *barrio pesquero* which are rented to commercial-retail outlets. Although the majority of these concerns are managed by members of his family they control a large workforce here and across a wider geographical area than most inhabitants, and have established themselves as one of the most prominent and wealthy entrepreneurial families in the village. Furthermore as one of the entrepreneurs who apparently helped to dislodge *Benito* from his beachfront location *José's* altogether different entrepreneurial strategy also reflects the uneven distribution of power *within* the local entrepreneurial classes and the latter's ability to regulate access to resources within a wider institutional context at the local level. Although he was reluctant to go into much detail, *Benito* often referred to the aggregate of powerful entrepreneurs whose property and tourism establishments are situated in this part of the village as "*la mafia*", in an indication of the heavy-handed



manner by which he was evicted from this spot and the tensions that exist between prominent and subordinate peasant entrepreneurs.

There are therefore variations in the degree of horizontal and vertical integration amongst the family economic units who are actively engaged in the production of goods and services for tourists, whose interests are spread within and across discrete areas of enterprise. Whereas some, such as *Santiago*, have several assets spread within one economic sector which are managed by different members of the family, others such as his brother *José*, controls a variety of assets across different sectors (although each in some way are related to tourism) in which varying degrees of capitalist social relations are present. However, apart from one or two exceptions, most members of the local entrepreneurial classes are still strongly tied to the fortunes of the tourism sector economic sector alone, over which they are able to exercise a limited amount of influence beyond the village or in some cases, municipal level. This is particularly relevant where the channels of distribution and promotion are concerned, which to a certain extent are influenced by the local, island and regional political authorities, but are predominantly controlled by the increasingly the different coalitions of external capitalist investors who control a range of tourism-based assets in the marina, and more recently, the village as a whole (as exemplified by the recent opening of an amusement arcade in the *barrio pesquero*). In contrast to much of the smaller village-based enterprise, the entrance of increasing scales of capital investment in commercial enterprise and renovation of the built environment reinforces the transformation of the village into a 'marketable commodity' (see Chapter Ten: *The Cultural Ideology of Tourism...*).

There is thus more to tourism entrepreneurship than the mere ownership and/or control of economic resources. These contrasts illustrate markedly different social dimensions of entrepreneurship which are emerging within the processes of touristification that are taking place in this locality. In particular, there is a feeling amongst some within the local entrepreneurial classes, represented by individuals such as *Santiago*, *Alberto* and *Enrique*, that the desire to make large profits in any way possible amongst other members of the local entrepreneurial classes will damage the long-term interests of the local population. What is at issue here is not merely the conflict between different organizational forms of tourism enterprise and the inflow of outside capital, but rather the core identity of the village itself. Before considering the implications of these socio-economic changes for the future of local tourism enterprise and the social structure of the village, it is useful to consider some of the other interests involved in the exploitation of tourism enterprise and the patterns of employment engendered by this.

### *The Marina and Metropolitan-Foreign Entrepreneurs*

The construction of the marina has been instrumental in precipitating the entrance of outside capital and a broader constituency of entrepreneurial factions in Playa de Mogán, thus forcing local enterprises to compete with a wider spectrum of metropolitan commercial interests who are no longer just restricted to the marina, but are penetrating the socio-economic fabric of the village itself. Although there are varying degrees of capitalist social relations within local family-based enterprise, there is a significant social



distinction between these and foreign entrepreneurs who are perceived as 'outsiders' by villagers, with few if any social and/or cultural obligations to the life of the village. This distinction was underlined by the proprietor of a small family-run grocery store in the *barrio pesquero* who contrasted this type of local enterprise to that of what he termed "*los capitalistas*", in reference to the larger units of capitalist enterprise more commonly found in the larger resort areas, but increasingly evident in Playa de Mogán also. For this group of metropolitan entrepreneurs, whether foreign, Spanish or from other parts of Gran Canaria and the archipelago, the village of Playa de Mogán, and its commercial appendage, the marina of *Puerto de Mogán*, constitutes the physical locus of various individually-motivated investments in tourism enterprise, rather than a place to settle and establish deep-seated social ties (although there are isolated cases where this has occurred as in the case of *Lars* and the Italian chef, the first foreigners to establish tourism-related businesses in the village). The ideological logic of corporate-capitalist tourism development impregnates these spaces, although it presents itself as an expression of 'community', or more appropriately '*quality tourism*' (cf. MacCannell 1992: 99). Their economic interests may be situated within the physical domain of Playa de Mogán but as a social group they are more closely linked to geographically distant social structures, wherein lie the source of their identity and the basis of their social obligations. As individual units of economic production however, most have less political influence over the direction of tourism development in the locality than do the cluster of landowning families and prominent local entrepreneurs, or for that matter the larger investment concerns which underpin the marina itself. However they do exercise an indirect influence over tourism by virtue of the capitalist nature of their enterprise and the need to maximise profits and keep labour costs low, often using undeclared foreign labour which is drawn from the constant inflow of migrant tourist-workers from northern Europe. They therefore represent different factions of a metropolitan entrepreneurial bourgeoisie whose interests coincide with and give impetus to the logic of corporate-capitalist driven expansion of the tourism enterprise economy in Playa de Mogán.

The majority of metropolitan and in particular, foreign-managed enterprise is still however concentrated inside the marina with less than half a dozen such establishments situated in the *barrio pesquero* and the rest of the village. Approximately half of all the eating and drinking establishments in the marina are owned by foreigners whilst the remainder are in the hands of mainland Spanish or metropolitan entrepreneurs from different parts of the Canary Islands. It is harder to discern through observation whether or not the retail and commercial establishments are owned by foreign, Spanish or Canary Island interests, given that the service and/or merchandise on offer does not give an indication of this to the extent that it does in the former case. However conversations with shop assistants did reveal that many of the retail and commercial establishments belong to absentee metropolitan owners (either an anonymous company or individual capitalist investor) from either mainland Spain or the Canary Islands, who are not resident in the village itself.<sup>11</sup>

The origins of the majority of foreign entrepreneurs correspond with the major generator countries in northern Europe, particularly Ireland, Britain, Germany, Scandinavia and Italy, many of whom were initially drawn here by the attraction of the warm climate and relaxed pace of life, much like that which



drew the large foreign contingent (mainly British) to the Costa del Sol (see Fraser 1974). Many came across Playa de Mogán by accident during the mid-1980s whilst on holiday in neighbouring Puerto Rico or Playa del Inglés. Some became so enamoured with the locality that they even purchased the lease on future premises which had yet to be built. This contrasts with the attitudes of the few established local entrepreneurs in the *barrio pesquero* at that time, who were largely uninterested in the potential entrepreneurial opportunities in the future marina, or else did not have the requisite capital or managerial expertise to be able to do so. In addition, the attention of the few who might have been in a position to open businesses in the marina such as *Alberto* and *Enrique*, was focused on the disruptive implications of the marina which brought them into confrontation with the municipal council and marina development company, while landowners were looking to the future development of tourism-related infrastructure on their land (see Chapter Ten: *Tourism, Politics and the Contours of Dissent*).

In contrast to the few who had opened enterprises in the *barrio pesquero*, some of the first entrepreneurs to open establishments in the marina were greeted with a certain amount of hostility from both (ironically) the municipal council and some local inhabitants who accused them of ‘stealing food from their mouths’, although these attitudes have since subsided once locals managed to find employment as bar-staff, waiters and cooks in some of the establishments. Initial difficulties were compounded by the fact that the first foreign entrepreneurs arrived a couple of years prior to Spain joining the European Community in 1986, which subsequently facilitated access to residence and work permits. It is worth noting however that the small handful of foreign entrepreneurs who had opened restaurants in the village prior to the inauguration of the marina and the arrival of a more recent wave of ‘outside’ entrepreneurs, did not experience any hostility or resistance from the villagers. Such long-term foreign residents who arrived in the village prior to the construction of the marina such as *Lars* and the Italian chef who opened a restaurant together, are seen by locals as having an affinity with the village, which goes beyond a narrow commercial interest. Indeed, one or two of these village-based entrepreneurs have married local women and continue to benefit from good relations with most local inhabitants and establishment proprietors.

Although varied in scale, the tourism enterprises controlled by the collection of entrepreneurs in the marina are predominantly capitalist in nature, in so far as they are defined by economic ownership over the means of production, control over investment decisions and the distribution of profits, as well as the exploitation of wage-labour (cf. Massey 1995: 31). Although many proprietors are leaseholders and thus rent their premises from absentee landlords, they can nevertheless be considered as different factions amongst a class of metropolitan-capitalist entrepreneurs who exercise control over the *accumulation process*, in that they are the owners of the respective business concerns located in these premises, and contract predominantly wage-labour. As argued by Gubbay (1997), it is not the mere ownership of assets, but rather their capacity to exercise control over the production process (here defined as the provision of a particular service to tourists) and the labour force, and to dictate the use to which profits are devoted, which defines their class location. Beyond the income required to guarantee their material subsistence, profits are generally reinvested in their business or redirected into other business concerns and profitable investments elsewhere. One particular restaurant proprietor in the marina had at one stage tried



to divert some of his profits back to the UK into a golf course development. Although this particular project eventually fell through he has recently decided to reinvest profits in a similar type of enterprise on the Costa del Sol, and sold the lease on the restaurant. According to this informant, there is a considerably higher turnover of businesses in the marina than amongst the family-based enterprise in the village, with some entrepreneurs often remaining for less than two to three years before moving on. It is common for some to open and manage an establishment without the necessary licences or permits, with a view to making a quick profit and moving on before the authorities have time to pursue the necessary legal proceedings against such infringements. Thus informal associations of entrepreneurs and business rivalries tend to coalesce around groups of similar nationality for the duration of their time in the marina, in order to ease the sense of isolation and to facilitate dealings with authorities (*i.e.* benefiting from the experience, and possibly language skills, of fellow countrypersons who have been here longer).

To a certain extent the high turnover of commercial enterprise reinforces a lack of horizontal cooperation between entrepreneurs of different nationalities, and on occasion outright hostility between the different entrepreneurial factions in the marina. Given that these entrepreneurs are embedded within a more complex hierarchy of urban space controlled by a network of capitalist investors, rents on commercial premises in the marina are substantially higher than in the *barrio pesquero*, (some of which exceed 1 million pesetas/annum) and the overriding goal is the maximisation of profit and accumulation of capital. Indeed many proprietors were reluctant to answer any other than the vaguest of questions when quizzed on their origins (and those of the owner if they were different) or other matters relating to the functioning of their establishment, such as the number of workers employed in the establishment.

The collection of entrepreneurs and businesspersons involved in the running of commercial facilities, bars and restaurants in the marina are therefore part of a socio-economic hierarchy of power within the tourism enterprise economy in Playa de Mogán, at the top of which lie the different factions of international capital who are in possession of the physical means of production of the marina and its infrastructure, albeit subject to the terms of the administrative concession granted by the national government who are the ultimate 'owners' of the marina. Below them, the broad stratum of entrepreneurs inside the marina share a common interest derived from the fact that they constitute an association of individuals running tourism enterprises and whose overriding aim of maximising profits sets them apart from the village inhabitants whose interests are more intimately bound up with the nature of the village as a living social entity rather than a saleable commodity.

## 11.2 Patterns of Tourism Employment

Given the articulation of diverse configurations of ownership in the tourism enterprise economy the structure of the resort workforce lacks horizontal integration and is mediated by the existence of segmented interest groups (*e.g.* families). The increasingly cosmopolitan tourism workforce are comprised of a collection of strata dispersed throughout a variety of enterprises characterised by distinct



forms of ownership. It is therefore fragmented, transitory and stratified into different social and cultural clusters. Whilst Canary Island, Spanish and foreign migrant workers tend to be engaged in wage-work on a more temporary basis, local village residents, particularly those from former peasant households, are still tied into non-capitalist family economic units to the extent that most still overwhelmingly define themselves in relation to their kin rather than class, even if they are also involved in wage-work.

Many of the eating and drinking establishments in the marina do employ wage labour from amongst local families in the village and surrounding areas,<sup>12</sup> as well as workers from other villages and casual labour from amongst long-term travellers who stay in the village. Some of the smaller establishments however (e.g. coffee-shops and bars) predominantly exploit the labour of their own family members, although this practice often only extends to the temporary employment of their children or relatives during summer holidays (most tend to be studying in their home countries), and in one or two cases rely entirely on their *own* labour as direct producers. Given the nature of their business, the number of employees in the commercial and retail establishments is usually lower than that found in the eating and drinking establishments. On average they number from around two to three in the case of the smallest coffee-shops, and up to twenty in the largest restaurants. Employer-worker relations are thus predominantly based on the cash-nexus and establishments are often managed by an on site supervisor. A large proportion of these are young adults from metropolitan areas or the mainland with the necessary high school qualifications, language skills and work experience to work in these establishments, in contrast to many young adults from the village.

The division of labour in the boutiques and small shops in particular, demonstrates the degree to which the socio-cultural background of the employee mediates their ability to locate work in particular *types* of tourist-related enterprise. The nature of retail establishments is such that it requires a considerable amount of customer contact and the ability to feel comfortable in the presence of foreign tourists, particularly since the owners/managers are often not on site and thus leave the shops in the hands of their employees. There are strong similarities amongst many of the shop assistants, which distinguishes them somewhat from those who work in the eating/drinking establishments, which confirms Gubbay's claim that:

what counts as a valued skill or credential depends not on their inherent qualities but rather the demands by employers for particular sorts of workers. (1997: 82)

The majority of these employees tend to be young women (approximately between the ages of eighteen and twenty-five) from other villages such as Mogán and La Aldea de San Nicolás and metropolitan areas, where educational attainment has traditionally been higher. Many of them are high school graduates and have often had prior experience of working in other urban or tourist resort areas. More importantly they conform to a socially constructed, transnational norm which underpins the notion of women's work, in this case the 'appropriate' image and appearance of a shop assistant (see Kinnaird *et al.* 1994: 17-18), which mediates the ability of local women to negotiate work in the more commercial tourism enterprise in the marina. The apparent 'unsuitability' of girls from Playa de Mogán in jobs as shop assistants is



thus not only the result of their being less qualified in terms of education or previous work experience, but also due to culturally-mediated variables which intervene in the labour market and which modify employer expectations for particular characteristics. For example, women from Playa de Mogán have been renown locally for being loud and more forthright in their social behaviour than their counterparts from predominantly agrarian villages in the interior, such as the village of Mogán, and were therefore perceived as coarse and brutish by villagers from these parts (see Chapter Eight: p.143). Although these attributes are less common amongst younger women due to the influence of tourism and modernization of Canary Island society, they must be understood in the context of the peasant economy, which necessitated the engagement of women in physical labour and practices whose skills are not easily transferrable into the tourism sector.<sup>13</sup> Moreover, many of the younger women in the village are still required to participate in domestic labour and even once they have left school are still often unable to undertake paid employment on a regular basis. Typically, many young women have found work as chambermaids in the marina. Many complained of having to work long hours (up to 15 hours/day) without over-time and under the supervision of an authoritarian boss who was 'not from the area'.

Despite attempts by members of the local neighbourhood association headed by *Enrique*, to put forward residents' interests and by requesting support for the preparation and training of locals in order to equip them with the necessary skills to work in the new tourism enterprise economy, the council has taken little notice (*Canarias* 7 2/8/86). Furthermore, the changes in the configuration of employment and the growing presence of wage-work in the tourism enterprise economy excluded many locals from taking up paid employment in the marina at the outset. In addition, whilst those already working in family-owned enterprise required little formal training or expertise to be able to locate work amongst a limited number of local enterprises, they were unfamiliar with the dynamics of the tourism labour market which created a demand for new skills and was governed by the laws of capitalist competition. During the earlier period of tourism expansion in the 1960s and early 1970s locals were able to find paid employment in a range of menial jobs, however the increasing competition and expectations of 'quality' in this recent phase of tourism development presented a new set of obstacles to socio-economic mobility.

