Tourism in the global periphery:
A case study from Manang, Nepal Himalaya

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A Master's thesis in
Human Geography
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Table of Contents

Abstract

This study examines the impacts of tourism in a small mountain village in the Nepal Himalayas. During the 1980s, especially, there was a strong global increase in tourism to "remote" places. This increase consequently led to a concomitant increase in writings on tourism and its effects on local places. In this thesis, I aim to engage critically in these theories, adapting some of them to my specific case study. In particular, writings with background in globalization theories are central. My analysis was both descriptive and theoretical. Through analysis of the farming system, I saw that the consequences of tourism are seldom one-sided and not necessarily ruining local culture. Quite the opposite, my analysis indicates that the income from tourism is essential to uphold the farming system and the settlement in Manang, at least in the form we have seen until now. New theories on tourism and local change have emphasized the goal of local cultural control, and have concluded that in light of a globalized world there might exist new ways of organizing global resistance based on local embeddedness; my findings, although supporting the possibility of such a locally based resistance, challenges this optimistic reasoning. Through discussing the findings in my analysis of the farming system combined with a study of the arranging of a local festival I argue that a place always experience a wide array of different influences. A broader understanding of place and the place-culture nexus is therefore necessary.

Acknowledgements

The work leading towards a Master's thesis can be chaotic. In this moment of conclusion, I want to thank some of you for helping me to make order out of chaos:

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Asgeir Skålholt

List of figures

List of tables

x

Chapter 1: Introduction

Even though we live in a modern era, most of the people in this world live in traditional societies. These societies are however intervened and affected by the "modern world" in various ways. Through the increased interconnectedness that we, western academics, have called globalization, the first world is at an increasing rate in contact with the third world. Tourism is one of the most distinct features of globalization. While other parts of globalization are vague flows of opinions and cultures mediated through diverse forms of information media tourism is concrete. Tourism is people travelling, from one place to another, from one culture to another. Western tourism is also looked upon as one of the possible ways out of poverty, and has been introduced as a solution to deep economic problems.

In the 1980s, many development countries, among them Nepal, saw that tourism could be a way of integrating their economies into the global flow of capital, while at the same time maintaining some degree of control over the process. The small village of Manang in the Nepal-Himalaya became a part of this international development. The village is en-route a tourist-trail that directs close to 10 000 people to the village every year. According to traditional theories on tourism and cultural change, this sudden influx of tourism will lead to changes to the local culture. The village's agro-pastoral practices should be expected to change. My point of departure was therefore how tourism, as a distinct phenomenon, affects a traditional society. To concretize I decided to concentrate on the local farming system, as a distinct cultural feature of a traditional society, and on how tourism affected this farming system.

I will first introduce my case and my research question concerning my case. I will do this in **chapter 2**. The chapter presents a short overview of the historical developments in tourism generally and in Nepal specifically.

Chapter 3 will consist of a short introduction to different theoretical understandings of tourism and farming systems.

Chapter 4 will discuss the methodological choices I did in this study. I will try to argue for my use of participatory observation, and for my use of both qualitative and quantitative methods.

Chapter 5 is my first analytical chapter. Here I will focus on the farming system. What characterizes the farming system in Manang? What changes occurred after the start of tourism? What is a possible further development?

Chapter 6 will be a theoretical discussion, discussing different approaches to tourism in light of my case study in Manang.

Chapter 7 is an attempt to gather and clarify my findings.

Chapter 2: Context, tourism in the periphery

2.1 Geographic setting

Nepal is sandwiched between the two most populous countries in the world, India and China. Nepal has always been dependent of these two countries, a situation that according to some writers is to blame for the underdevelopment that exists in Nepal today (Brown 1996). At the same time, the state of Nepal has internal conflicts bordering an open civil war, further complicating development. Nepal has a population of just above 20 million people, living primarily in rural areas. About 80 percent of the population is employed in the agricultural sector. As the big percentage of rural population indicates, Nepal is a country with a vast countryside. The countryside has a scarce modern sector. Infrastructure is poor, and travelling in Nepal can be a stressful and time-consuming experience. Still the country has succeeded in developing some tourist regions. Apart from the biggest cities and Chitwan National Park on the border of India, these are mostly in relation to the Himalayan mountain massif that crosses the entire country. The most visited region is the Annapurna region north of Pokhara, but Khombo, the area surrounding Mount Everest, is also an important tourist destination. This case study concerns a small village in the Annapurna region, Manang. Manang Village is a village that is situated in Manang Valley and is a part of Manang District.
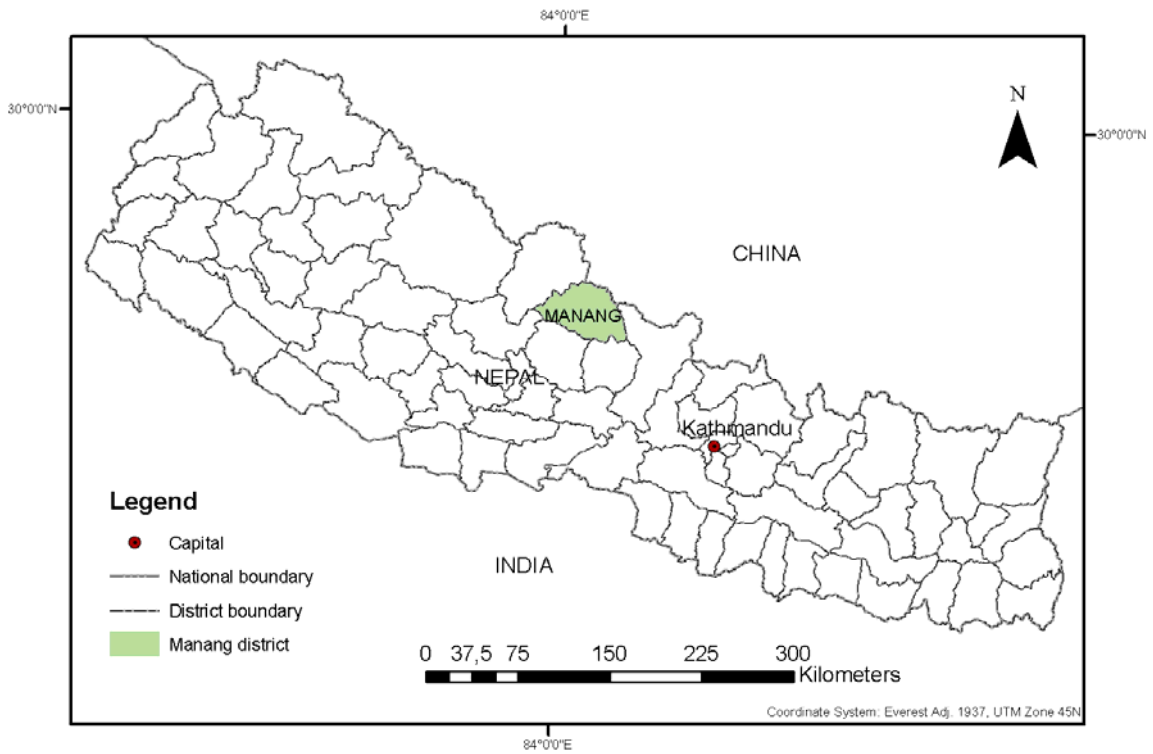
Figure 1: A map of Nepal and its district

Source: HMG Nepal survey
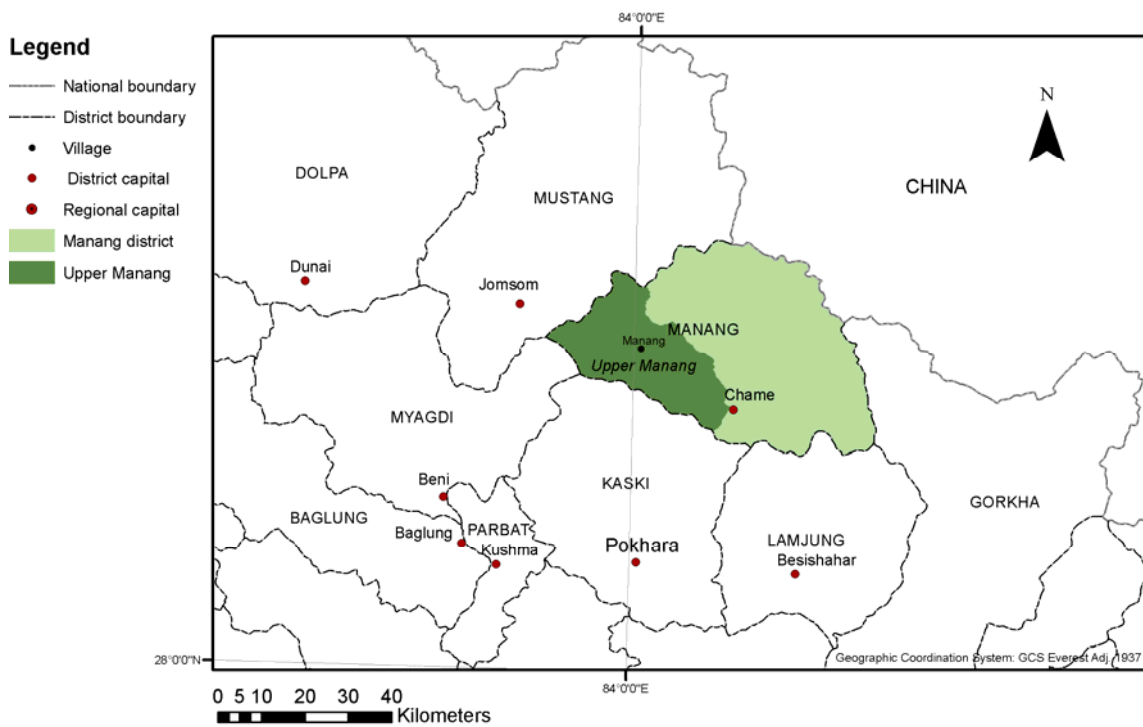
Figure 2: A map of Manang and its surrounding districts