Nevertheless the expanding range of commercial and retail establishments related to tourism have provided employment for many young adults in the village. The case of *Jaime*, a young adult in his late teens, is relatively typical and illustrates the changing experience of work for the newer generation of locals. His grandfather was a fisherman but did not pass on the necessary skills and capital to his father who then worked for many years in the restaurant belonging to *Santiago*. *Jaime* and a significant number of his extended family approximately between the ages of twenty and thirty, hold various tourism-related jobs in Playa de Mogán, particularly in the large metropolitan-owned supermarket and one or two local bar-restaurants. In particular, tourism has expanded the range of employment opportunities for women and young adults such as *Jaime*, although these opportunities are mediated by gender and 'skill' inequalities which allocate work in an uneven manner resulting in occupational segregation. This is demonstrated by the experience of women elsewhere in the tourism labour market, particularly cleaners, a common occupation for women with few qualifications in these resort areas, which represents an example of the



commodification of household labour outside the confines of the home. It has nevertheless enabled some women to augment the family income through occasional periods of unskilled wage-work in tourism, whilst taking time away from work to raise children and look after domestic chores. However the frequency of movement between the non-capitalist household economy and the capitalist labour market may become increasingly difficult as family economic units find themselves increasingly unable to absorb surplus family labour (a situation exacerbated by the rising cost of living) as a more diversified and cosmopolitan tourism workforce enters the village and intensifies competition.

The demand for waged labour, which is also being fuelled by the development of an increasing range of capitalist enterprise both in the *barrio pesquero* as well as the marina, and within the next few years, will be given added impulse by the construction of tourism facilities on the adjacent land in the valley. Moreover, the particular nature of tourism development in Playa de Mogán, which combines an household tourism economy situated predominantly in what remains of the peasant fishing village on the with a commercial tourist-marina apartment complex, is unique in Gran Canaria. The close proximity of the marina to a picturesque fishing village has played a significant part in attracting an increasingly cosmopolitan migrant workforce, comprised of young individuals from the mainland and other parts of Europe, seeking a combination of casual work and pleasure. This group also includes a type of drifter tourist-worker, a phenomena also noted by Kenna (1993: 77) who refers to them as, “*nomads not from affluence*”, ‘displaced’ by high unemployment and the rising cost of living in their home societies. They usually comprise unemployed professionals and skilled labourers from the colder climes of northern European who come in search of seasonal as well as long-term work opportunities, a factor also facilitated by closer EU integration.<sup>14</sup> Some arrive on tourism yachts sailing between the Mediterranean and the Caribbean, having hitched free rides in exchange for working as a crew member. They frequent the bars and restaurants of the marina, and one or two in the *barrio pesquero*, in order to locate casual employment, whilst those with more specific skills to offer (e.g. electricians, plumbers, mechanics, builders) are often able to adapt these to the specific requirements of the tourism enterprise economy and earn a living as self-employed tradesmen of which there were several living in the village at the time of the fieldwork. Thus the multi-dimensional dynamics of tourism development in Playa de Mogán have transformed the very nature of skills and expertise, constructing the experience of employment in such a way so as to render some of the previous expertise held by villagers, relatively superfluous.

Highly valued intellectual and technical skills which were previously central to fishing and agriculture, for example, the ability to locate fishing grounds which were an important component of *los secretos* (although these have also been made relatively redundant since the advent of sonar technology which has been fitted on most boats), or specific skills relating to the repair of nets and equipment, are ones which on the whole cannot be transferred into tourism. Even in cases where some of these might conceivably be applied to tourism, such as boat maintenance or navigation skills, there is often too much competition from itinerant foreign workers who are willing to be paid less than locals can earn in fishing (4,000 pesetas/day, c. £20). The maintenance of tourist yachts does not therefore offer the potential level of income which can be earned as a fishermen nor is it a regular or stable source of employment. Although



the income from fishing is highly variable and is usually concentrated in the summer months during the tuna season, catches of up to 3000 kilogrammes per boat can bring in an income of 675,000 pesetas (around £3,400) in one week (calculated at the 1994 price of 225 pesetas/kilo), which is shared amongst only a few crew members, although they tend to vary between 1,000 and 2,000 kilos (*Cofradía de Pescadores de Playa de Mogán*).

The uneven nature of competition between foreign and local workers in some areas of the tourism enterprise economy is facilitated by the fact that migrant resort workers rarely have to support anyone beyond themselves and thus only require enough income in order to meet their basic needs of food and shelter (which may also be provided free of charge by restaurant proprietors), and perhaps save a little to make their way to a new resort in the months to come. Moreover, not only is the navigation of a sailing yacht an entirely different skill compared to that of a fishing boat, migrant workers have the added advantage of understanding and indeed form part of the tourists' own cultural register, which therefore renders them more 'suitable' as crews on charter yachts. However some fishermen have been able to transfer their skills to sport fishing (*pesca deportiva*), an activity which has grown considerably over the past decade thanks largely to the construction of the marinas here and in the larger resort of Puerto Rico. In a minority of cases where fishermen have invested in sport fishing boats they are still in possession of their means of production, although they are usually dependent on commercial intermediaries (travel agents) for their clientele. In the case of fishermen who do not own their own boats but work on other, sometimes foreign-owned craft in return for a wage, they have no stake in the ownership of the boat as they would in the artisanal fishing sector.

Fishermen can earn on average between 70,000 to 80,000 pesetas per month (£300-400) according to one fishermen who had worked on a sport fishing boat for five years, which is less than can be earned in some of the better paid bars and restaurants (up to 150,000 pesetas in some cases) and certainly less than fishing.<sup>15</sup> This is perhaps the one area of employment however that has brought traditional productive practices into direct conflict with those associated with tourism (see Chapter Ten: p.198). Specifically, conflicts have occurred where sport fishing boats have strayed into the fishing grounds used by the commercial boats, due to the fact that foreign boat owners are not aware of their location. In contrast to fishermen who undertake temporary employment in other touristic activities during periods of low catches, those who work on sport fishing boats have often found themselves accused of being "*ladrones del mar*" (thieves of the sea) (Santana Talavera 1990b: 35). These fishermen may often find it difficult to return to the traditional fishing sector for fear that they will divulge the location of fishing grounds to their new, capitalist masters. It is ironic that the sea itself, so long the source of material subsistence for the inhabitants of Playa de Mogán, should become the site of conflict between two different modes of economic production which on land have tended to articulate together in a more peaceful manner.

A further indication of the significance of the contrast in the culturally-defined nature of expertise, pointed out to the researcher by the resident Danish painter, is illustrated by the nature of the merchandise on sale in one or two locally-owned souvenir shops. These items rarely sell and include cheap religious



statuettes and articles of clothing which appear unchanged in style since before tourism arrived, and thus unlike the common 'international tourist fashions' found in resort areas. In contrast he sells a substantial number of paintings ranging from the surreal to standard watercolours of Mediterranean 'village-scapes', and even displays works by other resident-foreign painters in his gallery whose livelihoods compare to those of the market 'hippies' in Ibiza (Rozenberg 1995: 169). His success, which also extends to interior design contracts for hotels, enabled him to expand and open another gallery in the marina managed by his daughter. It is also interesting that there are few locally-made handicrafts for sale in the village. Historically, life for the majority of local inhabitants in Playa de Mogán and surrounding areas was devoted to eking out a living from the sea or in the agricultural plantations. There was thus little time to devote to craft activities and as a result there existed few opportunities for the development of an independent artisanal or craftsman class, in contrast to the more socially diverse and wealthier villages in the north of the island. Moreover, the children of landowners, amongst whom one might expect to find such activities, went to Las Palmas or the mainland to become journalists, writers, lawyers and engineers.

However, college and university-educated descendents of the agrarian middle-classes from the agrarian village of Mogán, have become increasingly active in the maintenance of some local cultural traditions.<sup>16</sup> Mogán is also the seat of municipal government and has historically been inhabited by local politicians, functionaries and landowners, whose children would often be sent to school in the larger towns in the north of the island (Guía and Gáldar) or Las Palmas. This led to a steady depopulation of the village until the expansion of tourism in nearby areas including Taurito and Playa de Mogán, increased employment opportunities for younger residents.<sup>17</sup> Many are employed in public administration, and in particular the *Casa de Cultura*, the cultural section of the municipal council which organises local festivals, jazz and rock concerts, as well as cultural events which celebrate the distinctiveness of this area. This extends to assistance in the annual celebration of the patron saint of the village of Playa de Mogán in July of each year, *las Fiestas del Carmen*, although this is predominantly organised by the *Cofradía* and the fishermen themselves. The former are often of greater interest to the tourists and also add to the accumulation of cultural capital which further distinguishes them from the youth and descendents of peasant households in Playa de Mogán, who see tourism as simply a means to earn a living. Two young men from the village of Mogán, one of whom was related to the incumbent mayor and another a waiter in one of the restaurants in Playa de Mogán who had recently returned from living abroad, referred to the silence and hostility which often greeted them when they passed an old school colleague from the Playa de Mogán in the street.

This group of relatively affluent youth are often also more sensitive to the damaging effects of mass tourism development in this area, and as a result have also been active in the organisation of rural walks and hiking trips in the area, which can be organised through the *Casa de Cultura*. Young adults in Playa de Mogán on the other hand are still however closely connected to the world of manual work whether it is fishing or more commonly today, wage-work in tourism. One resident of Playa de Mogán who has had the benefit of a high school education in Las Palmas, recounted how he had often tried to arrange cultural



activities for the youth of Playa de Mogán itself. His attempts were however greeted with insults from fellow villagers, and in particular from the sons of fishermen who he suggested were far more interested in the instant gratification of their desires through drinking, drug taking and visiting night clubs in nearby resorts, attitudes which were observed on numerous occasions during the periods of fieldwork.

### 11.3 Tourism Enterprise and Social Change

The ongoing touristification of Playa de Mogán has thus given rise to diverse local patterns of tourism entrepreneurship which reflect deeper transformations in the dominant modes of accumulation, in particular the penetration of capitalist social relations into the local tourism enterprise economy. The dynamics of tourism entrepreneurship constitute a contemporary terrain of conflict wherein former tensions between different social constituencies in the village are borne out, and new social alignments emerge. Individual enterprises, tourism entrepreneurs and workers are thus situated in an expanding web of social relations which mediates their ability to exploit tourism as well as the specific type of resource at their disposal. Despite the fact that it is possible to speak of the emergence of a new stratum of tourism entrepreneurs who occupy a broadly similar position in the social relations of production, this does not mean to say that they share a pre-determined set of common interests or indeed constitute an internally homogeneous 'class' (cf. Massey 1995: 42). Rather the evidence points to the existence of a number of different factions which interpellate the local entrepreneurial classes, giving rise to social tensions if not outright class antagonisms.

Thus one of the principal social changes brought about by tourism has been to create the conditions for the emergence of a range of inter-mediate entrepreneurial classes whose access to economic and political means of production (cf. Mouzelis 1990: Chs. 2-3) is uneven. These factions include, peasant entrepreneurs comprising for the most part former peasants/general labourers and to a lesser extent sons of fishermen, amongst whom there is a prominent minority who as 'culture-brokers' were the first to make contact with and open facilities for tourists and have gained considerably in socio-economic and political status in the village; a small number of entrepreneurs who are descendents of the local *cacique* family and own one or two establishments (in particular the successful restaurant on the beachfront) but more significantly control land and property-based assets into which commercial investment is channelled by outside investors as tourism becomes increasingly institutionalized in the village; more recently, (particularly since the early 1980s and the development of the marina) a broad spectrum of metropolitan entrepreneurs which includes the peninsular Spanish and Canary Island managers of small retail shops and/or bar-restaurants, as well as a significant quantity of foreign entrepreneurs, many of whom have had previous experience of managing similar types of enterprise elsewhere, and the larger commercial investors (anonymous companies) who are not resident in the village but have capital tied up in property and tourism enterprises. The overriding concern of the several development companies who control assets in the marina and parts of the village itself, with the maximisation of profits rather than the reproduction



of the family and individual enterprises, ensures that control of the tourism enterprise economy centred on the marina is located within wider socio-economic hierarchies far removed from the village.

Alongside the expansion of tourism-related enterprises the locally-specific conditions of tourism development in the village also construct the experience of employment in particular ways. The expansion of the tourism enterprise economy since the late 1960s has extended the role of segments of the village population who were previously marginal to the dominant modes of production in the pre-touristification phases of the village's development. Young members of the village workforce were drawn out of the physical confines of the locality in order to seek wage-work in the construction and tourism industries for the first time. This had the effect of enlarging the proportion of the village population subjected to capitalist wage relations, although occupational pluralism has continued to bind many workers into the household economy. It has also expanded the role of women and young people within the village, and allies them to the changing patterns of enterprise which challenges the economic dominance of the established local cliques. The cosmopolitan character of employment in the village has been significantly bolstered by the attraction of a substantial floating or migrant workforce from the mainland and other parts of Europe. Given that they are endowed with varying degrees of cultural-educational capital and experience of tourism-related work, has meant that the skills and cultural registers involved in the different enterprises are clearly demarcated. This contributes to the weak organizational character of the tourism workforce which is intersected by vertical social relations based on familial ties, clientelist networks and differentiated national-cultural allegiances (*i.e.* where a German bar-restaurants favours the employment of German workers etc...).

#### *Local Tourism Enterprise: Prospects for the Future ?*

It is difficult to predict with any degree of accuracy, and indeed this would be contrary to the theoretical underpinnings of this study, the likely outcome for locally-operated tourism enterprises of the ongoing touristification of this locality. What is certain however, is that each enterprise and their respective owners are increasingly tied into a deepening web of capitalist social relations, in one way or another, which has significant implications for their ability to survive and adapt to the requirements of the tourism enterprise economy. The contrast in the investment strategies amongst the different groups of entrepreneurs is indicative of the degree to which entrepreneurial agency coincides with and generates additional momentum for the increasing capitalisation of tourism enterprise and commoditization of social relations in the village. This is demonstrated even more clearly by the actions of entrepreneurs from amongst the landowning households. Although the running of tourism enterprises and extraction of rent from property in the *barrio pesquero* provides some of them with a reasonable return from tourism-related economic activities, ultimately it is their ability to convert the land-based capital on the valley floor into a large-scale productive tourism infrastructure which will consolidate their ability to intervene and extract significant wealth from tourism in the near future. Indeed the tension described by Goffee and Scase (1983: 153) between *established* and *marginal* segments of the entrepreneurial middle-class can be seen here. Whilst the dominant faction of local entrepreneurs stands to benefit from the ongoing



improvement of the physical infrastructure and concomitant institutionalization of tourism, smaller peasant entrepreneurs are in a more precarious or indeed marginal position with respect to their relationship to the deepening logic of the market. They are less able to spread their assets or investments across sectors and capitalise on the changing nature of tourist consumption in the village. These changes may therefore serve to subordinate family enterprises in the village to the logic of the wider capitalist tourism industry and increasingly consolidate the ability of a small group of well-established local entrepreneurs in tandem with external metropolitan commercial interests, to regulate the precise nature of the local tourism enterprise economy.