Source: HMG Nepal survey

Manang is the name of a district, a valley and a village, situated on the northern fringes of Nepal-Himalaya. Here the focus will be on Manang Village, if not otherwise noted "Manang" denotes the village. In other words, the administrative district will not be central in this analysis. However, quite a lot of the governmental control is administrated on district level, but as the further analysis will show, this governmental administration has only played a minor role in Manang (see Acharya 2002, for a discussion of the regional-local governance in Nepal). Just the same, the capital in Manang district is Chame, a village placed outside of what traditionally and ethnically has been considered Manang. Chame is a part of Lower-Manang, my research area, however, is Upper-Manang.
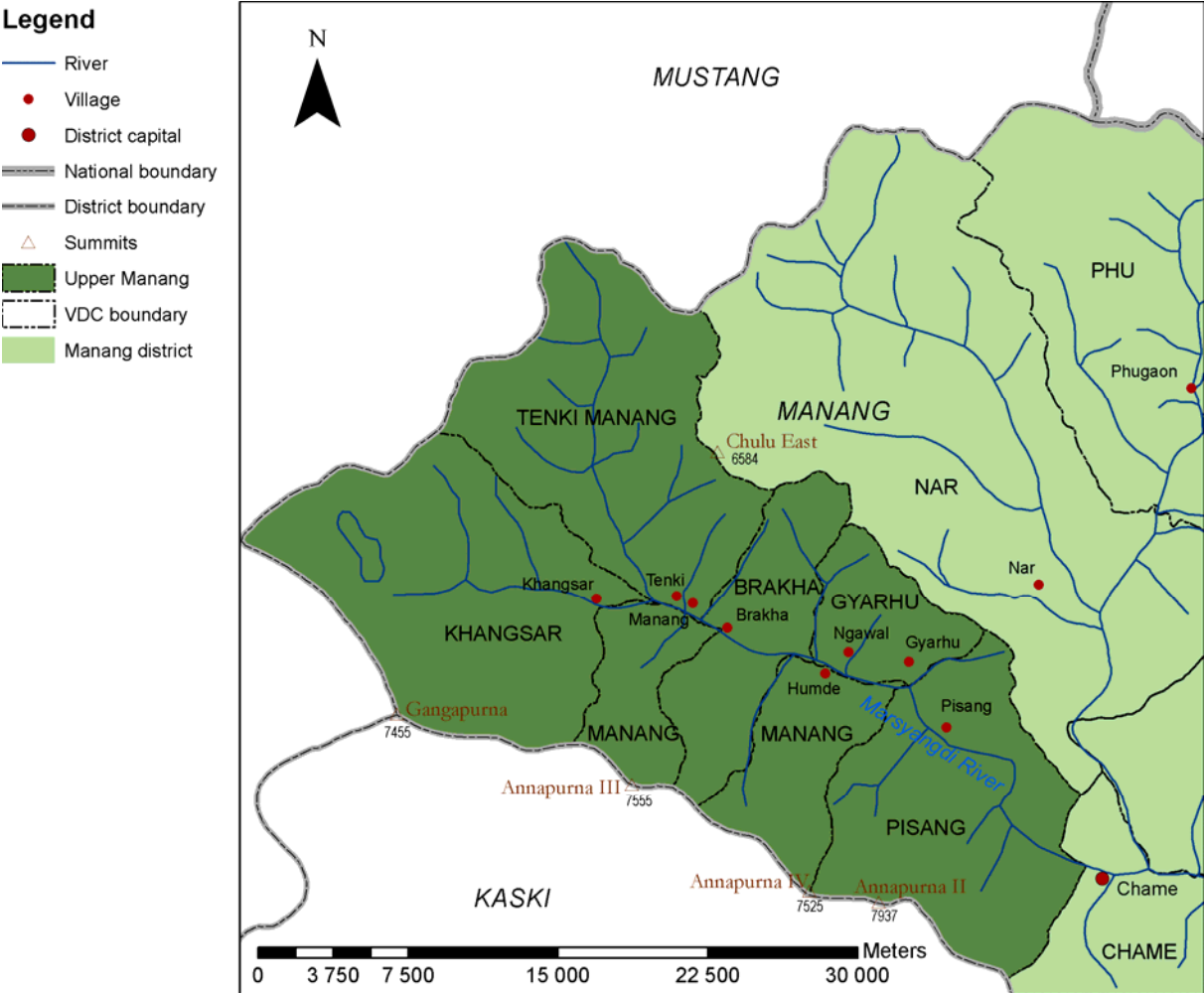
Figure 3: Map of Upper-Manang

The main villages in Upper-Manang are Manang, Pisang, Gyarhu, Ngawal, Braga (Brakha) and Khangsar. These villages are situated between 3200 (Pisang) and 3900 (Khangsar) meters above sea level. Upper-Manang roughly makes up the Manang valley, a valley that is encircled by massive mountains. To the north lays the Tibetan plateau and on the south and west side the Annapurna mountain massif. This remote location has helped to preserve a traditional agro-pastoral farming system, but the same remoteness led to out-migration and problems of under-development. The only relatively easy access is from southeast, up through the Manang valley. Still, to Manang Village even the easiest route is a strenuous five day-walk from the nearest road-head, currently in Besishahar.

Manang Village is the biggest village in this valley. This is where the tourists spend most of their time, and it is here that I decided to do most of my fieldwork. My research topic was how tourists in a wide sense affect the local farming system, so if I wanted to investigate effects of tourism, there had to be tourists. I did some comparative research in the neighboring village Ngawal and Humde as well, but my empirical findings will focus on Manang Village. In the following, I will discuss administrative and social organization, general history and outline the development of tourism in Nepal and Manang.

2.2 Administrative and social organization

Although Upper-Manang has a great deal of cultural and ethnic unity, the following description is based on the realities in Manang Village. Some of the findings are general for the whole area, but I will stress that Manang Village is in a quite special situation in the valley, as will be evident in my description.

The administrative system in Manang is a mix between traditional local based administration, and modern regional and national based governance. There are several different committees in Manang; the two most important ones are the Village Development Committee (VDC), which is the local governmental body and the *Chipen*, which historically was the deciding body. Although the VDC is the governmental "town council", the *Chipen* still plays an important role in every day life. For example, the *Chipen* is in charge of most ritual traditions, concerned with how the village will tackle wrongdoings on the somewhat complicated rules and traditions concerning the harvest. If there are any big decisions that concern the whole of the village it is called for a *Panch Chong*, a village meeting, where one male from every household in the village has to attend. There

are also other committees, such as the *Chepa Tepa*, which is in charge of fining people who do not follow the rules related to the harvest and religious rituals. For example, the *Chepa Tepa* is in charge of arranging the *Panch Chong*, fining the ones who do not arrive on time, or fail to attend at all. The administrative system is complex, often a confusing mix of old traditions and new centrally controlled levels of governance. Still, as my analysis will show, the level of local self-control is high, and the traditional system is strong in the village. In many ways the Nyeshangbas have their own value system, on the side of the established system in Nepal. This is, however, on the side for this thesis as well.

The people in Upper-Manang, often called Manangba, prefer to use another term for their selves. The word "Nyeshangba" is considered older and more correct. The meaning of "Nyeshangba" is somewhat unclear, but some argued that Nyeshang derives from an ancient city in Tibet called Shang and the word Nye, which means us (van Spengen 1987; destinationmanang.com). More comprehensive research found this less probable and it is now believed that the name derives from the word *Shang*, meaning north, and *ba* meaning people: "The people from the north", as Sherpa means "the people from the east" (Aase and Vetaas 2006). The real meaning of the word is unclear, but still it is the preferred word among the locals. I will use the word Manang when referring to the village and Nyeshangba(s) for the people, the language and the culture will be called Nyeshang. However, the definition problems arise already here. A second and maybe third generation resident in Kathmandu with family from Manang is considered a Nyeshangba. A dweller in Manang who is not intermarried with a Nyeshangba (man or woman), on the other hand, is not likely to be considered a Nyeshangba, even though his/her family has lived there for several generations, I will return to this at a later stage.

The number of inhabitants in Manang Village is unclear; however, the national consensus in 2001 sets the number to 920, this number includes the communities of Tenki, Humde and Julu (Rogers 2004: 16). There is reason to believe that this number includes people who are permanently resident in Kathmandu. The households are likely to include family members who live in Kathmandu or other places, moreover households may choose to be registered in Manang instead of Kathmandu where they actually live. According to fieldwork data, it is more likely that there are about 500 residents, and about 100 households in Manang Village. This coincides better with van Spengens estimate in 1979 of 196 households (van Spengen 1987: 154); especially since writers on Manang (Rogers 2004; van Spengen 1987) claim there has been quite considerable out-

migration in the 1980s and early 1990s. Even the numbers in 1979 were reported to be maximum numbers.

We do not know much about the origin and the early days of the Nyeshang community. Although strongly influenced culturally by Tibet, linguistic research indicates a stronger connection to the Gurungs than to the Tibetans (Van Spengen 1987). This is manifested in the new custom practiced by most Nyeshangbas, taking Gurung as their family name. The other most used surname in Manang indicates another historic background, Ghale. Ghale was a famous royal family that maintained a strong hold over Manang in the late Medieval Age; it is still possible to see the remains of a big Ghale fort towering over the valley between the two villages of Ghyaru and Ngawal.

Traditionally the Ghales had a more prominent role in Manang and the neighboring villages, although the most noticeable difference, at least in modern time, was that they did not eat beef, a difference that is of no importance any more since eating beef is illegal in the world's only Hindu state, Nepal. In addition, the Ghales were also freed from community duties. Today the internal differences between the two are diminishing, the Ghales have to attend village meetings and contribute economically as everyone else, but they do not actively partake in the festivals and community work. In the very end of my fieldwork there was called for a *pang chong* (village meeting), and the reason was to delegate responsibility for the upcoming *Badhe Festival*. The Ghales had to attend the meeting, but they played no active role, chitchatting with me on the outskirts of the monastery roof while the others sat in a ring discussing the distribution of chores before and in the festival. Badhe is a big festival, reintroduced in 2004, after 20 years of negligence. According to tradition, it is a festival celebrated every third year in honour of a local god. This festival includes a traditional play and the erection of a big prayer flag close to an ancient juniper situated right over the village, where this god was believed to reside. The Ghales, however, do not partake in this play. The Badhe Festival will be in focus in chapter six.

In addition to the Ghale and the Gurung, there are different family ties, the so-called *parali* or *phube* (meaning group of family, a clan) which is inherited paternally. Although these social structures still play an important role in the society, it will not be the focus of this thesis.

It is difficult to define the ethnicity and origin of the people in Manang. Van Spengen (1987) suggests that they are the result of different waves of immigration; both from the south and the

north, settling in Manang at different times. Still the Nyeshangbas are of the opinion that they have a separate and unique ethnicity. However, neither the Nyeshangbas, nor other Nepalese are certain on how they should address the Manangba/ Manang Bhote[1]/ Nyeshangba. Although well known in Nepali society, the Nyeshangbas have not acquired a distinct ethnic definition in the hierarchy of ethnicities in Nepal, Aase and Vetaas (2006) claim that they are an "ethnic group in-the-making". Tourism very much affects the making of this ethnicity, along with other developments in Nepal and in Manang. One concrete example is the increasing use of English. Because of the great out-migration from Manang from the 1960s and onward, along with the high proportion of locals going to boarding schools and the necessity of knowing Nepali to communicate with guides, the use of the local language is diminishing. Today young people in Manang mostly use Nepali, also when communicating with each other. On the other hand, among the elders Nyeshang is still lingua franca. Tourism's possible role as an agent in shaping the ethnicity will be discussed at length later on.

Some authors consider the caste system crucial for the lack of development in Nepal (Bista 1991). I will not elaborate this argument in my thesis; however, it is important to take what Bourdieu (1977) calls reproduction of social structures serious, whether it is from class, caste or ethnicity. Traditionally, the Buddhists did not acknowledge the caste system, but it is still a part of the Manang society, as it is a part of the other Buddhist communities of Nepal. The caste system in Nepal, introduced from India, became a part of both Hinduism and Buddhism. I will argue that communalism[2] is important in Manang, but it is perhaps more fruitful to see the differences on the background of ethnicity than of caste. The strong divide between insiders and outsiders in the village might indicate this. For example, a friend of one of my interpreters was denied entry to the house of my interpreter's parents. The friend was the son of a family that had moved to the village, and belonged to another Buddhist ethnicity. However, this young man was not dismissed from the social and economic life of the village. One of the "big men" of the village, the pilot and manager of the only private airline company serving Manang, gave him a good job in his airline company. Even though my fieldwork was brief, and I did not necessarily achieve a full knowledge of the social structures, I still did not find any hostility towards the lower caste Buddhist amongst the youngsters, giving hope for a more egalitarian future in Manang.

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[1] *Bhote* means "from Tibet", but in Nepal it has the connotation of "hillbilly" (Aase and Vetaas 2006). I heard the Nepalese using it for Nyeshangbas during my fieldwork, mostly in an either joking or patronizing way. However, also used in trekking advertisements and writings on the area (see http://www.yetizone.com/day_6.htm).

[2] "Communalism", as it is used in South-East Asia, denotes the suppression and conflicts between castes or communities based in religious traditions.

The notion "big man" might demand a closer investigation. Although I will argue that the society in Manang is relatively egalitarian, it also has features that show great internal inequality. The social anthropologist Dor Bahadur Bista (1991), quite boldly explains how Nepal's development suffer under the different social and ethnic antagonism in Nepal. He finds "*Afno Manche*" (one's own people) as especially important, "the term is used to designate one's inner circle of associates" (Bista 1991: 98). This level of social organization, so to speak, is important in the Nepali society, also in Manang. As the story of the traders will show, some people in the Nyeshang community had great success in trading ventures and had great success building up business in Kathmandu. These people attained a high status and a great deal of influence in Manang and are called "big men" among the villagers in Manang. As the tourism industry started in Manang, some of those people moved back, and created a bigger internal difference. The power of these "big men" and their *afno manche* should not be ignored.

Van Spengen claims that it "seems unlikely that a full year's livelihood could be produced on the basis of local resources" (van Spengen 1987: 140). An "extra-local component" is therefore needed. The traditional agricultural system introduced by the Ghales "guaranteed food […] for about seven to eight months out of twelve" (ibid.). In other words, the harsh environment in the Manang Valley has always demanded that the Nyeshangbas in one way or another gained access to food supplies that supplemented what could be produced locally. This could be done by seasonal migration to lower lying areas or through trading ventures. The Nyeshangbas started early with seasonal trading trips, like many other communities in the Nepal Himalayas (Banskota and Sharma 1998). As long as there have been people living in these areas, it is likely that there was some sort of trading. In historical time, we know that especially the glands from the musk deer were important, along with different medicinal herbs. These goods were brought down to the Terai, where it was bartered for food or other important articles. This tradition evolved over time and in 1784 the villagers were granted special international trading privileges by the Nepali King that they maintained right up until our time (until 1976 (van Spengen 1987)). In 1976, the trade had evolved to a large and professional trade venture, with branches in all major South East Asian cities. Even though their monopolistic privileges were abandoned, the structure was maintained. Well into the 1990s, the Nyeshangbas did trade in the major cities in South East Asia. Some Nyeshangbas still pursue international trading today, but due to visa problems and a general changing international environment, such as better border control and more

professionalized trading sector, several of the local traders have had trouble over the last couple of decades.

The traditional seasonal migration and trading developed over time. Van Spengen vividly describes the Nyeshangbas coming "down in the wintertime from their abode of snow, in order to escape the cold and engage in profitable trade ventures" (ibid.: 175). Still, during the 1970s and 80s more and more people moved to Kathmandu, both in order to continue professional trading, but also to partake in the booming tourism industry in Kathmandu. Because of the increasing out-migration from Manang, primarily to Kathmandu, the local culture in Manang was changing, as I will discuss in my analysis.

Nowadays the local people of Manang to a lesser degree take an active part in trading. Among the ones living in Manang, it is rare. Still, the increase in tourism, as I soon will return to, opened up new possibilities. Van Spengen draws a picture where the Nyeshangbas take an active part in trading and business while staying in Kathmandu or other places during wintertime. Most of the villagers still escape the cold of the winter, all but a few who remain to attend to the livestock. Although this fieldwork included only sporadic fieldwork in the cities, interviews in Manang indicated little or no activity while staying in Kathmandu or Pokhara, the two dominant cities in Nepal. The opportunity to get seasonal work in the big cities has diminished over the years, my informants claimed. Van Spengen argued that the Nyeshangbas took part in economic activity while staying in the cities during winter, it seems like this practice has ceased or at least diminished in importance over the years.

Even though the importance of trade has been reduced there are still Nyeshangbas doing trade. At the time of writing, one of my informants is in Bangkok to do trade during the winter. Although the Nyeshangbas current trading activity would have been an interesting topic for a Master's project, this thesis restricts itself to conclude that trade, at least to the community in Manang, has decreased in importance. This does not exclude, however, that capital accumulated during trade still plays an important role, especially in developing the new tourism enterprises in the village.

2.3 Tourism in the periphery: Nepal and Manang

Nepal is a country of great geographical, ecological and cultural diversity. Of the world's fourteen mountains over 8000 meters, eight are situated in Nepal. Therefore, the country is of a great interest to mountaineers and different kinds of explorers. The British, who early developed a culture for mountain hiking and climbing, were pioneers also in Nepal. But it was not until the 1950s that Nepal manifested itself as a tourist destination. Nepal was first opened for foreign visitors in 1951, and the country had only a few and sporadic visitors until then. The ascent of Mt Everest (Sagarmatha) in 1953, however, made Nepal attractive for tourism and during the 1960s there was an ever-increasing trekking activity in the Everest region. From 1962 to 1970 there was a sevenfold increase in foreign arrivals, from 6 000 to 45 000 (Chand 2000). By 1975 this had doubled again to 90 000. Much of the country was still closed nonetheless for tourism, but in 1977, the Annapurna region, including the Manang valley, was opened for trekking. The Annapurna region includes the surrounding areas of the Annapurna Massif, which includes Annapurna I, just over 8000 m.a.s.l. The Annapurna region is culturally diverse, and includes the districts of Kaski, Lamjung, Manang, Mustang and Myagdi. Although culturally and ecologically different, the districts are presented as a part of one package to foreign visitors. The Annapurna region experienced an increasing flow of tourists after the opening for tourism in 1977. However, the increased pressure on the fragile ecosystems raised international and national alarm. Without proper management and monitoring, the tourism would not be sustainable (Bajracharaya 1998). King Birenda of Nepal issued a directive in 1985 to investigate the possibilities of a conservation area in Annapurna (ibid.). Instead of giving the authority to the government, the area project was handed over to the King Mahendra Trust for Nature Conservation (KMTNC), an "independent" non-governmental environment organization[3]. KMNTC launched the Annapurna Conservation Area Project in 1986, covering approximately 7000 square kilometres, making it by far the biggest conservation area in Nepal. About 60 percent of all tourists who come to Nepal to do trekking do so in the Annapurna Region (Bajracharaya 1998). In 1989 this was approximately 36 000 people. The tourism traffic peaked at 76 000 in 2000; due to instability in the region and elsewhere in the country this number was down to 38 000 in 2002, almost the same as in 1989 (ACAP).