The increasing penetration of capitalist enterprise and large commercial concerns into the village, and the associated inflation of house prices and the cost of living, threatens the ability of all but the largest and most established of the family-operated enterprises, to maintain an independent economic existence and avoid being forced to seek wage-work in tourism. Increasing competition has particularly affected small family-run grocery stores. In the past two years, two out of the three remaining stores of this type have been forced to close as a result of competition from the increasing number of metropolitan-owned supermarkets in the village. Only two years ago, one of these, an establishment which had supplied food and drink to locals and foreign visitors since the 1960s, was supplying merchandise to around twenty different bars in the marina; mainly fruit and vegetables purchased from wholesalers in Mogán and Las Palmas, plus numerous other small last minute items when stocks ran short. However, on one of the last meetings with this informant, he emphasised that many of these relied on him [predominantly] for last minute purchases, or during sudden increases in demand, rather than setting up systematic supply chains. Some of the foreign-owned establishments in the marina purchase their stock from foreign-owned wholesalers in Las Palmas, who import produce directly from the specific country in question. This has created a hierarchical neo-mercantile network between individual units of foreign-owned enterprise in the village, island-based wholesalers and producers in the home countries which supply the goods. This supply chain thus by-passes not only local suppliers in the municipality, but metropolitan wholesalers on the island as a whole.

To a certain extent however some of these locally-run establishments have been able to survive due to a continued monopoly on the provision of tourism-related services within the village (this also applies to businesses such as the hardware store, pharmacy and the hairdresser, all of which are currently the only suppliers of these facilities). Many family-run pensions and the best situated bar-restaurants, including those belonging to *Alberto* and *José* as well as the beachfront restaurant, continue to survive thanks to their ability to provide lodgings and places to eat and drink to a segment of the tourist market in search of a more 'traditional' and 'authentic' setting, in contrast to the more 'contrived' ambience (in the eyes of local travelers staying in Playa de Mogán) in the large urban resort enclaves areas dotted along the adjacent coastline. It is also worthy of note that the location of the best situated local bar-restaurants is not entirely coincidental. The involvement of their owners in the local council gives them privileged access to planning and development information and enhances their ability to anticipate the likely effects of changes on their business. The unique nature of local tourism enterprise is also bolstered by the fact



that there are few other tourism destination areas in Gran Canaria where tourists can find lodging facilities run by local inhabitants within existing villages.<sup>18</sup> Hence, they continue to depend upon the regular influx of tourists comprised mainly of three groups; first, the more self-reliant explorer-type tourists in search of 'locally' owned, small-scale lodging facilities, some of whom also comprise part of the continuous influx of the migrant resort workforce; second, regular visitation by day-trippers from nearby coastal resorts, although this market tends to restrict its custom to one or two conveniently located bars, such as the cafe-bar situated in the picturesque *plaza*, and the predominantly foreign-owned establishments in the marina; and finally, a regular clientele of islanders who frequent certain pensions and restaurants owned by friends or relatives. For example, the pension operated by *Santiago's* wife, fills up nearly half of its rooms for almost an entire month during the early summer, with the extended family of its neighbours who moved out of the village some time ago, but who still return on a regular basis to visit friends and relatives still resident here.

The ability of family-owned accommodation facilities to be relatively self-sufficient in this respect is further bolstered by the fact that, apart from the transport services which bring tourists to the island and to the area itself, payment is made directly to the owners of each individual enterprise. This contrasts with the experience of small independent tourism enterprise elsewhere, such as for example in northern Thailand, where non-Thai Hmong villagers in highland areas who offer accommodation facilities in small guest-houses, are dependent upon Thai middle-men for their remuneration and thus receive a smaller share of tourist revenue (Michaud 1997). In Playa de Mogán the supply of small-scale family-run pensions continues to outstrip demand at certain times of the year (particularly from December to April). This also however contributes to an element of complacency and a lack of effort devoted to upgrading facilities or to market these establishments. Should the level and scale of tourism development continue to increase or reach a level of saturation which begins to detract from what remains of the rustic appeal of the village, there is a danger that these establishments will lose their clientele and thus be forced to seek other strategies of economic survival (which may include selling their property), according to the resources at their disposal.

As the marina begins to attract a more 'discerning' high spending visitor who demands a certain quality of accommodation facilities, some of the larger family economic units may benefit from their custom in one of their restaurants or well-furnished apartments for rent. On the other hand, smaller pensions are unable to exploit this or the increase in visitation by day-visitors either, as their establishments are of limited capacity and cater to a limited segment of independent tourists who may increasingly be deterred by the continuing expansion in the scale of development in the village and marina. One response by families with little capital beyond the houses in which they live, has thus been to sell their property to increasing numbers of long-term foreign residents or entrepreneurs with commercial interests in the marina. Nevertheless this does not constitute a long-term investment strategy (often these families have to leave and seek employment in the larger resort areas), nor does it guarantee a sustainable economic future for these families who are still left with few transferable skills or resources on which to capitalise through tourism.



Since the late 1980s however, the expansion of family-based tourism enterprise appears to have reached a ceiling. Indeed few of the peasant entrepreneurs have expanded into altogether new sectors or into different types of touristic enterprise, although some minor improvements have been made to the original establishments, which in some cases are now being run by their children. Their expansion has been inhibited by a number of factors already discussed, including the lack of available space and affordable property in the village as a whole. Furthermore the lack of specialist tourism-related skills or marketing expertise amongst existing owners, places constraints on the further expansion of enterprise controlled by the subordinate factions of the local entrepreneurial classes. The majority of their business activities thus remains within the confines of the village itself (in the *barrio pesquero* or Lomo Quiebre), and is restricted to the requirements of ensuring the reproduction of the family. The inter-generational social mobility precipitated by tourism has also increased the need for the recruitment of a replacement workforce to cover tasks previously undertaken by the children and kin of the first generation of peasant entrepreneurs, which may undermine the continued existence of these enterprises in their present form. Indeed the majority of the proprietors in family-run establishments tend to be over the age of fifty. The management of some enterprises has been passed onto younger family members in their late twenties or early thirties, however many are drawn towards wage-work in the larger capitalist tourism developments or in a few cases, middle-level supervisory and administrative roles. Many do indeed have high school qualifications however they may well be forced to seek employment in other parts of the island. However, several young adults working in fishing or tourism-related jobs in nearby resorts, were adamant that they did not want to leave *their* village. Some were convinced that after a period of work experience elsewhere they would then be able to return to Playa de Mogán and find work in the increasingly diversified range of tourism establishments, such as those which will be built adjacent to the *barrio pesquero*. They may however find their task somewhat complicated as the increasing scale of tourism development attracts qualified workers from other areas, including a substantial migrant workforce from other European resorts.

The construction of the marina has also acted as a catalyst of change in the nature of competition between different family enterprises in Playa de Mogán, which has benefitted some whilst marginalising others. Certain local restaurant proprietors in particular have begun to complain of a decline in business despite the increase in tourist visitation to the village, blaming this on the attraction of the marina for tourists. This demonstrates one of the fundamental distinctions made by peasant entrepreneurs between the earlier pre-marina phase of tourism whereby a limited number of long-term visitors would spend their money in a few establishments (probably more a reflection of the fact that there was little choice at that time), and the more recent increase of tourists and day-trippers from nearby resorts who spend little in the village (especially the *barrio pesquero*). Often during conversations with informants in these local establishments, whole afternoons went by with nothing more than a couple of locals dropping in for a beer. One particular restaurant proprietor put this down to the increasing competition from the marina, whose proprietors try and discourage tourists from frequenting locales in the *barrio pesquero*.



However, the success of foreign-run restaurants and cafes, particularly those in the marina, is also strongly related to the specific nature of these establishments. Most offer a 'transnational tourism fare' to which most of the tourists and in particular day-trippers from the more standard resorts are accustomed, in terms of both the food they serve and their familiar ambience. As mentioned above, the fact that the country of origin of many of the foreign entrepreneurs corresponds closely to those of the tourists themselves, also constitutes a significant element in the culturally-specific nature of expertise and tourism-related skills which influences the nature of their business (*e.g.* a well-known Irish restaurant serves Guinness imported from Ireland and shows British television much like similar bars in the larger more populous resort enclaves). The above informant lamented that, apart from the occasional couple who venture beyond the restaurants in the marina or independent tourists from the pensions, tourists are reluctant to sample more local food. Her situation was not helped by the fact that they are situated opposite a restaurant run by an Italian, which does serve some local produce, but essentially markets itself as a pizzeria, something which most people are familiar with and indeed associate with good, reliable cooking anywhere in the world.

It could be assumed that such a significant concentration of independent budget travellers and long-term migrant resort workers in such a small space as Playa de Mogán, would result in substantial demand for local fare. However many of them tend to purchase a small selection of standard 'Spanish' produce (not necessarily from the Canary Islands), such as olives, chorizo and beer, from the large supermarkets (of which there are now a total of three in the village) to be consumed in their pensions or apartments, a fact which preoccupies several restaurant proprietors. Most only venture out to drink in the marina or in one of the two locally-owned bars in the *barrio pesquero* frequented by locals, tourists and long-term foreign residents. If they do eat out, it is often nothing more than a quick snack or *tapa*. By doing so they are inadvertently contributing to the continuing demise of small family-owned grocery stores by larger commercial enterprises employing wage labour. Ironically, this contradicts one of the principal reasons why many of them choose to stay in family-run pensions in Playa de Mogán rather than in the larger resorts nearby. It is also a further illustration of the changing identity of Playa de Mogán and the ongoing commodification of its social and built environments. Difficulties are also compounded by a lack of language skills held by most native to the village itself, in contrast to many of those entrepreneurs who have come from mainland Spain and elsewhere, many of whom have had more experience of working in tourism. This makes communication difficult with all but a few tourists who learn some basic words of Spanish, and indeed some are even hostile towards learning another language for reasons that are not immediately apparent but which may reflect a sense of local 'pride' and conviction that 'outsiders' should learn their language and not vice versa.

The lack of commercial or formal management and marketing expertise is demonstrated by the fact that all but a few of the establishments which are owned and/or managed by local entrepreneurs from the village, and certainly most of those which opened in the 1970s and early 1980s, essentially constitute *reactive* attempts by villagers to make the best of their residual expertise and resources at their disposal, and convert it into profitable use in accordance with the prevailing nature of tourism activities. For



example, in recent years there has been a proliferation of apartments for rent in response to the closure of some small family businesses, such as the two local grocery stores which closed in 1997. This may have something to do with the fact that it requires little management expertise compared to a restaurant, but also it represents the commodification of the one form of capital which many residents still have access to above all else, *i.e.* the property they have built or inherited from departed or deceased family members. A common “risk-reduction” strategy deployed by small entrepreneurs with few assets and little expertise at their disposal, is to imitate businesses which are apparently successful (Dahles 1997b: 31). In this respect, the fact that many of the long-term foreign residents have purchased and converted residences into tourist apartments for rent in the *barrio pesquero*, has encouraged many local inhabitants to do the same. However they lack the culturally-specific knowledge of tourist desires, as well as the direct contact with potential customers in the generating countries and ultimately the ability to transform this into a strategic long-term investment rather than a short-term reactive response to the changing nature of tourism visitation, which puts them at a disadvantage.

Apart from those who continue to run pensions, there is a tendency to opt for a bar or restaurant of some description, which often represents the least difficult path for local entrepreneurs with only small amounts of capital to invest and/or little expertise. The majority of the bars and restaurants run by local entrepreneurs from the village, whilst not unappealing, tend to be unsophisticated establishments with the odd tourist menu which are merely extensions of standard local eating and drinking establishments. Indeed there is little identifiable difference between them in terms of theme or ambience, which might appeal to a specific tourist market. Tourists are also intimidated by the often loud and animated conversations of groups of local men who usually congregate in some of these bars for several hours, a common social ritual for particularly elderly men in Mediterranean societies (see Waldren 1996: 45). Many also make little conscious effort to lure tourists (in contrast to the more aggressive marketing of restaurants in larger resorts) or are not familiar with the subtle differences in ambience and provision of food and beverages which attract particular sets of tourists. As long as the tourists keep coming there is little thought given to what might occur should circumstances change and the tourists were to go elsewhere. This contrasts to the more carefully stylised bars characteristic of the more commercial enterprise in the marina, each with their own particular identity or theme.<sup>19</sup> Equally significant is the manner in which tourists tend to gravitate towards locales run and staffed by people of similar and familiar cultural backgrounds and nationalities.

The experience of many foreign entrepreneurs in tourist-related businesses elsewhere is also a significant factor in the internal differentiation of entrepreneurship which reinforces the uneven distribution of benefits in the local tourism enterprise economy. This was emphasised by a restaurant proprietor in the marina who is from another village on Gran Canaria and has thirty years of experience working in hotel and catering, along with a period of time spent overseas learning languages. His experience contrasts significantly with all but the youngest generation of villagers who are entering the workforce, few of whom have similar levels of experience or qualifications, and who speak perhaps a few rudimentary phrases in English or German. Indeed he was critical of local workers who underestimate the degree of



skill and training required to work as a waiter, many of whom he suggested, believe it involves nothing more than being able to hold a tray in the correct manner! This ironically contrasts with some foreign-owned establishments who are willing to contract undeclared casual labour who although often inexperienced and untrained, are familiar with the cultural background and tastes of tourists. In this respect the more familiar terrain of 'face-to-face' contact is still significant for many locals who may prefer to work for the son or daughter of a local *cacique* family (e.g. such as the popular beachfront restaurant) than for an unfamiliar foreign entrepreneur in the marina, whose language and culture they are unfamiliar with.

## Conclusion

This chapter has outlined the principal forces which have conditioned the social configurations of tourism entrepreneurship in Playa de Mogán. Using a combination of ethnographic data in tandem with archive material, a range of factors which regulate the structure, organisation and pattern of entrepreneurship in the village, have been illuminated. Specifically, it has been shown that the timing and nature of tourism development in Playa de Mogán has reinforced the persistence of non-capitalist forms of [tourism] enterprise regulated by the need of particular family economic units to secure their livelihoods, in which there is little separation between the owners and workers of such establishments. Whilst enabling a degree of independent control over the means of production, the persistence of hierarchically-ordered social relations has at the same time inhibited the emergence of any underlying common interests between the key protagonists within the local entrepreneurial classes.

It has also been shown however that there is a degree of internal differentiation of tourism enterprise, according to the type of enterprise, the internal socio-economic organisation of work and the use to which surpluses are devoted. The last of these variables also indicates the degree to which a minority of more successful local entrepreneurs, through a combination of timing and access to both economic resources and political support, have consolidated a position of relative strength within the tourism enterprise economy. Hence, although the local entrepreneurial classes appear to occupy a common structural position, ethnographic analysis of the social dynamics of entrepreneurship reveals different patterns of mobility and influence amongst the group of tourism entrepreneurs which has emerged from within the village itself. Indeed many have moved through the social structure as a result of their activities in tourism, which has allowed them to further benefit from the increasingly commercial nature of tourism. Some have thus accumulated substantial amounts of capital (particularly property-based assets) and become more akin to a rentier class of capitalists, whilst others have remained less mobile and constrained in their opportunities, and may continue to become more marginalised as an increasing array of entrepreneurial coalitions with superior economic and political capital intervene in the touristic landscape of Playa de Mogán.



The changing nature of visitor consumption, both reflects and precipitates the commodification of village resources, and the shifting composition of entrepreneurial groups in the village. Whereas once most commercial enterprise was restricted to the marina, the renewed growth in tourism since the slump of the early 1990s, has witnessed the arrival of a wider spectrum of [metropolitan] entrepreneurs who have begun to open more commercial enterprise in the *barrio pesquero* itself. The renovation of certain buildings and embellishment of public spaces in the *barrio pesquero*, has transformed the village into a space of intense speculation between competing entrepreneurial factions, which increasingly threatens the survival of the household economy and the previous economic independence of peasant entrepreneurs. In contrast, the more well-established, and economically-powerful local entrepreneurs are in fact well placed to consolidate their advantageous economic position, through political support for tourism as well as their own individual investment strategies which add momentum to the increasing prevalence of capitalist social relations in the tourism enterprise economy.