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[3] Before the royal takeover in Nepal many saw KMNTC as a governmental body (researchers and even KMNTC employees that the writer talked to), now when the king has even more powers this is further established. The crown prince is the chairperson of this organization.
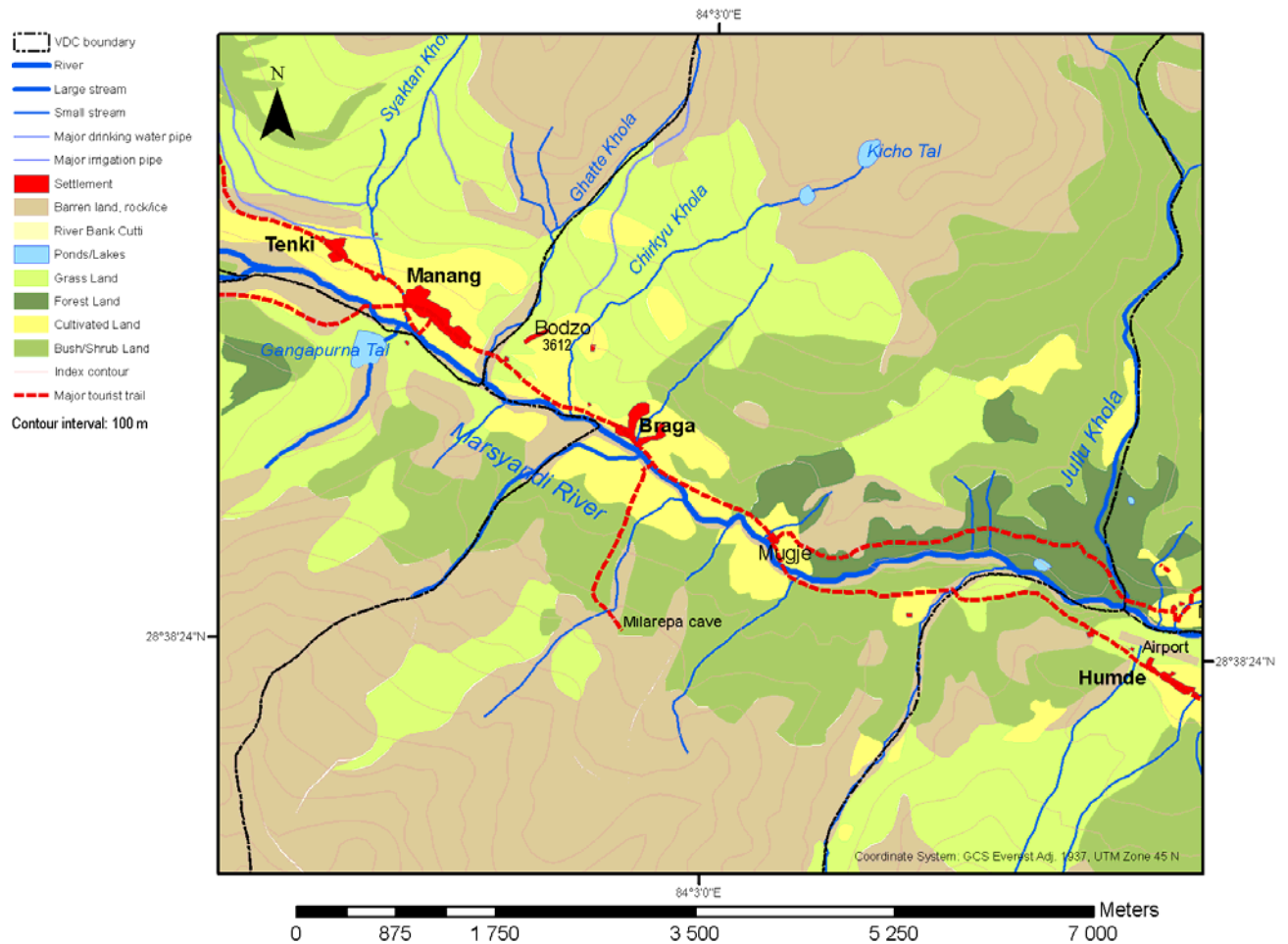
Figure 4: Map of Manang, showing the major tourist trails

Manang is situated along the trail of the Annapurna Circuit. This trek lasts for approximately 21 days and is over 300 km. The trek starts in Besishahar and ends in Beni (figure 2), passing through a diverse and fascinating landscape, including the mountain pass over Thorong La, at 5416 m.a.s.l. Annapurna Circuit is the second most popular trekking destination in the Annapurna Region, after the Annapurna Sanctuary Trek, a shorter and less strenuous trek to the base camp of Annapurna I. The numbers of trekkers that come into the Manang region are uncertain, but every trekker doing the circuit has to pass a checkpoint in Tal (now in Chame, due to Mao rebels). In 2000, this checkpoint registered 12759 people; in 2003, it was down to 11156, however still a small increase from the bottom year, 2002.

13

Check post, Tal

Year/Month	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	Percent
January	120	176	79	104	112	1
February	307	484	294	279	313	2,9
March	1669	1980	1386	1552	1499	13,8
April	1126	2453	1476	1639	1629	14
May	179	731	433	601		4,1
June	132	74	88	122		0,9
July	293	181	177	119		1,6
August	247	207	107	165		1,5
September	1367	1305	777	685		8,7
October	4334	3832	3060	3504		30,9
November	2679	2222	1660	2029		18
December	306	275	304	357		2,6
Yearly	**12759**	**13920**	**9841**	**11156**		100

Table 1: Trekkers passing the checkpoint in Tal

Source: ACAP field office in Manang, after May 2004 the checkpoint moved to Chame due to Mao rebels
Numbers from that date were therefore not available at the time of data gathering (September/October 2004)

These numbers are uncertain; trekkers may pass this checkpoint unwaveringly, without registering. Still they provide us with a good estimate of the number of tourists and the strong seasonal pattern of the traffic. Most of the trekkers arrive either in the months of March and April (28 per cent) or in October and November (49 percent). It is reasonable to assume that almost the same amount of trekkers arrive in Manang as in Tal, even though some tourists might turn around and descend to Besishahar before coming to Manang. In any case it opens up to a substantial business possibility for the inhabitants in Manang.

Before the opening of Manang to organized tourism in 1977, Manang had been infamous for their unfriendly handling of tourists. Michel Peissel shortly concluded that Manang is "a district famous for its unfriendly people" (1967: 62). Marcel Herzog, the first ascender of Annapurna I in 1950, also reported unfriendly locals; the Nyeshangbas allegedly denied the expedition food and shelter (Parker 2001: 139). As soon as the Nyeshangbas experienced there were possibilities for a new source of income, this atmosphere however changed. This sudden change in the villagers'

treatment of the tourists might seem peculiar. However, field interviews indicate a highly pragmatic approach to business, as well as life in general. Doing trade in 1970s in Thailand, many of the Nyeshang businessmen experienced the tourist boom there, learning that tourism may be a big opportunity for income[4]. As long as the tourists generate money and opportunities, they are more than welcome. The increase in tourism, along with the decrease in trading, generated a re-migration to Manang of trading entrepreneurs in Kathmandu. Former traders own all of the biggest guesthouses in Manang. These guesthouses are the main form of accommodation among the trekkers. These former traders, with a great deal of "entrepreneurism", invested their own and some of the Manang community in Kathmandu's money in Manang, trying to increase the revenues from the recently growing tourism.

There are mainly two kinds of tourism business in Manang, first guesthouses, ranging from (simple) hotels to smoke filled lodges, and second, teashops (*bhatti*), which are often only temporary sheds with a simple wooden stove inside. Guesthouses demand big investments, and are often based on credit from the relatively financially strong Nyeshang community in Kathmandu (Rogers 2004). These are highly risk-filled endeavours that demand a great deal of both hard and social capital. In addition, these undertakings demand a larger amount of staff. Guesthouses, depending on their size typically have a chef, a baker and several servants. Teahouses, on the other hand, demand less capital and fewer personnel, most often it is only the owner of the teahouse. Contrary to the guesthouses, the teahouses are primarily for Nepali guides and porters and do not have any sleeping facilities. In the teahouses, the porters can buy noodle soup, dried yak-meat, *cheng*, and *rakshi*, the local beer and liquor respectively. The teashops are solely run by local girls, or young women, and represent a good opportunity to take part in the tourism industry on a low risk level. The women working in the teashops are for the most part unmarried, but the money earned is shared with the household where they live[5]. In addition to guesthouses and teashops, some also have small shops, equipped with trekking appliances, biscuits and soft drinks. These are, however, dominantly a part of the guesthouses. Even though an increasing number of the tourists come and stay in a facility that resembles what we in Europe would call a hotel, it is still always a family enterprise. In addition to the low threshold businesses, such as the teashops, a great deal of the local community partakes in the tourism industry. I will elaborate later how much and in what degree the locals take part in the tourism business.

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[4] Rogers (2004) described these processes in his book "The secrets of Manang"
[5] This will be the focus of other studies from Manang

Despite the growth in tourists during the 1990s, excluding the decrease in the beginning of this decade, there has been no increase in the amount each tourist leave behind (Banskota and Sharma 1998: 112). Likewise, the import leakages in the tourism industry have traditionally been estimated high in developing countries (ibid.; Mowforth and Munt 2004). These findings are mostly based on more well developed tourist places where international chains of hotel and tourist agencies are more central. However, it is likely that the same is valid for more remote tourist places as well. There may be, however, a smaller dependency on global economic power structures in Manang than in other more central tourist places. The peripheral placing of Manang makes it less attractive for foreign investors to invest in Manang. Another question is whether the local community would have allowed it. Local entrepreneurs own most of the hotels and few tourists travel by foreign travel agencies. On the other hand, most of the food and all of the utilities they sell to the tourists have to be carried in by porters, making the profit margin small.

Due to internal competition, and probably the lack of organization, the prices in Manang are low, ranging from free to 100 Nepalese Rupees (NPR) a night for a bed (10 Norwegian Kroner (NOK) or US dollars (USD) 1.5)[6] and approximately 200 NPR for a warm meal, as evident from fieldwork. The average spending by the tourists is low, also compared to Nepali standards. A survey held by the World Wildlife Fund estimated the average spending in Manang to be USD 6.30 on food and beverages, USD 1.14 (85 NPR) on accommodation and USD 0.78 (60 NPR) on purchases (Snow Leopard Conservancy 2003), this is almost 5 dollars less than the national average in Nepal in 1988 (Banskota and Sharma 1998). This opens up to possibilities for increasing revenues, despite of a possible and likely general decrease in tourist arrivals, which might be expected because of the current unrest in Nepal. Over the years, the guesthouses initiated a price collaboration to raise the prices. This has increased the prices, but as my numbers indicate, the prices are still low. One of the reasons to this low price level is the dominance of young backpackers on a strict budget that passes Manang. An increase in prices might, but only might, decrease the numbers of backpackers in Manang. Another question is whether these backpackers leave so little money that it is not any business in maintaining the traffic.

Approximately half of the gross income of a guesthouse in Manang goes to buy imported rice, wheat, kerosene and so forth, as evident from fieldwork. The big costs of keeping guesthouses, along with the uncertain numbers of tourists the guesthouses can expect, make it hard and risky

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[6] All currencies in the thesis are converted at the rate given in September 2004.

to make long-term plans for the entrepreneurs. Still, tourism generates substantial income for some families. Households can net up to 500 000 NPR a year (44 000 NOK / 7 000 USD). This coincides with reports from a similar area in the Everest region. In the Everest region popular lodges could in 1993 gross up to USD 10 000 a year (Stevens 1993). Almost every household in Manang is in one way or another involved in tourism. My survey recorded that just one out of five households was not economically involved with tourist activity[7]. Such a thorough involvement of tourism suggests a major influence on socio economic life. I will return to this later in my analysis.

2.4 The present situation

Tourism is highly vulnerable to global macro changes, both economically, politically and because of changes in tourist trends. The tourist places are very vulnerable to bad publicity. The current unrest in Nepal may therefore hamper and reverse the tourism development in Manang. After the first Maoist insurgencies in the years following 1996, the increase in tourism was showing a downward trend. After the royal massacre in June 2001, the increase was turned into a decrease. After the badly disguised coup d'état in February 2005, the decrease was massive. The British magazine The Economist reported a 40 percent decrease in international arrivals from February 2004 to February 2005 (The Economist, April 14th 2005). This decrease may be of a temporary character, as the memory of the tourists after occasions like this has proven short (Mowforth and Munt 2004). Nevertheless, this decrease comes on top of a more lasting decline. From 2000 until 2001, the decrease was 22 percent, and the contribution to the GDP went down from 3.2 to 2.9 percent (Baral et. al. 2003). Both Maoist groups and the government have let the tourists alone until now, but two Russian climbers were wounded as their car ran on a land mine in April 2005. This attack was in the popular Everest region, the second main goal for foreign trekkers. The consequences of these and more recent events are uncertain, but it could lead to a change in international travel advices. A paradoxical consequence for the community in Manang however, was the availability of labourers created by this situation. One of the first places the Maoists established a stronghold were in the Gorkha villages of central Nepal (Bhattarai and Karki 2004: 10). These are mainly Buddhist villages with some traditional connections with Manang, situated in the adjacent mountain massive. The conflict in these areas affected mostly poor rural workers, harassed by the *Maobodi* (Nepali for the Maoists). The conflict in these areas provoked a mass

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[7] See the methodology chapter (chapter four) for a discussion on the surveys possibilities and shortcomings.

migration from Gorkha land, a few of them coming to Manang; creating a considerable source of labour. Gorkha and Dholpa is not yet a major tourism destination. One reason to this is undoubtedly the unstable and possibly dangerous situation in these areas. Although the unstable situation in parts of Nepal is not affecting Manang directly, the situation certainly restricts the numbers coming to Nepal over all. Still, in the long term the unstable situation in the country is for sure not positive to the tourism development, event though the situation indirectly contributes with much needed labour power in Manang.

Nepal International tourism, number of arrivals
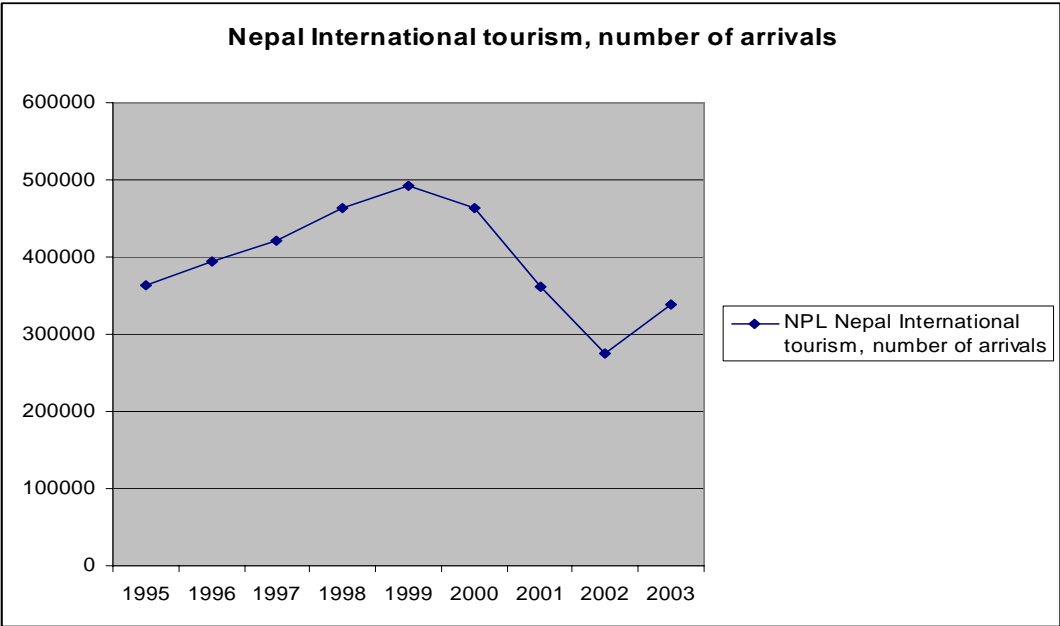
Figure 4: International tourism arrivals in Nepal 1995-2003

Source World Bank Group, WDI online

The positive trend from 2002 to 2003 (continued in 2004) is likely to be reduced in 2005, due to the royal takeover and the following unrest. The most recent arrival numbers (August 2005) indicates a decrease in 17 percent compared to 2004 (Nepal Tourism Board). In any case, it is a long way from the heydays of 1998, when there were almost half a million foreign arrivals in Nepal. These national trends are likely to be felt also in Manang, however much of the decrease in tourism might be explained on the background of Indian arrivals. The Indian arrivals have plummeted over the last years. However, Manang have never been popular among Indian travellers, indicating that the national trends not necessarily affect the situation in Manang that much. Still, according to my informants there were slightly less tourists in the years following up to 2004, compared to the top year in 1999.

As mentioned, the image of a place is often more important than the reality of what is actually happening there. There is an established image of the Nepali Himalayas as peaceful and mystic, but the lasting unrest in the country, for a whole decade this year (2006), may give a lasting change in the country's image. If a new and different image is consolidated among tourists, media and tourism agencies, it will be difficult to change. The meaning and the role of how the place is experienced by locals, tourists and expatriates will be focused upon in the analysis.

As the trading history illustrates, Manang has a special role in the Nepali society. They are ranked on the very top when it comes to literacy, health and education[8]. They have the lowest percentage of economically active children (indicating the level of child labour); they have the very best ranking when it comes to gender discrimination (interestingly the other top ranking districts are also Buddhist). The numbers concerning affluence are probably misleading for the village of Manang. Many of the most successful Nyeshangbas are living in Kathmandu, but are still registered as living in Manang for political and practical reasons; likewise, some of the poorest inhabitants living in Manang would be a part of Dolpa, Gorkha or other districts in the census. The over-representation of marginal farm households in Manang further strengthens this point of view. Forty-four percent of the households in Manang are considered marginal, making the district among the least developed districts of Nepal by some measurements. The fact that such a high portion of the households are marginal further supports van Spengen's assumption that the ecological restrictions in Manang render impossible a full year's livelihood based on local produced food. This important conclusion is discussed further in chapter five.

Some of these numbers indicate a relatively good livelihood level in Manang; however, this should not be overvalued, although they hint to Manang's special situation in the Nepali political and economic landscape. Nepal is ranked overall as one of the world's poorest countries. In the Human Development Index (HDI), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) measure for poverty, Nepal is currently only the 140th country of the world (out of 177). If we only take Gross Domestic Product (GDP) into consideration Nepal are number 151 (Human Development Report 2004). The country is in other words better off than their economic situation indicates. Still, the focus on economy, health and education in the HDI ranks Nepal as one of the worlds 50 least developed countries, making Nepal one of the so-called LDCs (Least Developed Countries) (UNDP). The level of poverty is, however, difficult to estimate. The high

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[8] Data source: National Population Census 2001: ICIMOD/HMGN; the child illiteracy rate is just 3, 31 percent, the least developed region, Mugu, had a child illiteracy level of 51.75 percent.

percentage of rural workers, agriculture provides employment for 80 percent of the population, indicates that people, even though poor, may not starve. Still, Nepal is one of the poorest countries in the world.