The evidence outlined in this chapter therefore emphasises the importance of examining the social organisation of tourism enterprise which embraces the internal diversity of entrepreneurial agency within the context of the broader processes of tourism development. Furthermore, it has demonstrated that not only are static categorisations of entrepreneurship and/or simple classifications of tourism enterprise according to pre-determined insufficient as analytical tools, but also that within particular social configurations of entrepreneurship at a local level, there exists a number of qualitative variations in the social relations of production.



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- <sup>1</sup> Amongst the businesses situated outside the marina, there are approximately 16 restaurants and cafes, 2 bars, 11 pensions, 1 small supermarket, 1 small grocer/general store (2 grocery stores have recently closed down), 1 ice cream stand, 1 large chain supermarket, 1 fishmonger, 12 assorted retail outlets/ shops/newsagents, 1 hairdresser, 1 pharmacy, 1 launderette and 1 art gallery.
- <sup>2</sup> Keyder (1998: 16-17) argues that the informal economy is a defining characteristic of southern European societies, in which the absence of a universal welfare system has reinforced the role of the household as a unit of production as well as consumption.
- <sup>3</sup> These opinions were also confirmed during market days when traders, eager to sell their wares to the day-trippers from large resorts nearby, would often display their frustration to tourists who were unwilling to pay the prices on offer; indeed to paraphrase one trader, "*I thought you people were supposed to be wealthy?*" (this comment was shouted at an elderly British tourist who had turned her back on him after refusing to buy some cloth).
- <sup>4</sup> For example the manager of a small flowershop situated in an older building just off the *plaza* pays 45,000 pesetas per month in rent, whilst in a nearby street, the rent for a slightly larger retail space which has just been opened in a modern, newly constructed building is 150,000 pesetas. Towards the marina commercial space is far more expensive, and often exceeds 1,000,000 pesetas per month in the marina itself.
- <sup>5</sup> "There is no unemployment in Mogán, if people don't have a job, its because they dont want one".
- <sup>6</sup> Keyder (1998: 16-19) argues that particularism and hierarchical loyalties are the outcome of the uneven development of peripheral capitalist societies. In particular there is a suspicion towards universal social (welfare) institutions derived from a political heritage of clientelism and a weak state. Rather than reverse this situation, the increasing integration of southern European economies into international circuits of global capital, facilitates the mobility of regional bourgeoisies who become less bound to the goals of national or regional development, thus further disenfranchising household economies to whom they have little obligation (see also Bauman 1998).
- <sup>7</sup> "Every three months I have to pay...they charge me for the tables, the chairs, the pavement, the radio, the television, to be able to speak, to sit on the pavement...!"
- <sup>8</sup> 12.4% of the total municipal population was registered as illiterate in 1975 (Alvarez 1980b: 314). Between 1981 and 1991 the level of illiteracy in the municipality fell from 8.3 % of the population (over ten years of age) to 4.5 %. Furthermore, whilst in 1981 nearly half of the population did not progress beyond the basic level of secondary education (*primer grado*), by 1991 this had fallen to 33% (INE 1985; CEDOC 1986; Istac 1991).
- <sup>9</sup> Santana Talavera (1990a: 94) points out that ostentatious displays of consumer items are often found in the kitchens of particular households, the part of the home in which most social interaction with friends and relatives takes place.
- <sup>10</sup> A.A.M. *Libro de Actas de Pleno*, Vol .17: 3/11/80-27/4/81
- <sup>11</sup> Arguably this reflects an area of weakness in an ethnographic-driven inquiry of tourism development. However it is emphasised that attempts to establish these facts through approaching the managers directly were largely greeted with hostility and/or outright refusal, which made any attempt to do so futile. The information gathered from one or two who did agree to an informal interview with the researcher, forms much of the contextual detail which is used here. Moreover, as the classification of tourism enterprise is not one of the stated aims of this study, but rather the examination of the processes and social relations which inform entrepreneurial responses and local adaptation to tourism, this shortcoming was not seen as a fundamental obstacle to the study.
- <sup>12</sup> *Enrique*, the ex-leader of the local neighbourhood association, suggested that despite the inflated claims of the marina developers, fewer then 10% of workers in the marina enterprises were from Playa de Mogán. Although difficult to quantify due to the hostility of enterprise owners in the marina coupled with the fluidity of labour circulation throughout much of the establishments in the village as a whole, observational data and conversations with several employees in the marina suggests that this figure is much larger.
- <sup>13</sup> During the early part of this century when women were responsible for the distribution and sale of fish throughout the villages of the interior, they would announce their arrival by piercing cries. These can be still be heard in markets around the island and echoing across the rooftops in the *barrio pesquero* as they communicate with one another (this practice has been much reduced since the arrival of the telephone during the 1970s, although it is still usefully employed to call children playing down below!).



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- 14 For further elaboration of this argument in the context of Playa de Mogán, see Bianchi and Clarke (1998).
- 15 Although artisanal fishing offers unpredictable returns and is often an arduous occupation, it has however provided an opportunity for substantial and immediate economic returns when catches are good. In 1996 the highest recorded catch for one boat and its crew was 22 million pesetas (c.£110,000) (*Cofradía de Pescadores*).
- 16 For the most part this is restricted to the organisation of village *fiestas*, rather than handicrafts. Similarly, as a result of their superior familiarity with urban and popular culture (evidenced by the trendier nature of the bars in the village of Mogán), they have brought music and jazz festivals to the area as well as contemporary art exhibitions.
- 17 Between 1960 and 1986 the (de jure) population of Mogán fell from 686 to 442 permanent residents. During the same period the figure for Playa de Mogán rose from 614 to 694. (Cabildo Insular 1986).
- 18 Official figures suggest that there are only 84 such establishments on the island of Gran Canaria, over half of which (53) are located in Las Palmas (Istac 1993). In the municipality of Mogán there are 16 registered establishments of this type, of which at least 10 are located in Playa de Mogán. There are some locally-owned lodgings in the nearby fishing village of Arguineguín, but due to its location on the main coastal highway it has grown into a relatively unattractive and bustling town., thus detracting somewhat from its 'peasant' appeal. Furthermore, the encroachment of tourism construction has almost joined this village to the urban sprawl of nearby resort areas.
- 19 Furthermore many of the bars and restaurants in the marina play on the connotations of sophistication associated with marina resorts elsewhere, in particular the leisured wealth associated with yachting.



# CONCLUSION

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The principal concern of this thesis has been to illuminate, through the application of a critical ethnography, the social forces of change which have given rise to and conditioned locally-specific configurations of tourism development and entrepreneurship in the village of Playa de Mogán. Moreover it has sought to demonstrate the importance of situating analyses of the local dynamics of tourism development in the context of wider macro-economic and political circumstances which have helped shape uneven patterns of regional and local capitalist development, and thereby reinforce the social structure of the village. This conclusion will summarise the key findings which have been considered in the chapter conclusions, together with reflection on the methods employed and the value of the knowledge which has been uncovered. It will also consider the degree to which this study has contributed towards a wider understanding of tourism development in peripheral [island] regions, and thus added momentum to a critical research agenda in this domain of tourism inquiry.

## **A Critical Ethnography of Tourism Entrepreneurship and Social Change: A Synopsis of the Research**

It has been argued (see Introduction and Chapter Five) that much of the literature on tourism development has paid insufficient attention to the dynamics of touristification within local formations. Hence, the approach to the study of tourism, development and social change adopted in this thesis, reflects a continuing concern in anthropology, pioneered in the work of Blok (1974), Wolf (1966, 1982) and Boissevain (1975) amongst others, to develop a critical understanding of societies undergoing processes of social and economic transformation, which is sensitive to wider material forces of change, but in which it is recognised that people are “*active agents and subjects in their own history*” (Ortner 1984: 143). In so doing it has attempted to integrate ‘local voices’ into a critical deductive framework, thus addressing the relationship between structure and agency in the context of tourism development, more of which will be discussed below. In the following synopsis of the research findings, three principal areas are considered which illuminate different yet interconnected aspects of the varied strategies of adaptation and response to tourism at a local level. These are, first, the continued significance of household production within the tourism enterprise economy; second, the relationship between social change and entrepreneurial agency; and third, the socio-spatial configurations of entrepreneurship linked to processes of commodification.

### ***The Persistence of Household Production in the Tourism Enterprise Economy***

Although recent publications herald an increasing level of theoretical sophistication in tourism research (Lanfant *et al.* 1995; Picard and Wood 1997), there continues to be a deficit of critical theoretical research regarding processes of tourism development (Clancy 1999). As a consequence, one area in particular - the



diverse patterns of non-capitalist modes of tourism enterprise - has not been given adequate attention by tourism scholars, or by policy-makers at different levels (see below). This is even more surprising given the continued importance of household economies, particularly in coastal and island regions in 'Mediterranean Europe', where tourism has taken root within rural and/or fishing communities (Hadjimichalis 1994: 20). More often than not they are regarded as representative of a transitional phase, between the early stages of tourism development and the eventual full-blown institutionalization of this sector (*e.g.* Oppermann 1993). These assumptions have been perpetuated by further adaptations of linear development theories, which suggest for example, that the tourism informal sector is likely to disappear or be absorbed by the onset of a larger-scale phase of investment in tourism facilities (Kermath and Thomas 1992). This may well be the case, but what this and other studies of a similar nature lack is a theoretically-informed explanation of the social forces which serve to undermine informal coalitions or groupings of entrepreneurs, in favour of more powerful cliques and vested interests. Thus despite the arguably descriptive utility of Butler's (1980) life-cycle model, it fails to provide the analytical tools with which to analyse the organisational diversity of tourism enterprises in tandem with the complex array of social forces which give rise to specific structures of tourism development.

Furthermore, the household economy is often invisible in tourism policies which increasingly emphasise the need to improve 'quality' and 'competitiveness', although the European Union's recent *Philoxenia* Programme goes some way towards recognising this, and describes tourism as:

a diverse and highly fragmented industry, most of which are SMEs, often resulting in less coherent policy formulation and ineffective co-ordination at many levels. (CEC 1996: 2)

A perceived bias towards large-scale concerns amongst local and island policy-makers, was reflected in the accusations by peasant entrepreneurs in Playa de Mogán that the interests of household/family-based enterprise were consistently ignored, or at worst, undermined in order to perpetuate their decline altogether. Indeed political agency which favours larger coalitions of commercial enterprise also means that the contribution of the non-capitalist sector to the economy (as well as its wider social welfare role) is ignored and moreover is not recognised in statistical indicators of selective economic well-being. Ultimately, this serves to reinforce the emphasis of tourism authorities on *quantitative* indicators of tourism's success, as evidenced by the ritual publication of tourism arrival figures in the local press.

This study has thus highlighted not only the existence of varied forms of tourism enterprise in Playa de Mogán, in which the uneven penetration of capitalist social relations ranges from non-capitalist family-based enterprise to larger units of commercial tourism enterprise, but also how specific characteristics of the social formation and local modes of tourism consumption have to a certain extent, reinforced local patterns of entrepreneurship. The changes experienced in the material basis of economic production in Playa de Mogán have not led to a wholesale transformation of the social relations of production across the local tourism enterprise economy. Indeed the persistence of a degree of non-capitalist social relations throughout the tourism economy has been instrumental in the continued survival of Playa de Mogán as a living community with a series of tourism-related economic activities that still benefits its inhabitants



to a significant extent. Thus the collection of tourism entrepreneurs which has emerged from different segments within the social formation over the past three decades, cannot yet be considered as a fully developed local capitalist class who has been able to “*transform the means of production and set them in motion through the purchase of labour power offered for sale by a class of labourers*” (Wolf 1982: 120).

The fragmented and experiential nature of tourism as a productive activity and moreover, a process of consumption, which appropriates (and embellishes) a combination of intrinsic socio-cultural and natural features particular to a locality, to which the consumers themselves have to travel in order to experience and consume them, differentiates it substantially from other economic sectors. In contrast, economic activities such as agriculture and manufacturing, tend to give rise to significant inequalities between regions and classes due to the existence of a “*vast productivity differential between technologically advanced and backward areas of the economy*” (Mouzelis 1978: 479-80). The so-called “*low-level equilibrium trap*” which describes the inability of ‘petty commodity producers’ in underdeveloped societies to compete with manufactured imports due to their inability to accumulate sufficient capital and upgrade technology (see Cheater 1989: 102), is not as relevant in areas where household tourism production is prominent. Here, a combination of factors specific to the legacy of capitalist development in this area, as well as the nature of tourism as a commodity, has been instrumental in the ability of non-capitalist tourism enterprises and household economies to survive, particularly in the areas of lodging and eating/drinking establishments.

During the early stages of tourism development in the village, prior to the development of the commercial marina-fishing port (*puerto deportivo-pesquero*), entrepreneurial agency was characterised by the ‘informal’ appropriation of village resources with predominantly use values, and their conversion into forms of economic exchange (e.g. the renting of rooms in family households). This then began to initiate a transfer of productive labour by a small number of peasant entrepreneurs from the domain of agricultural and other labour-based practices, to the provision of basic goods and services to an initial trickle of ‘explorer-travellers’ (*los ipis*). This process reflects what Husbands has referred to as, “*a structural shift from investment in ‘productive’ activity (the output of goods) to ‘unproductive’ activity (the output of services)...*” (1981: 50). The locally-specific dynamics of tourism entrepreneurship have been regulated by a constellation of factors, of which three have emerged as key determinants in this case. First, the legacy of the existing social structure which had been shaped by the dynamics of agrarian capitalist development from the early 19th to the mid-20th centuries. This endowed some segments of the social formation with the informal means of production which became valuable at a later stage of touristification; second, the innovative capacity of peasant entrepreneurs who were in relatively close contact with *los ipis* and early visitors to the village and were thus able to exploit their commercial potential; and third, for a smaller collection of entrepreneurs within the broader spectrum of the local entrepreneurial classes, instrumental and political friendships gave certain entrepreneurs (particularly landowners) privileged access to the levers of power in the municipal government. Similar conclusions were arrived at by van der Werff (1980) with respect to the early stages of tourism development in the



resort of Pescaia (Italy), where “*hundreds of former peasants and traditional fishermen seized the new opportunities of a fast growing beach resort*” (1980: 207).

The mode of tourism consumption during the early phase of tourism in the village, was characterised by the search for an ‘authentic’ peasant vernacular exemplified by fishing villages such as Playa de Mogán, as suggested in accounts by the resident painter who (he claims), was the first foreign visitor to the village. This feature, together with the inaccessibility of the village, facilitated the involvement in the provision of food and lodgings to early visitors. Similar factors have also contributed to the reproduction of household economies in peripheral regions elsewhere, including island destinations in Malaysia (Din 1991) and southern Thailand (Cohen 1982b), isolated interior regions in northern Thailand and Ladakh (Michaud 1991, 1997), as well as resort areas in small Mediterranean islands (Kenna 1993; Zarkia 1996; Scott 1997). The continued existence of diverse modes of consumption in close spatial proximity, has thus constituted another important factor in the continued survival of household tourism production in Playa de Mogán, in the face of the growing commercialisation of the tourism enterprise economy.