2.5 My project in relation to the NUFU research programme

My project is part of the NUFU project "Local Effects of Large-scale Global Changes". NUFU is a Norwegian academic programme based on the co-operation between institutions in Norway and in the South. The Norwegian Council for Higher Education and NORAD (The Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation) fund this programme. The project will "elucidate the effect of large-scale changes, such as global warming and internationalisation, on a local community in the Himalayas (Manang in Nepal)"[9]. The project defines further: "Traditionally mountain regions have been neglected in development plans; this project is an effort to heighten the competence on mountain communities and development, and to look into the effects of global changes. Whether the social changes related to globalisation influence the management of the agricultural systems and the related pastoral transhumance system (i.e. agro-pastoral system)"[10]

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[9] From the NUFU Project Description, Project document, p.1
[10] http://www.svf.uib.no/sfu/nufu/localeff/localeff_pd.htm

GLACIERS ← CLIMATE CHANGE

↓

MELT-WATER

SEED-SUPPLY

↓

PRIMARY PRODUCTION: AGRICULTURE ← PASTORALISM

TRADE →

↑

MIGRATION

FOREST

GLOBALISATION

&

INTERNATIONALISATION
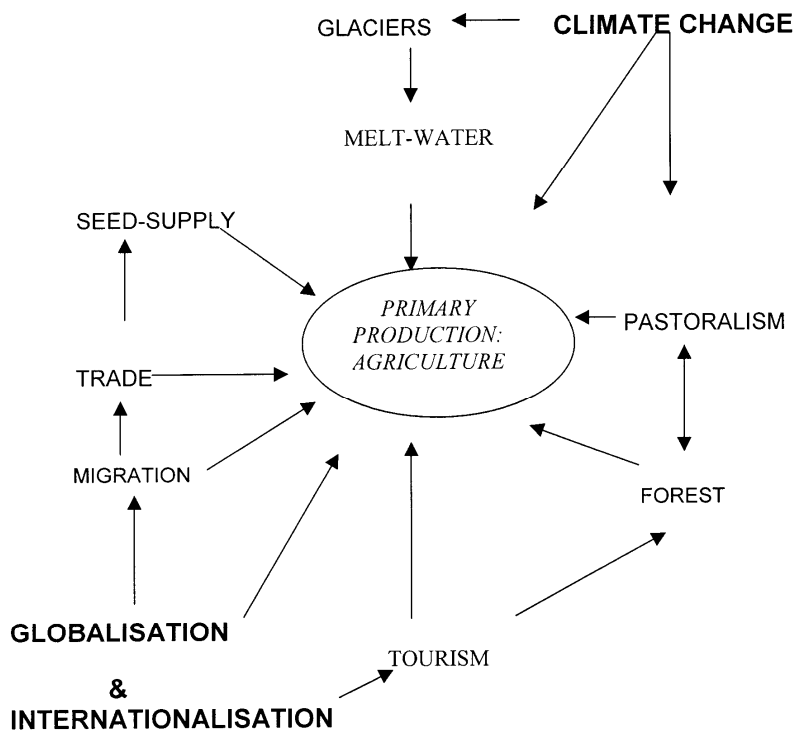
TOURISM

Figure 5: The relationships between different factors and sub-disciplines in the NUFU-project
Source: the NUFU project

Internationalization has affected Himalayan communities through tourism, migration and international trade. As the figure shows, this influence can come from several positions. All factors in the figure are affecting each other, and all aspects are important in my thesis. However, my focus will be on how tourism affects agro-pastoral production. The opening of tourism in these remote communities of Nepal brings challenges: the rise in income could improve economic conditions so that there could be an increase in the technological level in the farming system. However, the same cash flow could also amplify the pressure on genetic resources, landscape and people. My contribution to "Local effects of large-scale global changes" is therefore to try analytically to find the relation between the tourism activities and the agro-pastoral production. However, the thesis will also try to broaden the scope and look into how general assumptions on cultural change are dominating the theories of tourism. In the start of this project, I therefore formulated some research questions that were used as a reference in the rest of my project:

2.7 Research Questions

In what way has tourism influenced the management and composition of agricultural systems?

Sub problems

- *Is there a lack of labour resources during the tourism seasons, and if so what does it lead to?*

- *Does the influx of tourists increase the pressure on traditional practices?*

- *How do the conventional theoretical understandings of tourism explain my case?*

This thesis' intention is to look analytically into how a village in the Himalayas is affected by globalization, mainly manifested through tourism. In the following chapter, I will focus on which theoretical understandings that may help us to inform these research questions.

Chapter 3: Theories of tourism and social change

> Theories and strategies have tended to stack up, one upon another, co-existing,
> sometimes in a very convoluted and contradictory manner
>
> Potter (c.f. Mowforth and Munt 2004: 32)

All abstractions are in some way uncoupled from reality. Thus, they will not be completely and lastingly correct. At the same time, this is how we see and understand the world, through generalizations and categorizations. The Argentinean writer Jorge Louis Borges philosophizes about the perfect map; it has to be in ratio 1:1. Not only that, to make the map usable, we need a map of the map. This may seem like a farfetched thing to include in a chapter on theory, but this is the very essence of the shortcomings of theories and models. A theory that is adequate and correct may be too complex to apply, theories that clarify, on the other hand, may be so simplified that they do not any longer represent reality.

I will here lay a basis for my theoretical scope. The backdrop for this chapter is my aspiration for this thesis, the thesis' raison d'être so to speak: namely to look for analytical tools that can help us understand how tourism affects a local village, and mainly its agro-pastoral production system. To do this I will first discuss basic epistemological views. Thereafter I will continue with a discussion on theories on globalization and tourism, before I conclude with a short discussion on farming systems and peasant theories.

Central in the last decades' discussion of epistemology is the notions *grand theories* and *metanarratives*. The postmodernist Lyotard first used the notion metanarrative in 1984 (Peet 1998: 209). In his book *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge* he describes metanarratives as all the big structuring stories that constituted our society in the age of modernism: such as the narrative of the rational and free subject, the belief in historical progress, and so forth. In *postmodernism*, the big narratives from modernism were believed to be succeeded by many small and local narratives. There is, Lyotard claimed, an increased belief in difference.

Lyotard's view is a part of a great epistemological shift in the social sciences. Moreover, the thoughts of Lyotard and his companions are reflected in many of the theories of globalization, as the reader will see in my discussion on tourism theory. The belief in *difference* has lead to an increased interest in the small stories, in the "multitude" or in many small discourses. This is also

central in geography, which has resulted in an increased interest in studies on a micro scale. My case is also at a micro scale, however, we should be aware of what several writers call localism, namely an exaggerated focus on local level (Hardt and Negri 2000; Amin 2002).

Peet asserts that geography is the "study of relations between society and the natural environment" (1998: 2). Therefore, we need concepts that can help us understand these relations, relations that make up an entire system, a complex of interrelations. To understand these interrelationships, awareness of the different levels of abstractions is essential, from the philosophy of philosophy – meta-philosophy – to practice. The researcher has to be aware of the scientific discussions that are taking place, or at least that they are taking place. The scientific discussions in geography have endured, and certain theories tend to dominate these discussions. The spatial science tradition after World War II is an example of an important tradition that is still influencing geography. However, the spatial sciences were soon criticized and new traditions developed. Knowledge was no longer certain and objective but constructed[11].

In my thesis, I am addressing problems of farming practices and tourism influence. The farming system approach, which I will return to later, is influenced by spatial sciences, with stress on the comparative research across geographical scope. However, also in theories on farming system new thoughts came as a result of the linguistic or cultural turn. In any case, the different traditions stress important issues in relation to how we understand the world around us, and in how we acquire this information. Postmodernism has made itself indispensable, raising questions that need to be addressed in any scientific work, at least in social science where the interpretation of humans, landscapes and social systems are essential. Questions of what and who has created the meta-narratives the research rests upon is important, this is questions that demands that the researcher is critical to all knowledge that is produced, also his/her own knowledge.

The problems concerning tourism in rural societies are central in several academic disciplines. New academic sub-disciplines also embrace the problem, I am thinking especially of research on the processes that have been termed globalization. Kenneth Meethan (2001: 4) for example, defines tourism as "a global process of commodification and consumption involving flows of people, capital, images and cultures". Tourism is global in the very essence of its existence. In the following paragraphs, I will try to sum up some thoughts about tourism theory.

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[11] This paradigm is sometimes called the coherence theory (Aase *forthcoming*), or simply postmodernism

3.1 The theory of tourism

John Urry (1990) was one of the first to try to systematize tourism theory. Before him, tourism was discussed in terms of economy, geography, anthropology and so forth, but it lacked a distinct theoretical basis. Urry claims that the main contributions "are not uninteresting but they leave a great deal of work still to be done" (Urry 1990: 7). Much has happened since John Urry wrote this in 1990, and a lot of work has been done, especially in the area of development and tourism.

3.1.1 Authenticity theories

Writings on tourism are dominantly concerned with two things, the reason or the motivation for tourists to travel, along with theorizing the impacts of tourism on places. The two have in many ways affected each other, as understandings of tourism was often set in a context of "us and the others", of modern and pre-modern, of fake and real. This understanding is widely influenced by the linguistic and postmodern turn. The sociologist Dean MacCannel was a pioneer in the developing of tourism theory. MacCannel based his theories on a general scepticism to modernism along with a strong interest in semiotics. MacCannel defined the traveller as a modern person longing for an authenticity she could not find in his own life. Inherent in this view is a sharp criticism of modernism, "the triumph of the west" MacCannel argues "is evident first in the total exhaustion of viable systematic alternatives to Western liberalism" (cf. Mowforth and Munt 2004:17). To escape the superficial and hasty modern world is therefore, according to MacCannel, essential in tourism, at least in travelling to "pre-modern places".