### *Social Mobility and the Contours of Entrepreneurial Agency*

In addition to the analysis of the organizational structure of the tourism enterprise economy, this study has endeavoured to illuminate the internal differentiation of entrepreneurial agency by broadening the analysis to include the social configurations of entrepreneurship. In this respect it has demonstrated the existence of several modalities of opposition between different clusters of local and non-local entrepreneurs and enterprises which cannot be deduced from the economic structure in a determinate manner. The initial outcome of early tourism development was to dissolve the rigid socio-economic divide which separated those who owned the land from those who worked the land and/or sea, via the creation of the structural conditions for the emergence of tourism entrepreneurs from amongst former peasant households. At the outset the opening of tourism-related enterprise had a limited effect on the degree of social disruption in the village, but it did initiate the social advancement of formerly marginal segments of the local peasant formation. The benefits offered by these local opportunities were compounded by an increase in employment opportunities in the larger resorts along the adjacent coastline, the construction of which coincided with (but not necessarily ‘caused’) the decline of cultivation of agricultural crops for export in the mid-1960s. These resorts were situated in a geographically distinct part of the municipality (accentuated by the inaccessibility of Playa de Mogán) and thus provided little competition for the initial cluster of local enterprises, whilst also providing a limited market for these establishments.

Nevertheless, former alignments between different social groups in the village still persist and intersect with the new configurations of power and enterprise which have emerged in the context of tourism. The continuation of the social relations which underpinned rural societies in southern Europe which have undergone rapid social change, has been conceptualised by scholars of the social history of this region, in terms of the “*ruralisation of the city*” (Sapelli 1995: 13). An illustration of the persistence of the former



social antagonisms between peasants/fishermen and local *cacique* families was indeed demonstrated by the eviction of one of the early peasant entrepreneurs from a prime beachfront location by members of the latter social group. Hence, there is a faction of landowner-entrepreneurs who are still able to determine the outcome of local affairs, to a certain extent via political support and influence in the municipal government, as well as due to their superior education and knowledge of planning regulations as a result of their formal legal training and involvement in local government. Moreover, the former monopolisation of community resources by the local *cacique* families during the period of agrarian capitalist development, in particular the land adjacent to the *barrio pesquero*, has put them in a favourable position to exploit the value of their land-based assets in the tourism economy.

Tourism has thus simultaneously succeeded in both dissolving previous social cleavages and laying the foundations for the emergence of further inequalities in the increasingly competitive environment of the tourism enterprise economy which has emerged in the village. It has not only transformed the terrain of social conflict between different community segments and in the process enabled members of the subordinate formation within the village to gain a measure of economic independence, but more significantly perhaps it has created newer more horizontally-ordered divisions between different classes of entrepreneurs, as well as between an increasingly commercial strata of tourism entrepreneurs (which includes a small yet influential cluster of local entrepreneurs), and the rump of local entrepreneurs who continue to survive in a state of precarious equilibrium.

Therefore, although the owners of independent tourism enterprise (*i.e.* those not integrated into a wider chain of ownership and control) may appear to share a common structural location, there are significant variations in the social nature of ownership and overall goals of different groups of enterprise. In some cases there exist important contrasts in the use to which tourism surpluses are devoted, which reflects the differential capacities of entrepreneurs to mobilise resources for tourism and parallels Boissevain's (1974) distinction between 'first order' and 'second order' resources. Thus, although in some respects it is possible to talk of the emergence of a local entrepreneurial class, horizontal loyalties are weak and intersect with hierarchically-ordered social relations centred on vertical associations of kin whose primary resource is the family tourism enterprise. This reinforces values of distrust, whether towards other enterprises, particularly where they may take on monopoly characteristics as in the case of the perceived 'exclusivity' of the marina or the recent attempts by the coalition of landowners to develop the valley (*cf.* Goffee and Scase 1983: 155). Moreover, each participates in a geographically differentiated set of social structures, according to the specific nature of their linkages to different levels of social, economic and political agency. It is thus more accurate to speak of them as a:

heterogeneous collection of strata, occupying the same contradictory position within the relations of production, but disarticulated by varying power bases. (Callinicos 1989: 163)

Thus in Playa de Mogán the persistence of hierarchically-ordered social relations, which also derives from the legacy of former divisions between landowners and peasant households, has contributed towards a lack of cooperation amongst local tourism entrepreneurs and household enterprises. A similar conclusion was



reached by van der Werff (1980) who argues that a disproportionate concern for individual or family economic interests amongst small-scale entrepreneurs (*piccoli*) in Pescaia, continues to mitigate against cooperation between different elements of the locally-run tourism facilities. Whereas prior to tourism there was a relatively clear separation between local residents based upon the nature of their work, social status, and place of residence, many now compete as tourism entrepreneurs who share a similar structural location within the local tourism enterprise economy, but are still divided by former loyalties and intra-class antagonisms.

### *Socio-Spatial Dimensions of Entrepreneurship: Processes of Commodification*

This study has emphasised the importance of contextualising different adaptive strategies to tourism with reference to the changing societal context within which different phases of tourism development take place. Moreover, the analysis of patterns of tourism development in the village has been further deepened, using the concept of commodification, to examine the changing spatial configurations of the tourism enterprise economy in the village. The result has been to link specific strategies of entrepreneurship to the nature and form by which space is conceived, appropriated and used in the context of the changing modes of tourism development. The concept of commodification thus enables a clearer understanding of the socio-spatial changes in the village in relation to specific adaptive capacities of entrepreneurial groups and the social structure as a whole.

It has been shown how the changing landscapes of tourism development constitutes the site of struggle in which different coalitions of community members and entrepreneurial factions contest the meaning and uses of space in accordance with varied local modes of accumulation. As noted by Harvey (1993: 9), paraphrasing Lefebvre (1991), “*class struggle is inscribed in space through the uneven development of the qualities of places.*” Indeed the transformation of the built environment for tourism in Playa de Mogán, reflects a more general pattern of conflict over the ownership and use of civic space in areas of dense touristic concentration. Tourism development in many parts of southern Europe thus reflects and reproduces the distinctive features of uneven capitalist development in this region (see Sapelli 1995: Chs. 5-6; Keyder 1998), which has endowed [tourist] space with particular significance as a vehicle of capital accumulation for regional and international bourgeoisies (Cals 1986). This process has been accelerated by contemporary processes of tourism development, based on the rather ambiguous and spurious notions of ‘*quality tourism*’, which it has been argued, merely reconstitutes capitalist modes of accumulation within a renewed and arguably more aggressive phase of touristic expansion (see Chapter Ten).

In this case, it was the advent of the *puerto-deportivo pesquero*, in particular the tourist marina which gave momentum to the intervention of increasingly diverse coalitions of entrepreneurs and metropolitan capitalist investors into the touristic landscape of the village. This has fuelled speculative pressures and lent weight to land and property-based interest groups (in which certain groups of local entrepreneurs have a stake) who are in a position to benefit most from the transformation of Playa de Mogán into a saleable commodity. Indeed the asymmetrical configurations of touristic space and patterns of entrepreneurship in



Playa de Mogán, reflect the articulation between the “*space of flows*” on the one hand, in which coalitions of political and cosmopolitan entrepreneurial elites exercise their capacity to appropriate and exploit the touristic resources of the village, regardless of the logic and historical specificity of this locality, and a “*space of place*” on the other, in which locals are culturally-bound through shared life experiences, to the physical environment in which they live (see Castells 1996: 415-425). Thus the place of origin of investors is of decreasing relevance, in contrast to the earlier concerns associated with ‘dependency theories’ (see Chapter Two), as opposed to whether their interests are geared towards the enhancement of the social diversity and civic well-being of the places in which they invest, or whether their overriding concerns are dictated by commercial returns.

The socio-spatial transformation of the village also to a great extent reflects and reproduces the outcomes of a ‘tyranny’ of individual entrepreneurial agency in the context of unfettered market-driven tourism development. The small group of local entrepreneurs who control some of the more well-established tourism enterprises outside the marina, and landowning interests (whose involvement in tourism is of a qualitatively different nature), are increasingly part of a broader entrepreneurial middle-class who have benefited from the increasing scale and scope of commercial tourism investment in the village. However, this collection of entrepreneurial interests cannot be reduced to the functional requirements of capital. Nevertheless, despite different strategies of accumulation local tourism entrepreneurs share a commitment to the values of private property and thus reinforce the logic of market-driven tourism development, which would seem to confirm the views of Goffee and Scase (1983: 156). Whilst this continues to provide an economic lifeline to small-scale entrepreneurs, the more well-established enterprises may benefit disproportionately from favourable planning decisions (*e.g.* through permission to build further tourism facilities in the village) and infrastructural improvements implemented by the municipal government, given their superior access to resources and control over more than one enterprise. Thus, rather than ameliorate the impact of intense competition for space and resources, state agency serves only to fuel such a momentum, as noted by Wood:

In this sense, government planning decisions determine the structure of entrepreneurial opportunity which tourism brings about, generally to the detriment of local collectivities and investors. (1984: 363)

The aggregate outcome of these actions may be to undermine the continued ability of independent household enterprise to survive, as witnessed by the closure of small family-run grocery stores in recent years (see Chapter Eleven: *Tourism Enterprise and Social Change*). The marginalisation of those enterprises less able to expand and upgrade their infrastructure also reflects the growing class divisions within the local entrepreneurial classes. Increasingly, only those who are able to mobilise land and property-based assets will be able to consolidate a position of prominence within an expanding capitalist bourgeoisie in the tourism enterprise economy. It has also been shown that the movement of young adults into wage-based employment in more commercial tourism enterprises, will increasingly require household tourism enterprises to seek a replacement workforce. In answer to the rhetorical question “*Mogán... de pobre a rico?*” [Mogán...from poor to rich?"] posed by Suárez Moreno (1997: 239 - 240) in the conclusion to his historical study of this area, it is difficult to disagree with the overwhelming



evidence that the expansion of tourism in the municipality as a whole, and in the village in particular, has generated substantial improvements in the material standards of living and quality of life, in terms of employment, wealth and increased provision of public amenities. Indeed the expansion of the tourism enterprise economy in Playa de Mogán will continue to create employment opportunities in areas of catering and commercial lodging facilities, for those with the 'appropriate' skills and experience. However, it is the conditions or terms laid down by the increasing penetration of capitalist social relations, backed by large-scale commercial concerns, into the social and economic fabric of the village, that is of potential concern for locals:

The question is rather how a growing dependency on the necessarily rising income, without which such fragile gains are snatched away, involves us all in a deepening acceptance of the logic of capitalism, wherever it may lead us, even when its imperatives demand that it disemploy us and dispossess us our children. (Blackwell and Seabrook 1985: 107)

In effect the processes of touristification experienced in Playa de Mogán have led to the redefinition of the very meaning of the 'quality of life' for its inhabitants, in accordance with the values of an increasingly prevalent market society. However, by virtue of their own entrepreneurial agency many locals are themselves active agents in a process leading to the cultivation of an increasing variety of social needs and wants amongst inhabitants of the locality, which can increasingly only be satisfied through the market. This process is given further impetus by the different modes of conspicuous consumption by different categories of visitor which intersect in the village, thus fuelling the penetration of capitalist social relations and the socio-spatial antagonisms which accompany them. This pattern of social change is indicative of the degree to which the village has become enmeshed into the broader social and cultural changes of the late 20th century, where prescribed roles between human beings have increasingly given way to social atomism and contractual relations:

The cultural revolution of the later twentieth century can thus best be understood as the triumph of the individual over society, or rather, the breaking of the threads which in the past had woven human beings into social textures...such textures had consisted not only of the actual relations between human beings and their forms of social organization but also of the general models of such relations and the expected patterns of people's behaviour... (Hobsbawm 1995b: 334)

## **Towards a Critical Research Agenda in Tourism Development**

Finally, this study has endeavoured to illustrate the potential for applying a critical ethnographic approach to the examination of tourism entrepreneurship, which challenges many of the prevailing normative approaches to the analysis of tourism development. In response to the critique of the lack of research into entrepreneurial agency (Shaw and Williams 1994, 1998), or alternatively, of the generalisations inherent in both linear/formalistic models of tourism development (see Chapter One) as well as the more critical [dependency] approaches to tourism (see Chapter Two), this study has provided evidence that the ownership and control of touristic resources is far more diverse and multiordinate than is often suggested. It has addressed weaknesses in much of the literature on tourism development which has failed to further our conceptual and theoretical understanding of the different modalities of tourism enterprise which emerge within and across a range of destination areas. It is this author's contention that



the fault lies largely with a conceptual conservatism on the one hand, which tends to privilege rational-positivist approaches over critical analyses of touristic phenomena, and secondly (as a corollary to this), a tendency to collect empirical data in order to categorise a variety of tourism phenomena in accordance with pre-determined criteria, as a substitute for theorising.

This investigation has challenged macro-structural perspectives on the one hand, whereby the transformation of Playa de Mogán from a peasant fishing community into a modern service-based tourism economy might be seen as the inevitable outcome of either, the progressive modernization of an 'underdeveloped' periphery, or a functionalist dynamic of capital seeking new avenues of accumulation, (in this case, the spatial dispersion of tourism into 'new' and 'unspoilt' frontiers). Similarly it poses questions for the validity of behavioural approaches inherent in much of the literature on tourist area transformation whereby patterns of entrepreneurship are examined in isolation from societal contexts (see Shaw and Williams 1998: 236-238). The mechanistic determinism of large-scale approaches risks reducing the diverse agents of touristification to one-dimensional bearers of structures, whilst the latter adopts a narrow psychological conceptualisation of social transformation driven by the well-informed and rational decisions of economic agents, akin to Schumpeter's notion of the creative entrepreneur (cf. Larrain 1989: 94-95). In contrast, this analysis has situated the examination of tourism entrepreneurship into a wider social context, which highlights the range of linkages which bind a locality into qualitatively different networks of society, thereby conditioning its development.

This study has also adopted a 'non-bounded' conceptualisation of place in order to demonstrate that Playa de Mogán was never an enclosed peasant community of the sort described by Moore, who argues that the 'Los Santos' on Tenerife, was transformed from a "*homogeneous*" and "*isolated*" village, into a "*socially complex*" one through tourism (1976a: 22). Local peasant households have been tied into wider trading networks since the end of the last century, since when these linkages have evolved into ones of a qualitatively different nature, in accordance with changes in the dominant mode of accumulation and the nature of economic activities. Although the wider economy provides the overall context in which particular configurations of entrepreneurship have emerged, it has been shown that processes of tourism development in the village of Playa de Mogán have also been conditioned by the existing social structure, as well as precipitating further social alignments within the local formation. What is evident from this study is that tourism was instrumental in the creation of certain structural conditions for the emergence of differentiated patterns of entrepreneurial agency, and that these have altered the context of relationships between different segments of the local social formation. Indeed one of the significant characteristics of tourism development in the village has been to render the social relationships between dominant and subordinate groups progressively more opaque as locals become incorporated into an expanding web of power relationships in which capitalist social relations have become more prominent.

Dualist and linear interpretations of tourism development (see Chapters One and Three), therefore oversimplify the stratified character of social formations within which touristic processes take place. For



instance, studies of tourism development and entrepreneurship at the micro-level have often suggested that small-scale, locally owned and managed enterprise - which is predominantly concentrated in the provision of lodging facilities, bars, restaurants and to a limited extent retail and commerce - represent a *coherent* segment of economic activity (Rodenburg 1980). This assumption is principally guided by the same rationality and set of criteria (descriptive rather than analytical) derived from the functionalist distinction between the tourism informal and formal sector (see Chapter Three: *Tourism and Economic Dualism*). The limitations of the dual-economy model is evident in the analysis of touristification in Playa de Mogán although it is useful to briefly restate some of its principal flaws. The predominant weakness relates to the inadequacy of this model as a basis for an explanation of the diverse configurations of tourism production and consumption which emerge in the context of destination formation. Using mainly *descriptive* criteria to classify the variation in tourism enterprise, it lacks a conceptualisation of a range of socio-cultural, economic and political factors, as well as an understanding of the symbolic universes in which tourism entrepreneurs are situated, in order to explain *how* and *why* specific variations in tourism enterprise emerge and are able to reproduce themselves within the context of a particular tourism economy. The dualistic distinction between formal and informal enterprise moreover tends to assume that all tourism enterprise, regardless of size, is competing for similar markets and thus ignores the often subtle variation of tourist segments and relations of consumption which co-exist in close spatial proximity.

Overall, it is clear from the evidence that there is no linear logic to the development of tourism in Playa de Mogán as prescribed in conventional models of destination development (*e.g.* Butler 1980; Keller 1984). In a sense *los ipis* and later 'explorer-type' tourists can be seen to represent 'pioneers' who extended the 'frontiers' of tourism into this locality, an image which conforms to the logic of spatio-temporal models of tourism. Although these models are of some relevance in their depiction of overall patterns of destination development, they fail to explain the different social, economic and political forces which intervene and mediate the emergence of local configurations of tourism development during different historical epochs. For example the construction of the marina and the increased intervention of wider state bureaucracies in this and other tourism developments in Mogán discussed in Chapter Ten, could be construed as the beginnings of the progressive loss of control over tourism development by actors in peripheral destination areas, as suggested by normative models of tourist area development (*cf.* Keller 1984). Similarly, Hall's (1994a: 134) suggestion that any increase in state power occurs typically at the expense of a loss of local control through traditional power structures, would appear to confirm this view. However, he does recognise that prominent individuals or groups from within traditional power arrangements may in fact manipulate newly created state institutions in order to reinforce their existing position. The attempt by local cliques to challenge the intervention of the island and regional governments into tourism development planning in Mogán would also appear to confirm this view. Thus residual notions of local or foreign involvement need to be contextualised and theorised in relation to societal structures and the relations of entrepreneurial agency that are conceived and enacted within the



context of distinct modes of accumulation and which are then manifest in specific patterns of spatial change.

### *Critical Ethnography and Tourism Research*

In summary, it is important to highlight the broader relevance of a critical ethnography, and the specific insights into processes of tourism development and configurations of enterprise in this particular locality. As a heuristic device, the principal feature of ethnography is not to generalise the findings gathered within specific local circumstances across infinite other contexts. Rather it is to illuminate [general] features of human life through the description of particular events in their social context:

the value of ethnographic work often depends on showing that particular events described instantiate something of general significance about the social world. (Hammersley 1992: 17-18)

Here, a detailed account of diverse patterns of local responses to tourism has been provided in the context of wider social changes. Thus a dialectical understanding develops of the degree to which locally-specific facets of the social formation interact with and are forged by changing wider circumstances in the ongoing emergence of different configurations of entrepreneurship. In order to develop this particular methodological approach, it was first necessary to build up a sufficient level trust amongst a network of 'key' informants who provided a locally-grounded insight into how wider forces of change, from the height of the agricultural-export economy to the arrival and unfolding of tourism development, have impacted on the lives of villagers. Consequently, an attempt was made to integrate both oral and written histories into the text, not as an introductory appendage, but rather, in order to illuminate the manner in which prior and existing social relations, working practices and cultural forms are continuously recast and interpreted in the context of prevailing circumstances (see Behar 1986: 13-14, 328-329). A survey based approach could have been applied in order to generate more quantitative data regarding the scale and number of tourism enterprises, however it would have been unlikely to capture the sociological variation within and between enterprises, as well as the relevance of social relations across the entrepreneurial classes. Moreover, it would have necessitated a more 'overt' approach to the research, thus limiting the extent and depth of interaction with informants and thereby, access to the contextual data which endows much of the evidence with meaning and explanatory relevance (see Chapter Five: *Tourism Development: A Critical Ethnographic Approach*).

There are of course shortcomings to any methodological approach and its outcomes. Indeed this study has also demonstrated some of the shortcomings of an ethnographic inquiry into tourism development, which although not insurmountable, must be considered when reviewing the contribution of this study as well as undertaking future studies of this nature. Where possible the author has endeavoured to present the findings in a transparent and reflexive manner, using a combination of primary (observational data, oral sources, informal interviews) and secondary data (archive material, historical documentation, newspaper sources) in a continuous and interrelated manner (see Chapter Five: *Applying the Principles of Ethnographic Inquiry Fieldwork in Tourism Resort*). However, it is regretted that local dialogues and interpretation of events have not made their way into the text to the extent which the author would have



liked. To a large extent this was due to the social complexity of the village, and the reticence of many informants to discuss village affairs 'in the open' (see Chapter Five: *Interrogative Techniques*). Indeed, the potential danger of exclusion from continued interaction with villagers meant that access to other social groups, including many foreign entrepreneurs and long-term foreign residents, was restricted. Nevertheless it is felt that this has not compromised the validity of the findings, particularly given that some critical distance from subjects was required in order to construct a processual understanding of tourism development, which draws on multiple sets of data.

Thus, research should be guided by the 'way of knowing' considered most appropriate to a particular research problem, which in turn relates to the overall goals and purpose of the research. In this case, a critical ethnography was best suited to the examination of varying adaptive capacities of local inhabitants (as well as more recent arrivals) to tourism, and modes of resource appropriation and use within changing social and economic circumstances. It has specifically not endeavoured to construct an all-embracing model of tourism development, which has been identified as a major weakness of existing approaches in the literature (see Chapter Four). Rather, empirical generalisation is linked to Weber's notion of "*adequate causation*", which claims that similar outcomes are probable (or have occurred, as shown through comparisons) where a similar set of circumstances and interaction of social phenomena takes place. An understanding of locally-specific changes cannot therefore be developed independent from a recognition of wider processes and changes as well as the historical context in which these events take place. Ultimately, it is clear from the evidence that finite conclusions or assessments cannot be made with regard to the value of tourism for local populations without either a nuanced understanding of local touristic formations, in tandem with the incorporation of local voices into the research.

A critical ethnography of tourism development thus endeavours to swim against the currents of a pragmatically-driven empiricism on the one hand, and theoretical conjecture which claims to be above the need for empirical grounding on the other. It is hoped that this study has demonstrated the benefits of an inter-disciplinary cross-fertilisation of perspectives, drawing on anthropology, sociology and political economy. However it cannot be assumed that we can choose randomly from a 'paradigmatic supermarket' in a theoretical and methodological endeavour to forge a path between the poles of modernist meta-narratives and the post-modernist disintegration of unity. There must be a consistency and coherence between paradigm, methodology and research techniques, underpinned by a transparent 'theoretic purpose'.

In conclusion, if the very basis of ethnographic understanding is in doubt, as some debates would appear to suggest (Clifford and Marcus 1986; Crick 1995b), should ethnography as method should be abandoned altogether (MacCannell 1992: 286)? If so, we are in danger of arguing away the very grounds of critical analysis if, as argued by Norris, "*the idea gains ground that all theory is a species of sublimated narrative...*" (1985: 23). Indeed, it would be dangerous to relativize all forms of 'knowledge'; the ethnographer and say for example, the tourist, may often share the 'desire to know' (Selwyn 1996a: 25), however a significant critical and ethical distance separates ethnographic knowledge from more populist



narratives and belief-systems. Thus, ethnographic knowledge will continue to play an important role in critical research in tourism:

Some anthropologists may enjoy their own sense of marginality, but they take up this position at the expense of their ability to foreground and challenge the situation of peoples whose marginality is not chosen but is a consequence of their oppression. (Miller 1995: 20)

Tourism embraces a socially complex and varied set of phenomena, yet this does not mean that researchers should abdicate their responsibility to try and identify the mechanisms and processes which underpin its diverse manifestations. It is hoped that this study has gone some way towards furthering our understanding of one particular dimension of tourism development, in a manner which is both relevant at a theoretical level, yet sensitive to locally-diverse experiences.



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*Appendix I*  
**Peripheral Capitalism and Uneven Development in Gran Canaria**  
(Extended Commentary)

Three fundamental and inter-connected historical processes have underpinned the structural transformation of society in Gran Canaria during the 19th century; first, the land disentanglements which placed aristocratic and ecclesiastical lands for sale on the open market; second, the increasing integration of the Canary Island economy (or rather, distinct island economies) into the world market; and third, the emergence of a small but significant middle class. The latter were principally comprised of an emergent agrarian bourgeoisie whose principal source of power was centred on the control of land, an urban-based, mercantilist class of predominantly foreign origin, and a growing number of professionals, administrators and clerical workers, concentrated in the expanding urban-export enclaves in the ports of Santa Cruz de Tenerife, and particularly the Port of Las Palmas (*Puerto de la Luz*), which by the end of the 19th century had broken Santa Cruz's former monopoly as a regional export hub (see Alvarez 1980a: 18). The development of an agricultural plantation economy in Gran Canaria at the end of the 19th century was manifest in the territorial differentiation of economic activity, whereby the cultivation of crops for export became concentrated in strategic enclaves in low lying coastal areas, whilst the island's interior continued to be dedicated to peasant smallholdings and subsistence cultivation, and also provided the workforce for the plantations (García Herrera 1987: 36).

There have been many attempts to explain the reasons for the distorted and retarded development of capitalism in Spain which are beyond the scope of this study and have been examined in detail elsewhere.<sup>1</sup> However it is important to emphasise at this point that one of the dominant legacies of Spain's conquest of the New World was not the development of a modern commercial and industrial powerhouse such as Britain or Germany, but rather the enrichment of her principal creditors in Italy, the Netherlands and southern Germany and the subsequent suppression of an autonomous dynamic of industrial development (see Wolf 1982: 112-4). Consequently, land and the accumulation of property became the only secure source of wealth in what Gilmore has referred to as an "*eternally agrarian society*" (1980: 143). Thus, in common with other similar regions in southern Europe (e.g. Sicily, see Blok 1974: 36-8), the changes in the legal foundations of property ownership was a fundamental motor of social and economic change in both the Spanish mainland and the Canary Islands, creating *new patterns of land tenure and spaces of economic production*. Land and the accumulation of property has not only been significant in shaping the territorial distribution of productive activity in Gran Canaria, but also constitutes one of the primary sources of value for local and metropolitan capitalist interests alike, given the absence of a diversified economic infrastructure and solid industrial base. Moreover, these socio-economic forces were reinforced by the steep nature of Gran Canaria's topography, and thus played a significant part in shaping new patterns of land tenure and the uneven development of agrarian capitalism across the island (replicated to a similar extent on the island of Tenerife).



### The Transformation of Land into a Commodity

The attempt to initiate an autonomous dynamic of capitalist development via the dissolution of landed property and agrarian communalism through the abolition of feudal property relations (*mayorazgo*) in the period between 1836 and 1870 (Bernal 1981), was inadequate, and indeed merely increased the importance of land as the primary source of wealth and status amongst the dominant classes. Nor did the dismantling of the legal foundations of feudal society have uniform consequences across Spain's rural interior, which has always remained geographically and socially diverse. As in many parts of the Mediterranean where rural peasant societies were never entirely destroyed or uprooted to the extent witnessed in industrial societies like Britain (Gilmore 1980: 188; Davis 1977: 245), Spain and the Canary Islands are characterised by considerable variation in the modes of production and patterns of land tenure, within close proximity. The struggle for land has often been a major focal point of social conflict and as such has been a factor of considerable importance behind the evolution of distinct regional class structures and modes of economic activity.

The bankruptcy of the Spanish Crown, whose colonial wealth had been depleted by wars and burgeoning administrative costs, precipitated the sale of Crown lands at the beginning of the 19th century in order to recoup these losses (Artola 1980). However by the third decade a series of disentailment laws had been passed by a liberal government which were intended to put an end to the monopoly of aristocratic and Church ownership of land in the hope that this would stimulate the creation of a modern agrarian economy and thereby help modernize the Spanish state (Carr 1982: 175-6; Tamames 1994: 63-7). In 1820 legislation against civil entail was passed which removed the inalienable right of monastic orders and other non-tax paying persons to dominion over any Spanish lands (Waldren 1996: 14). However it was not until the ecclesiastical disentailment laws of 1836-1845 enacted by Mendizábal which placed Church lands up for sale, and the civil disentailment of 1855 later enacted by Madoz, which placed a large proportion of Crown and municipal common lands on the market, that the dissolution of aristocratic privilege became more widespread.

It was professed by the Progressive Party who passed the legislation, that it was enacted in the hope of creating a new class of rural peasant proprietors. However despite some evidence to this effect, albeit in regions with a relatively more egalitarian distribution of property rights (*e.g.* the Basque Country), the lack of credit and limited surplus available for improving productivity coupled with the dominance of a land-hungry agrarian bourgeoisie had the net effect of proletarianising a significant proportion of small peasant proprietors and subsistence cultivators, thus ensuring the concentration of land in the hands of larger landowners (Carr 1982: 176 and 255; Tamames 1994: 67).

La desamortización no hizo sino que nuestro campo pasara de tener una estructura feudal a tener una estructura capitalista, si bien con vestigios feudales todavía muy importantes. (Tamames 1994: 67)<sup>2</sup>

In the Canary Islands the disentanglements failed to significantly redistribute the ownership of land, but rather led to a further concentration of property in the hands of the agrarian oligarchy (*oligarquía terrateniente*) and emergent agrarian bourgeoisie, thus establishing the foundations of a “*neo-latifundist*



*economy*” (Bernal 1981: 28). The sale of church lands did little to alter the structure of land tenure given that it did not possess vast expanses of land. Consequently, the total amount of land which was sold in Gran Canaria during the first period (2,253 *fanegadas*), was far less than the later phase of civil disentailment, which saw 32,330 *fanegadas* sold off by the State (Suárez Grimón 1987: 1076).<sup>3</sup> More significantly if we examine the figures for the average size of property sold during each period, it is clear to see that the civil disentailment of Madoz was of far greater significance for the transformation of the structure of land tenure. The average size of plot sold during the first phase was less than 2 *fanegadas* (Ojeda 1977b: 344), whereas the average extension of estate which emerged from the civil disentailment phase was 116 hectares (Bernal 1981: 28). The majority of land exceeding 100 hectares was sold between 1873 and 1874, and by the end of this period a total of 50 estates in Gran Canaria exceeded 100 hectares, 28 of which exceeded 250 hectares (Ojeda 1977b: 354). The disentanglements did however signal the emergence of a modest agrarian bourgeoisie who began to accumulate land and perform an important intermediary role between the agrarian oligarchy and the foreign mercantilist classes in the urban export enclave of Las Palmas (Alvarez 1980a: 26). This and the abolition of the *mayorazgo* thus forced oligarchic families to seek new strategies for the accumulation of wealth, which led to an increase in endogamic relations (Brito 1989a: 67), and inter-marriages between members of the agrarian oligarchy and members of the ascendent bourgeoisie (Millares Cantero 1977: 285).

The collapse of cochineal (a dye made from the cochineal beetle) export between 1877 and 1889, precipitated by the introduction of synthetic dyes on the world market and the Great Depression of 1873-86, added further impetus to the uneven nature of capitalist development and regional class structure. Cochineal production, which peaked between 1845 and 1876, had ushered in a brief period of prosperity for small and medium-sized landowners which was to prove short-lived. The twin effect of the disentailment laws and the crash in cochineal exports increased the exploitation of the peasantry in order to pay for land acquisitions or led to the bankruptcy of smaller proprietors altogether who had invested their entire capital in its production (Brito 1981: 11; Macías Hernández 1983: 285). Larger landowners who had been able to absorb the effects of the crash, were able to consolidate their landholdings by purchasing land from small farmers at low prices, as indeed were the nascent bourgeoisie who often appropriated land from the peasantry in exchange for the advance of a ticket to South America (Millares Cantero 1977: 345):

En el plano económico, no es anecdótico cómo a lo largo de las diversas crisis de los siglos XVIII y XIX, estos grupos aumentan considerablemente su poder a base a la ampliación de propiedades compradas a precios irrisorios a los arruinados campesinos y pequeños propietarios. (Pérez García 1989: 45)<sup>4</sup>

The proletarianization of the rural workforce also added pressure to rural-urban migration, expanding the ranks of an urban proletariat in the emergent harbour city of Las Palmas (Brito 1981), and precipitated the emigration of 90,000 islanders went to the Antilles, Puerto Rico and Cuba between 1870-1890 (Brito 1989b: 35; Macías Hernández 1992).