Modernity creates a longing for something pre-modern. This understanding of travelling has been compared with pilgrimage (Urry 1990; Lanfant 1995). In contrast to religious pilgrimage however, the modern pilgrimage is not restricted to a few specific sites, it is aimed towards all societies that some way or other can be considered pre-modern. My case, Manang in Nepal-Himalaya, may prove to be a good example of such an imagined pre-modern place. Through popular media, Himalaya has been laden with a sacred aura. In books like Peissel's (1963) Mustang: A Lost Tibetan Kingdom", Gregson's (2001) *Kingdoms Beyond the Clouds* and in a motion picture like "Seven years in Tibet", a special understanding of this area has been consolidated.

> "The gods live there, and for thousands of years priests, monks and scholars have gone there to die. The Himalayas for centuries past have fascinated all men, while today their lofty peaks keep hidden many a mystery." Michel Peissel (1963: 13)

What we expect to find in these "sacred" sites is something more authentic than what we experience in our daily life. In the western world, more authentic is often the same as closer to nature. Cultures that live close to, and in relation to nature, are therefore considered more authentic than others. These are often marginalized cultures, in frontier settings, such as mountain communities. This understanding is problematic, but first how MacCannel theorizes this phenomenon. The understanding of authenticity is, says MacCannel, created through a semiotic process.

> "I have suggested that tourist attractions are signs. It was my goal, in my formulation of the attraction as a relationship between a sight, marker and tourist, that it conform precisely to the empirical characteristics of actual tourist attractions and, if possible, to the theoretical definition of the sign established by Peirce. The esthetics of the eventual symmetry I found between the two, between the theory and the application to tourism, was a source of great personal pleasure."
>
> Dean MacCannel (1976: 109– 110)

Semiotics is the study of signs, how signs communicate meaning, how the subject is related to the sign (signifier) and how the subject and the sign relate to the object (signified). MacCannel argues, in his version of semiotics, that in the example of tourism and authenticity, the signified is the tourist place, and the signifier is the description or preconceived understanding of the place.
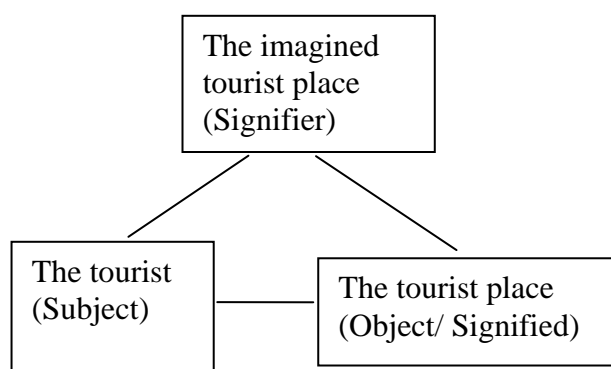

Figure 6: Semiotics used on the tourist place[12]

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[12] This figure rests upon my own reading of MacCannel, along with Aase's adaptation of semiotics (Aase forthcoming)

To travel becomes a way of connecting the preconceived understanding of the place with the actual place. In this context, authenticity becomes a sign and tourism a quest for this sign. The local tourist place may or may not wish to present its "real life". In any case, local communities feel the need to adapt either to adapt or to fulfil this imagined authenticity, or to put up some sort of shield between themselves and the tourists. MacCannel introduces the notion "staged authenticity" as a theoretical explanation and description of this phenomenon. A staged authenticity is a show, or a representation put up to portray a version of reality that is more consistent with the expectations of the tourists, more in accordance with the signifier. This rests on Erving Goffmans theory of front and backstage. MacCannel proposes a six-staged theory of staged authenticities, from the front scene, available for all visitors, to an authentic place hidden for almost all (Shepherd 2003: 134). However, the expectations of authenticity that the tourists hold, may conflict with reality, and therefore the tourist places may create a staged authenticity that tries to be more "authentic" than reality. I will discuss how this might take place in Manang in chapter six. Tourism becomes a mediating space between the modern and the traditional, a space where tourists are fed staged representations in the form of postcards, festivals and souvenirs. "Western tourists now meet non-western hosts in a postmodern emptiness – an empty meeting ground", MacCannel argues in a later article (cf. Shepherd 2003: 136).

I find this understanding helpful, but the search for an authentic place contributes to create a special understanding of the Third World. The Western travellers may reject ethnocentric opinions of the Western society as better, but at the same time positioning pre-modern places in the Third World societies as more authentic than the urban societies in the Western societies. The Third World societies are looked upon as "being closer to nature and hence to a presumed natural goodness" (Shepherd 2003: 138). The Third World represents a Paradise Lost. To preserve the paradise the traveller has to live and adapt to the local traditions, to be as non-invasive as possible. If not, the influences of travelling may end up in ruining a local culture. However, the culture the travellers do not want to destroy is not necessarily the real, authentic culture. The travellers are just concerned about preserving the culture as it is represented. In this sense the culture itself, the culture as signified, may conflict with the representations the traveller has of the culture as it "really is", as signifier. This implies some sort of objectification of culture, where culture becomes the place and not a constructed meaning. I oppose this reduction of culture to object, but still find "staged authenticity" a possible helpful way of understanding some of the processes that take place in Manang.

This understanding of tourism further creates a difference between the two notions "traveller" and "tourist". The traveller overcomes all borders of culture, ethnicity, race and gender and manages to experience the authentic authenticity. The tourist, on the other hand, is only intrusive and exploiting the local culture. Interestingly the tourist is always terming him/herself a traveller; it is the other holidaymakers who are the "tourists" (Urry 1990). This distinction between "traveller" and "tourist" is central in much of the writings on tourism; the "traveller" has many names, such as eco-tourist, backpacker and social-tourist. This reduction to only two types of tourism, the good and the evil, is problematic. Therefore, I will not distinguish between the traveller and the tourist unless it is explicitly noted. Of course, I do not question that some tourists are capable of achieving a greater knowledge and deeper understanding of local cultures than others. If not so, it would undermine the concept of fieldwork. In my understanding, the fieldworker is also some sort of tourist, at least until the fieldworker has attained statuses that imply other expectations. Just like the fieldworker, the tourists may also achieve other statuses; hence, I will not separate between the tourist and the traveller in my analysis. The difference between eco-tourism (e.g. traveller) and mass-tourism is becoming increasingly blurred. Many tourists may be quite content with the staged realities they experience when travelling. It is also possible to argue for mass-tourism in a culture preservation context. Mass-tourism is tourism to already "tourism prepared" places. Infrastructure is in place for huge numbers of tourists, in contrast to "authentic" places accessed through backpacking and other forms of independent travelling[13]. The pressure on already weak infrastructure in "authentic" places may succumb to the great number of tourists in a greater extent than in "staged" places prepared for a large number of tourists.

MacCannel proposes that the staged authenticity creates some sort of shield between the real culture and the effects of mass-tourism. According to this argumentation tourism ruins authentic culture, since the very process of constructing tourist places destroys the culture of which it is dependent. The logic in this paradox is dependent on a certain understanding of culture, where culture and place are closely knitted together. This connection is important in my further discussion of tourism theories. If culture, or at least "authentic culture" is the result of a long process of interactions between humans and the place upon where they live, what happens when

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[13] Independent travelling is tourism that occurs outside the many tourism agencies. Independent travellers are travellers that book their own tickets and customize their trip. However, these travellers are often dependent on guidebooks, and of that reason not "independent", but that is another discussion.

this connection is disrupted, for example from the increased time-space compression that we call globalization? Is the culture then no longer authentic?

3.1.2 Globalization theories, tourism and authenticity

Tourism is a major global force, and according to Mowforth and Munt (2004) it is the biggest industry in the world. Receipts from international tourism rose from USD 2.1 billion in 1950 to USD 445 billion in 1998 (Milne and Ateljevic 2001: 371). Western tourists generate most of the expenditures in international tourism, creating a surplus in the "tourism budget" for Third World countries. In 1997, this surplus was estimated to USD 62.2 billion, more than two thirds of the Third World's current budget deficit. It is therefore not surprising that tourism is central in writings on globalization and vice versa. Which other phenomena depicts the closer economic and cultural ties through out the world better than tourism? I find David Harvey's (1990: 147) concept of "time-space compression" a helpful description of globalization processes. The greater flexibility in markets, products and patterns of consumption increases the degree of globalization; this greater cultural and economic change increases interaction between cultures, and therefore generates new ways of understanding. In the previous paragraph, I discussed one of the most significant features of authenticity theories: what decides the level of authenticity is the level of connection between the culture and the local place. Local embedded cultures equals real, extra-local embedded (disembedded) equals fake. This strong connection between place and culture is also central in the concept of deterritorialization.

Deleuze and Gauttari introduced the concept of deterritorialization in their book Anti-Oedipus, in 1972 (2002). These two philosophers foresaw a future when there was a perpetual displacement of the subject, when the subject transcended both physical and social boundaries, living in a "nomadic space". Later the concept came to attain a less abstract significance, developing in several directions. One dominant use of deterritorialization took shape in the political science tradition, in this tradition it dominantly described processes on a national level. For example how the Soviet Union erased national symbols in nations the country occupied. However, in tourism theory and in more general theories of globalization, it has gained another and slightly broader meaning. Jon Aart Scholte defines deterritorialization as the distinctive spatiality of globalization:

> "'[G]lobal relations are social connections in which territorial location, territorial distance and territorial borders do not have a determining influence. In global space

'place' is not territorially fixed, territorial distance is covered in effectively no time, and territorial frontiers present no particular impediment"

Jon Art Scholte (cf. Amin 2002: 386).

García Canclini further argues that deterritorialization in a broad sense is "the loss of 'natural' relation of culture to geographical and social territories" (cf. Tomlinson 1999: 107). The fact that culture is dislodged from its place of origin may change the very way cultures constitute meaning, especially since culture, as Western writers defines it, is in such a way embedded in place. On the other hand, cultures have always migrated; the big difference now is the scope and speed of the flows of people and opinions. This use of the concept "deterritorialization" resembles Giddens "disembedding" (Tomlinson 1999), and it is possible to say that deterritorialization is just another fancy word describing processes that have always been in focus in social sciences. Just the same, the concept is now widely used and the understanding that lies in the definitions described in this paragraph might prove helpful. Whether it is a good concept is another discussion. I still find sufficient ground in academic articles and books for employing the concept the way I do (see for example Amin 2002; Tomlinson 1999; Andolina et. al. 2005; Hazbun 2004; Shepherd 2003; Low and Lawrence-Zúñiga 2003). This thesis will focus on the definitions in Tomlinson (1999).