Many scholars have argued that processes of rural proletarianization have largely been ignored both in studies of Mediterranean social formations (Gilmore 1982: 178). Similar criticisms can be levelled at



analyses of the so-called “*hecho económico diferencial canario*”, [the Canary Island differential factor], which attributes the uneven nature of capitalist development in the Canary Islands to its mono-crop export dependency (Bernal 1981). Other analysts have however been critical of those who attribute the region’s ‘underdevelopment’ to a lack of resources or ‘peripheral’ geographic location. Pérez García (1989) for example, stresses the influence of internal class relations which underpin the inequitable distribution of land ownership, allowing the agrarian bourgeoisie to increase the exploitation of the rural workforce during periods of economic crisis (Macías Hernández 1983; Galván and de Mello e Sousa 1981). Their influence was also instrumental in the passing of the free trade decrees between 1856 and 1869 which facilitated the influx of British capital into the economy of the Canary Islands (Bernal 1981: 33), and laid the foundations for the emergence of enclaves of capitalist agriculture in Gran Canaria and Tenerife, producing export crops for the expanding global market at the end of the 19th century. Although there is a lack of detailed evidence at a village or municipal levels, there is evidence to suggest that the expansion of agricultural production for export, undermined traditional peasant economies and led to increased pressure on the removal of peasants from their land (Macías Hernández 1995b: 373). They were then either forced into the ranks of a rural proletariat (*jornaleros*), or worked as *medianeros*, a system of share-cropping whereby the direct producer would divide the harvest between himself and the landowner, who provided the land and half the seed and fertilizer (Alvarez 1980a: 30). However, the manner in which different parts of Gran Canaria became integrated into the world market through the cultivation of crops for export (principally tomatoes and bananas), also had different consequences for the development of the agrarian relations of production in these respective areas.

### **Free Trade and Agrarian Capitalist Development**

After a period of economic stagnation during the early part of the 19th century, due largely to the loss of colonial export markets in the Americas, the establishment of Free Port status by royal decree in 1852 and the subsequent removal of tariff and customs duties, signalled a turning point in the transformation of the Canary Islands from a pre-capitalist to a predominantly capitalist social formation (Macías Hernández 1995b: 391-410). Although it initially stimulated the cochineal boom and an expansion of rural proprietors (Brito 1989a: 57-8), its overall effect was to provide the impetus to the hegemonic dominance of an agro-mercantile elite whose prosperity was closely tied to the accumulation of property prior to the rapid expansion of the agro-export economy between 1885 and 1914, and again after 1930. The policy of tariff exemption favoured by the regional elites, signalled a blow for the existing peasant polycultivation and the domestic market, favouring instead the transferral of resources to the agro-export sector (Macías Hernández 1983: 278). Furthermore it opened the door not only to an influx of foreign capital, but also to agricultural and manufactured imports, predominantly from Britain, which placed a further obstacle in the face of ‘indigenous’ capitalist development in the region (see also Alvarez 1980a: 26):

Con las franquicias quedó postergada toda posibilidad de desarrollo industrial para Canarias, al menos durante el período anterior a 1936. (Macías Hernández 1983: 276) <sup>5</sup>



The expansion of 'free trade' and export-oriented growth, thus enabled the two main islands to consolidate their grip on the regional economy with the result that the relative economic interdependence which had previously existed between the seven islands, came to an end as the cultivation of commercial crops for export consolidated its hold on the agrarian economies of Gran Canaria and Tenerife.

The transition of the regional social formation from a semi-feudal agrarian society to one where capitalist productive relations became increasingly dominant (albeit concentrated on the production of a few agricultural products) during the latter half of the 19th century cannot be understood without reference to the growing competition between the European industrial powers and the subsequent revolutionizing of transport and communications technology, which massively transformed the geography of production and social relations across many parts of the world (cf. Hobsbawm 1995a: Ch. 3). Britain's industrial dominance had been in decline since the Great Depression and by the end of the 19th century faced intense competition from a number of emergent industrial nations, for new avenues of investment and markets. However the combination of faster and more efficient means of transportation and improvements in agricultural productivity created just the opportunities these nations were looking for. A new instrument of capitalist expansion, the commercial agricultural plantation, began to spread across the globe creating geographically dispersed enclaves of tropical agricultural production, for export to European markets (Wolf 1982: 313-7). The proximity of the Canary Islands to West Africa where the British had established significant colonial trading centres, stimulated British interest in the islands, as they required a staging post where their steamships could re-fuel, which eventually led to the introduction of coaling stations in the port of Las Palmas. Moreover it was the decision by British imperial capitalist firms, some of whom were also integrated into the units of capital which controlled the steamship lines and coaling stations, to introduce the cultivation of bananas and tomatoes for export, which precipitated an era of British commercial expansion in Gran Canaria and Tenerife, which was to reach a peak between 1880 and 1914 (Bernal 1981: 35). A list of British firms operating in the Canary Islands shows that there were twenty six registered companies in Las Palmas and fifteen in Santa Cruz de Tenerife, involved in a variety of commercial activities from the supply of coal, various ship suppliers, consignatories, fruit exporters and financial/insurance services (Macías Hernández 1983: 290-291). The degree of penetration and dominance of British capital in the Canary Islands, and Gran Canaria in particular at that time, is revealed by the fact that the British government of the period had even considered exchanging sovereignty over Gibraltar for the Canary Islands (Herrera Piqué 1984: 313, footnote no.6). The entrance of British capital into Gran Canaria thus marked the beginning of a new phase of capitalist expansion through which formerly isolated parts of the island became economically and spatially integrated into a network of production, centred around the export hub of Las Palmas. Moreover it integrated the archipelago with the agrarian supply-zones of the expanding global economy, including Latin America, many parts of which experienced similar processes of agrarian development and the usurpation of land from peasants, from the 1870s onwards (Bernstein 1994: 45).

British interest in the region revolved around three principal factors; it was an important coaling station for Atlantic steamships, a centre for the production and export of cheap fruit and vegetables, and lastly,



a popular health and holiday destination (Morales Lezcano 1971: 119). All three functions were part of a globally integrated network of British commerce which radically transformed both the structure of the economy and the territorial distribution of production at the end of the 19th century. The new cycle of foreign capitalist investment constituted a “*historically-specific form of imperialist penetration*” (Hoogvelt 1982: 184), mediated by internal structures of political and class domination which resembled the “*feudal-imperial alliances*” that had also emerged in parts of Southern and Central America at around the same time (Munck 1985: 234). The dominant agrarian classes were able to commercialize their agricultural produce through commercial alliances negotiated with the foreign (predominantly British) mercantile classes who controlled the import-export companies and steamship routes to the northern European markets. The ‘enclave’ character of capitalist development in the Canary Islands is also marked by the continued existence of non-capitalist modes of production, particularly in the agrarian and fishing sectors and amongst small commodity producers/artisans in both rural and urban areas, which articulated with the commercial agricultural export enclaves where capitalist relations of production were more fully developed.

The protagonism of the agrarian bourgeoisie and political oligarchy in the transformation of capitalism in the Canary Islands, and the larger islands in particular, should not therefore be underestimated. Their protests against the protectionist policies of the mainland eventually led to the liberalisation of trade in the islands, spurred by their desire to find new avenues of accumulation after the economic downturn of the previous decades (Macías Hernández 1995b: 385). Nor was there a shortage of resources amongst the dominant classes; capital which had been accumulated during the expansion of cochineal as well as remittances from *indianos* (the term applied to *canarios* who had emigrated to South America), were important sources of capital which were channelled into export cultivation (Macías Hernández 1983: 288-289), thus adding weight to the criticisms of the view that they were merely a passive ‘comprador’ bourgeoisie. The expansion of the harbour infrastructure in Las Palmas was forcefully backed by members of the dominant political elite in Las Palmas and in particular the founder of the *Partido Liberal Canario* (Canary Island Liberal Party) and the most powerful politician of the period, Fernando León y Castillo, who aggressively sought the construction of the port in order to reinforce the dominance of Gran Canaria over Tenerife. Moreover the agrarian bourgeoisie had a vested interest in the expansion of the port as a form of “*social overhead capital*” (Mouzelis 1978: 482), which in effect subsidized their agricultural exports and made them more competitive in European markets as a result.

The capital and resources required for the export economy were concentrated in a series of agro-export enclaves on the islands of Gran Canaria and Tenerife (such as those in Mogán: see Chapter Eight), which precipitated both an intra-island movement of population from the smaller islands into these two, as well as rural-coastal migration from the interior into the coastal areas of the larger islands where the ports and agro-export plantations were located. Indeed, between the mid-19th century and 1970, the rate of population growth in Tenerife and Gran Canaria was double that of Lanzarote and La Palma (Burriel 1981: 93), whilst between 1909 and the period 1931-5 the total surface area dedicated to the cultivation of export crops increased from 3,375 hectares to 10,688 hectares (Macías Hernández 1983: 287). This



process of urbanisation and socio-economic change also occurred in the absence of any significant industrialisation, which was restricted to a small 'class' of artisans (including blacksmiths, carpinters and shoe-makers) who for the most part were concentrated in the city of Las Palmas and smaller rural towns, comprising approximately 15% of the working population at the turn of the century (Brito 1989b: 37).

The cultivation of agricultural crops for export stimulated further capital investment in the spatial expansion of the urban infrastructure in Las Palmas, principally around the port area, which became the hub or 'enclave' through which exports were channelled. By 1887 Las Palmas had attracted the majority of steamship trade away from Santa Cruz de Tenerife, which underpinned the expansion of ancillary services and commercial activities in Las Palmas, most of which were controlled by British capital (Morales Lezcano 1971; Herrera Piqué 1984: 307-310). Moreover, the expansion of the agricultural export economy at the turn of the century was underpinned by an intensification of competition and political rivalry between the respective elites on both islands. This culminated in the creation of two separate island councils in 1912 in attempt to alleviate the conflict, and finally in 1927, the region was divided into two separate provinces, Las Palmas de Gran Canaria (comprising the islands of Gran Canaria, Fuerteventure and Lanzarote) and Santa Cruz de Tenerife (comprising the islands of Tenerife, La Palma, La Gomera and El Hierro) (see Guimerá Peraza 1979). The result of this provincial division has plagued the archipelago ever since and has led to an entrenched political rivalry between the two main islands in particular (referred to as the *pleito insular*), thus hindering horizontal political mobilisation across the region as a whole. Moreover it has also served to foment an especially parochial form of regionalism known as "*insularismo*", based on inter-island rivalry (see Aleman 1993).

At the turn of the century political and economic life in Gran Canaria was dominated by a powerful hegemonic bloc which has been decribed by Millares Cantero (1983) as an "*agro-merchant oligarchy*". This comprised the remnants of the former 'noble' landowning oligarchy, the emergent agrarian bourgeoisie as well as a small but influential commercial and professional bourgeoisie centred around Las Palmas, and its municipal government (Noreña Salto 1977; Brito 1989b). Consequently, as in other parts of southern Europe which experienced similar processes of peripheral capitalist formation, insufficient industrialisation diffused the potential antagonism between the emergent bourgeoisie and the traditionally powerful rural oligarchy. Moreover the concentration of wealth and power amongst a small elite closely connected to the export sector, persisted well into the 20th century, which thus sustained the territorially uneven concentration of resources until the arrival of tourism.

The period of liberal reform ushered in by the Cortes of Cádiz during the second decade of the 19th century, secured the establishment of absolute property rights and a unified system of municipal government, which constituted the institutional legal foundation of a liberal economy and bourgeois society across Spain (Carr 1982: 98-9). In tandem with the disentailments, the creation of Land Registries in the 1860s further consolidated the land claims and property rights of the agrarian capitalist classes (Súarez Moreno 1990). However, the underlying structure of land tenure and the economy was such that Spain did not become a liberal capitalist society along the lines of the advanced northern



European states. One of the dominant legacies of the 19th century disentailments was therefore, “*to turn them (the agrarian oligarchy) from a class of privileged municipal tenants into outright owners of the surplus land of the community*” (Carr 1982: 57), rather than to stimulate the emergence of a ‘progressive’ agrarian capitalist class similar to that in much of Britain or the United States (cf. Bernstein 1994).

It has therefore been argued that one of the principal reasons why an ‘indigenous’ industrial middle-class failed to significantly challenge oligarchic power in Spain during this period of rapid economic and social change, was not due to their reduced size, but rather their weakness as a political force beyond the urban-industrial centres of Madrid, Barcelona and Bilbao (Carr 1982: 49; see also 204-6). Indeed, the interests of the nascent and increasingly rural bourgeoisie in Gran Canaria and Tenerife, were too closely allied to those of the agrarian oligarchy for them to present any kind of threat to the dominant regional power structure (Brito 1989a: 68-70). This was further enhanced by the regional disparity in social structure and economic development across Spain which has often pitted regions against each other in more recent times. The uneven development of capitalism across Spain is thus reflected in the regional parochialism and ‘enclave’ nature of capitalist development in the Canary Islands. In particular it has reinforced the parochial loyalties of local elites or rural bosses (*caciques*) whose influence has been exercised principally through the local town halls (*ayuntamientos*) (see Chapter Ten: *Tourism, Politics and the Contours of Dissent*). Thus in the same way that it did for many parts of rural Spain, the sale of Church and State lands in the 19th century was to therefore reinforce the power of existing agrarian estate owners without producing a significant change in the distribution of wealth in the region (Béthencourt Massieu 1987: 14).

Overall, the oligarchic control of land, a lack of certain resources and the uneven distribution of surpluses derived from agriculture, were factors which contributed to the lack of an autonomous dynamic of capitalist development in the Canary Islands (Pérez García 1989: 43). The emergence of a peripheral capitalist formation at the end of the 19th century, thus allowed the consolidation of a considerable power bloc rooted in a tripartite alliance between agrarian landowners, the mercantile classes who controlled the export trade and the urban professional and political classes (Pérez García 1989: 43). The acquisition of land by different fractions of the bourgeoisie was characterised by fierce competition not only for reasons of commercial interest, but had also served as a symbolic and real source of power and social prestige since the conquest itself; “*la tierra fue en Canarias la primera fuente para acceder a la riqueza y riqueza y poder fueron sinónimos*” (Millares Cantero 1983: 258).<sup>6</sup> The historical evolution of local society in Mogán was thus indelibly marked by the spatial dispersion of capital and class conflict, culminating in the emergence of a local agrarian bourgeoisie, some of whom had used capital accumulated in Latin America to acquire land in this area.



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<sup>1</sup> For a more detailed discussion of the uneven development of Spanish capitalism see, Vicens Vives(1968), Nadal (1975) and García Delgado (1975). For an equivalent analysis in Mallorca, see Cela Conde (1979), and the Canary Islands, see Bergasa y Viétez (1969) as well as the contributions of A. M. Bernal, J. A. Rodríguez Martín, A. Galván Tudela y A. de Mello e Sousa and M. Sánchez Padron, in the seminal collection of essays, *Canarias ante el Cambio*, published by in 1981 the Instituto de Desarrollo Regional de la Universidad de La Laguna, Santa Cruz de Tenerife.

<sup>2</sup> “The disentailment only changed the feudal structure of our countryside for a capitalist structure, albeit with highly significant remains of feudalism”.

<sup>3</sup> 1 *fanegada* is equal to 0.6 hectares (100 hectares = 1 square kilometre).

<sup>4</sup> “This story is repeated time and time again, in economic history, over the various crises in the 18th and 19th centuries, with these groups increasing their power considerably through further land purchases, at ridiculous prices, from bankrupt peasants and smallholders”.

<sup>5</sup> “The tariff and customs exemption postponed all possible industrialisation in the Canary Islands, at least during the period prior to 1936”.

<sup>6</sup> “The main way to get rich in the Canary Islands, was to get land, and ‘rich’ and ‘powerful’ were one and the same thing”.

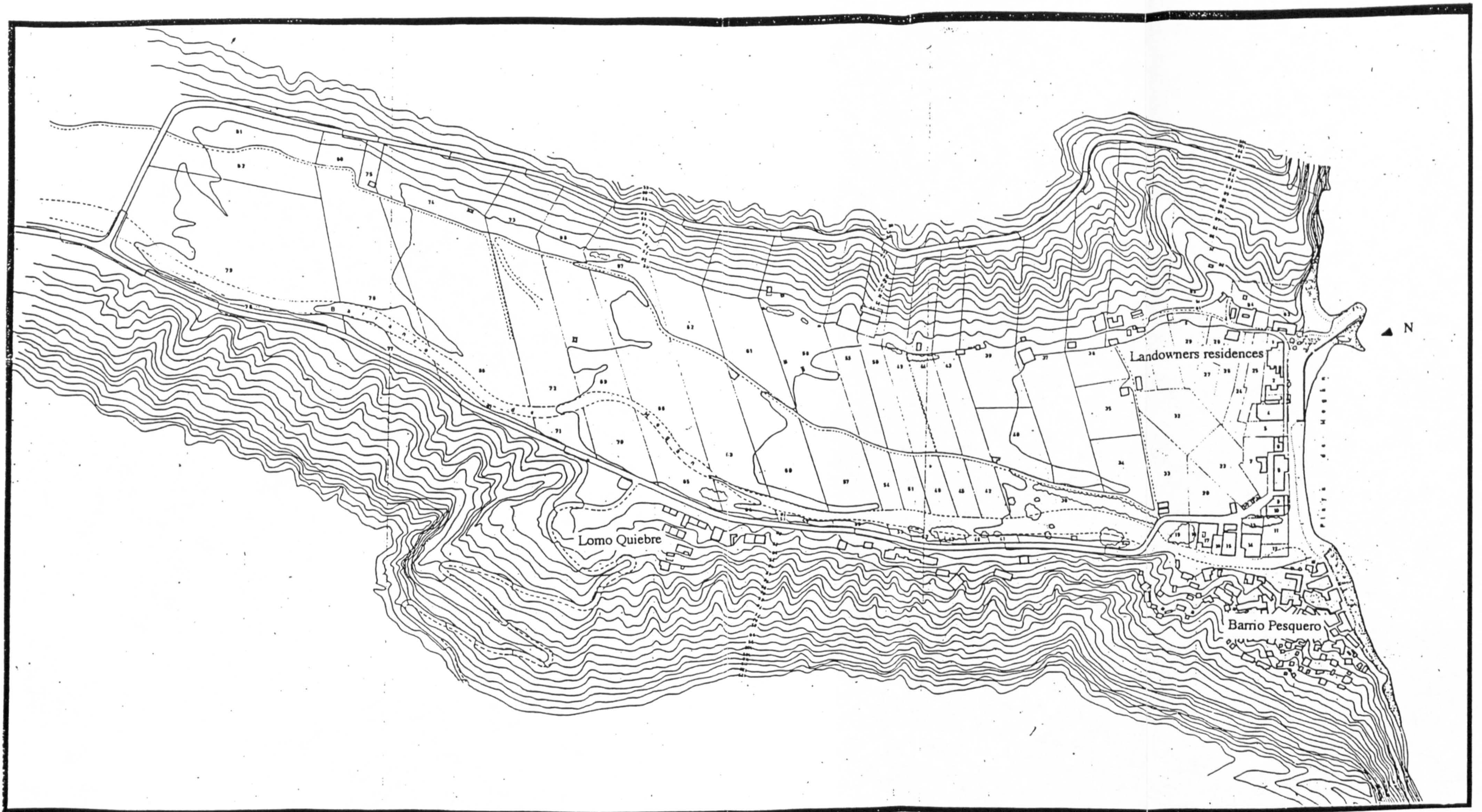


## Appendix II

### The Division of Labour in the Artisanal Fishing Economy

Pascual Fernández (1991) argues that it is not sufficient to simply attribute a uniform non-capitalist mode of production to artisanal fishing societies on the basis that production was predominantly governed by a means of surplus extraction known as the *sistema a la parte*, whereby the catch is divided up in different shares (*soldadas*) amongst the direct producers (crew of each boat), with the *patron* or *armador* (captain/owner) retaining anything between 40 and 60% of the share (Pascual Fernández 1991: 221). However, despite the fact that the allocation of surpluses in this manner also occurs amongst crews on larger commercial fleets, there are significant differences between the artisanal fishing sector and more capitalistic forms of fishing. In particular these relate to the *ownership of the means of production* and the underlying forces which regulate the manner in which *social labour is committed to the production process*. In the artisanal fishing communities of the Canary Islands, where boats do not exceed 20 tonnes (usually 13-14 metres in length), and especially those where boats weigh less than 5 tonnes, crew sizes range between two and three persons and the relations of production demonstrate predominantly pre-capitalist attributes (Pascual Fernández 1991: 218-9). In Playa de Mogán, the average weight and size of fishing craft is equal to seven and a half tonnes and 9.4 metres respectively, with an average crew of 3.8 persons (González *et al.* 1991: 21-2). The dominant social organisation of production has thus been one which is structured according to a kin-ordered mode defined as, “*a way of committing social labour to the transformation of nature through appeals to filiation and marriage, and to consanguinity and affinity*” (Wolf 1982: 91). Where production is predominately regulated through kinship relations this does not encompass only those who are associated via genealogical or ‘blood ties’. Certain tasks may be carried out by non-biological kin, who then become fully incorporated into the productive unit (Wolf 1982: 89). It is a symbolic and political relationship which assigns individuals and groups to particular points in the division of labour according to the legitimacy of their claim ‘to belong’, mediated by prevailing cultural norms (*e.g.* gender relations), in conjunction with the level of development of the productive forces. Production in the artisanal fishing economy is thus centred on the ‘corporate’ family unit headed by the male head of household, who eventually passes on the means of production (boat, equipment, knowledge) to his sons who will then take charge of a particular boat (*patron del barco*). Lateral kin members from ‘outside’ the immediate household (cousins, brother-in-laws) may also be employed to work as crew members, nevertheless the distribution of surpluses are regulated by the family economic unit to whom the means of production ‘belongs’ (Santana Talavera 1990a: 105). Often the economic fortunes of several households are connected through one or more boats depending upon the amount of sons they have, whose surpluses then constitute the basis for the reproduction of each household or family unit. According to Santana Talavera (1990a: 106) where there are more than six sons, surplus members usually will make up part of another crew and fish on boats owned by a distinct family economic unit. In some cases, non-fishing families with sons may, via the marriage of their son to the daughter of a fishing household, gain access to the fishing economy and become a crew member on a father-in-law’s or brother-in-law’s boat (Santana Talavera 1990: 102-6).



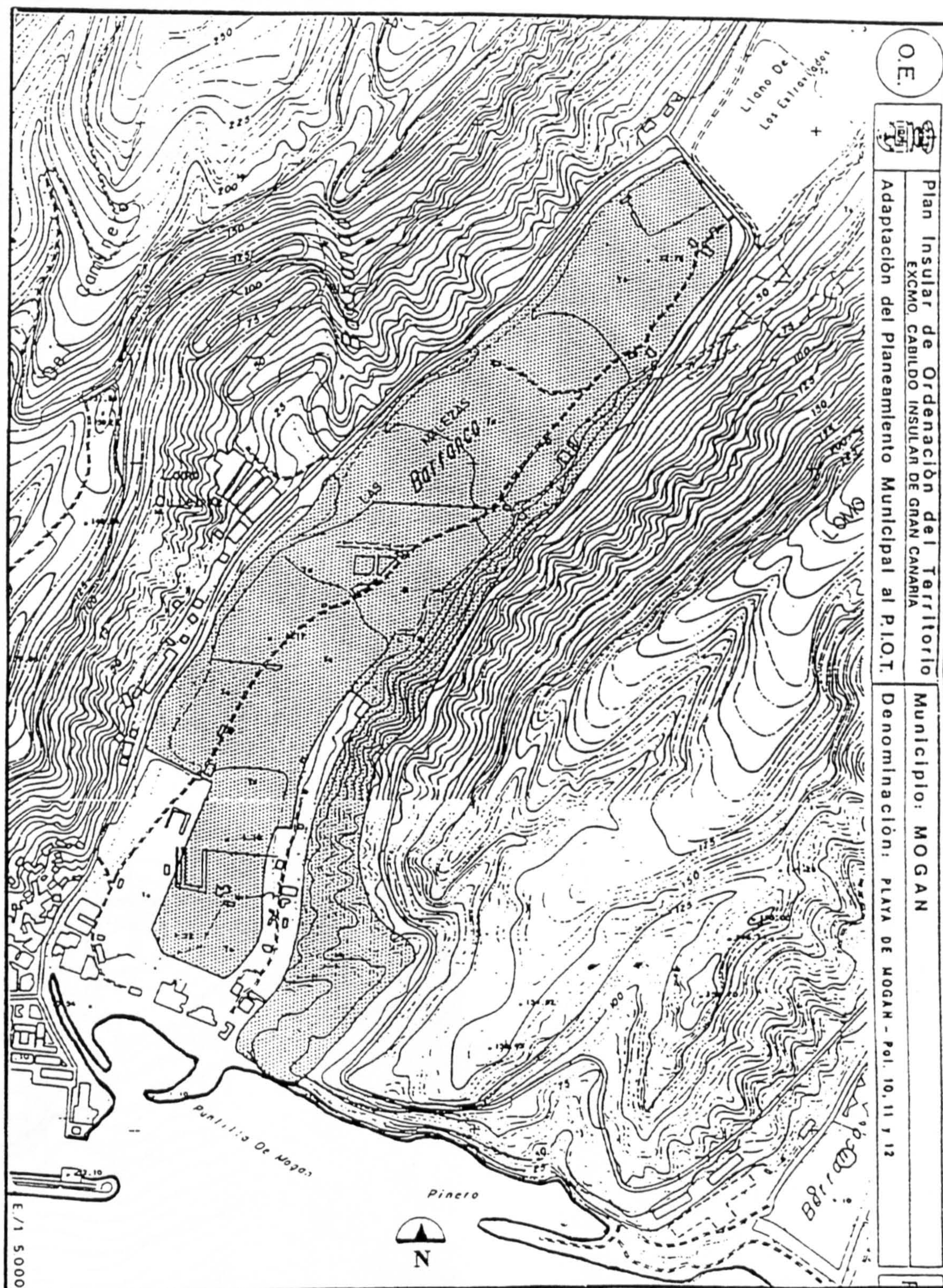


Scale: 1/2000

**Figure 9.1:** Patterns of land tenure in Playa de Mogán (see Plate 8.4). The parallel lines which run across the valley floor indicate the divisions between individual plots, each of which corresponds to a particular heir. It is important to note that individual holdings are also divided into multiple plots (*i.e.* two or more parcels of land may belong to one heir).

(Source: *Plan Especial de Ordenación de Playa de Mogán* 1974, Parcelario de Propietarios. Comisión Provincial de Urbanismo, Las Palmas de Gran Canaria)

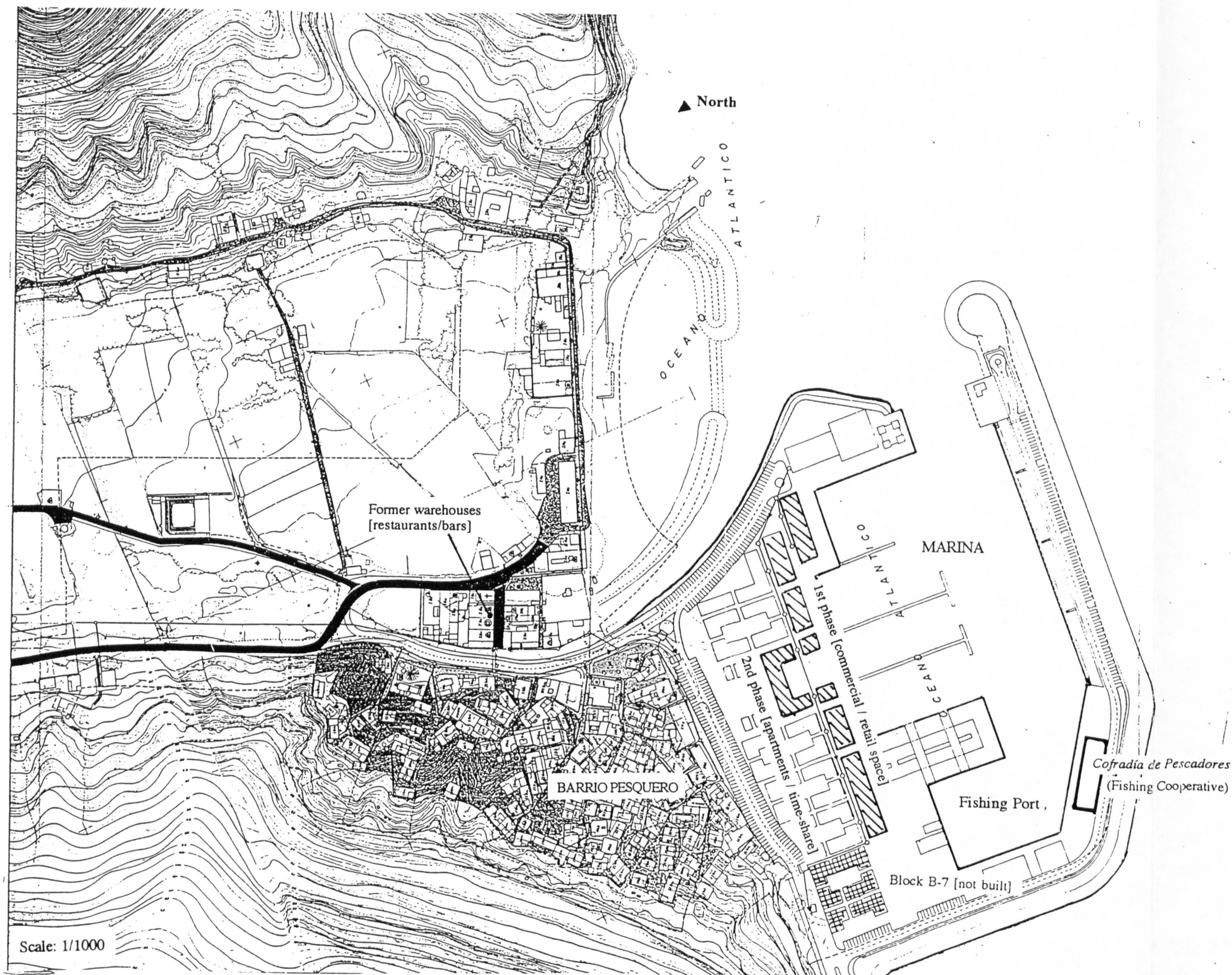




Scale: 1/5000

**Figure 9.2:** Proposed area of tourism development in Playa de Mogán (shaded areas)  
(Source: Cabildo Insular 1992a)





**Figure 10.1:** Plan of village and *puerto deportivo-pesquero* (marina-fishing port)  
 (Source: Proyecto de Modificación de las NN.SS. del T.M. de Mogán. Ordenación de Playa de Mogán. 1985)