In this sense, deterritorialization must be understood in the terms of time-space compression, theorized by David Harvey. Deterritorialization has been termed as one of the dominant consequences of the process of globalization (Amin 2002; Hazbun 2004). Deterritorialization implies that as it becomes easier and cheaper to travel and national barriers are perforated, a detachment of the production system and consumer markets from the specific territories occurs. Tourism is in the cutting edge of this development. Tourism generates big trans-national flows of people, 694 million international arrivals in 2003 (World Tourism Organization), all of whom travel in globally coordinated travel systems.

> "The spread of tourism in the world economy leads to the internationalization of cultures and extroversion of societies. Along this path the most firmly anchored identities are weakened, torn from their moorings and broken up. Heritage, tradition and memory are misplaced. The line between the inside and the outside becomes blurred. The identification traits by which individuals recognize themselves as being part of the same community are manipulated and lose their legitimacy."
> Marie-Françoise Lanfant (1995: 8)

Deterritorialization as a concept has an inherent assumption that there existed a connection between place and culture before the processes of globalization. This may be in certain ways questionable; this localism assumes that traditional cultures are bounded in space. They are rooted and "pure". However, do such cultures really exist? Arjun Appadurai argues that "natives, people confined to and by the places to which they belong, groups unsullied by contact with a larger world have probably never existed" (cf. Tomlinson 1999: 129). Cultures are, and have always been in contact with other cultures; cultures are ever changing, not static and tied to one particular locality. To conclude that traditional cultures were defined by its place of origin, to even believe that a culture has a place of origin is problematic. Nonetheless, time-space compression has undisputedly led to a faster and more comprehensive contact between different places during the last thirty years than before. In addition, to talk of a strong connection between place and culture does not mean to rule out that these places experience exogenous influence. The point of deterritorialization is, as I see it, that globalization, and thereby tourism, has led to some kind of interconnectedness that exceeds the contact that took place twenty years ago. Still, some writers also argue that there is a qualitative difference between the present day globalization, and that we have experienced before. We now live in a global system, as the tourism business might be an example of, "there is no more outside" (Hardt and Negri 2000: 186). Deterritorialization processes is not limited to Western societies. Even though the concepts of deterritorialization might seem trivial, compared to different forms of inhumane poverty, the Third World is still not predominantly isolated. Even in Manang the farmers take part in a globalized network.

Although I believe in deterritorialization as a concept, many writers have exaggerated its consequences. Many writers see deterritorialization as something that necessarily leads to, or threaten to lead to a homogenization of world culture. Goran Therborn sees a "flattening of social processes", mirroring Fukuyama and his "end of history"; there is a spreading of social practices: the world is becoming homogenized. The world is Therborn claims, "an arena where nationally determined actors meet, interact, and influence each other" (cf. Amin 2002: 385). This homogenization has especially been seen in relation to the spread of neo-liberal capitalism and Americanization of culture. Tourism researchers, especially using the term deterritorialization, often argue for tourism as an agent for this homogenization of world culture (Price 1997). But is this really the case? In geography a lot of the thinking is based on geographical distance as friction, when this friction disappears, at least for some parts of the world population,

geographical distance becomes relative. However, geographical distance does not cease to exist. If there were a total space compression, transportation would no longer be needed. The absolute distance is of course the same. At the same time most of our activity takes place in a place, not between places.

> "For all people though, whether geographically stable or mobile, most social relations take place locally, in a place, but a place which is open to ideas and messages, to visitors and migrants, to tastes, to foods, goods and experiences to a previously unprecedented extent."
> Linda McDowell (1996: 38)

The homogenization described is more a scaring vision of the future, than a real felt phenomenon. Geography still matters. The differences between the inside and the outside, between the rich and the poor are not diminishing; on the contrary, the differences are growing. However, in certain places, we can see phenomena that are bordering homogenization, and oddly, this processes can be understood on the background of a theoretical concept that argues for the opposite. In a world of differences, some have argued for a third space, where differences are tolerated, even celebrated and encouraged. This third space is inspired by Edward Soja, who feels the need to expand our definitions of space, to go further than the first space, the real material world and the second space, the space of interpretation and representations (Peet 1998). The examples we have of third space today are unfortunately places that in the process of making everyone feel at home loose their distinctive character and become non-places, such as in airports and hotel chains. Interestingly much of what writers now define as non-places, are places in relation to travel and tourism. Augé (Tomlinson 1999) introduced non-places as concept. In these non-places, we perhaps see what the ongoing process of globalization might turn the world into, if the dystopian globalization theorists are right. Among tourist places, we have seen examples of this, where the shopping and party districts of a tourist city looks just like any other, these places are, however, always sprinkled with generic cultural artefacts, such as sombreros in Mexico, Inca garments in Peru and the prayer wheel in Kathmandu. Augé argues that non-places are defined by its reference to "real" places. However, these references are often based on national stereotypes rather than of the local place specifically. Williams and Papamichael (1995) have a specific case of this, they found that local culture was sacrificed, or at least put aside, for Greek stereotypes when the little town of Paláiá Epidhavros became a part of a national plan to improve tourism in the country. The village wanted to present the village life of a small Mediterranean

village, the Greek government on the other side, wanted to present the ancient Greek traditions. In Manang, it is possible to buy "Tibetan" artefacts made in Thailand, these artefacts are more in accordance with the imagined tourist place (signifier) mentioned earlier. In addition, this reflects the authenticity debate, and will be discussed further in the case of Manang as well.

In the 1980s, more place-specific tourism evolved globally, questioning the hypotheses of deterritorialization because of global tourism. It is a critical theoretical question to ask if such place oriented tourism can create *reterritorialization* instead of deterritorialization. The increased mobility of goods may have the paradoxical consequence that the relevance of location may increase! John Rennier Short observes that "the connection between location and globalisation is not simply the creation of space; it is the formation of new forms of a space-place nexus" (cf. Hazbun 312). In a "borderless" world the place, again, become central. Although these places might be "mediated places", meaning that the place is constructed, tourism may still increase, and not erase, the meaning of place. "Reterritorialization can involve the effort to create new localized residential communities […] that rest not on a national imaginary but only on an imaginary of local autonomy or of resource sovereignty" (Appadurai 2003). The problems and the solution that might lie in the possibilities of reterritorialization are discussed further in chapter six. Is reterritorialization a possible theoretical solution to a more nuanced understanding of the apparent homogenization that global processes are said to initiate? So, globalization might both erase authenticity and create it anew?

As already noted, much of the writings on impacts of tourism focus on how "authentic" culture is changed by dominating (western) culture. This has often been termed *acculturation*. In this thesis "acculturation" denotes the process of change that happens when a minority culture is exposed to a majority culture. Originally, the concept was used to explain how migrant cultures tended to assimilate into the host culture, after a specific amount of time. However, in writings on tourism it has been used to include any situation where a minority culture experience pressure from a majority culture, also on global level. In this sense, the notion describes the exchange of cultural features when different cultures meet. Even though this exchange of features might go both ways, it has been dominantly used in description of how extra-local influence destroys local cultures (Zurick 1992; Gill 1987). Psychologist Floyd Rudmin (2003) has this definition: "Acculturation refers to the processes by which individuals, families, communities, and societies react to inter-cultural contact". The concepts inherent in acculturation have dominated the writings on cultural impacts of tourism. More often than not, acculturation has meant a

westernization or modernization of naïve local cultures, in some cases terming the local culture as defenceless (Fisher and Learner 2004: 5). Acculturation processes have been described for a long time. Plato described the meeting of culture as an "intercourse" "apt to create a confusion of manners; strangers are always offering novelties to strangers" (cf. Fisher and Learner 2005: 4). Likewise, the American anthropologist McGee argued in the nineteenth century that acculturation is "the processes of exchange and mutual improvement by which societies advance from savagery, to barbarism, to enlightment" (cf. Rudmin 2003: 3). The problems of development versus preservation are central here. The destruction of local culture may be understood as both a path to development and as a path to insecurity and exploitation depending on the point of departure. Even though the modernization debate is not central in this thesis (see Gill 1987, for example, for insightful comments on this debate), it is important to be aware of it.

There was a change in the views of culture in the dominant development discourses in the 1960s and 70s. Culture became good and cultural change became in most cases evil, at least in academic disciplines such as anthropology, development economy and human geography (Peet 1998; Zurick 1992). Different understandings of culture also changed the use of theories of acculturation. Theorists in the 1970s (and later) typically operated with a limit to what a culture could "absorb before social inequity and cultural *decay* occurred" (Zurick 1992: 618, my emphasis); "culture" is something that should be "unspoiled" and to change a culture equals destroying it. The devaluating of culture is often described because of commodification (also termed commoditization). This may especially be the case, these writers claim, when remote places are turned into tourist places. Greenwood (cf. ibid.:618) stresses that when culture is a part of a tourism package, it is turned into a commodity, a "paid performance", and therefore it can no longer be credible or authentic, like it was before. However, this makes culture something that is destroyed at once it has experienced "the tourist gaze" (Urry 1990). "Commoditization of culture in effect robs people of the very meanings by which they organize their lives", Greenwood concludes. In this sense, "authentic" culture is in danger because of globalization processes, and more concretely, because of tourism.

These thoughts, which are so central in much of the writings on impacts of tourism on remote or pre-modern locations, in many ways mirror what I discussed when talking about deterritorialization and the effects it had on homogenization of world culture. As more and more writers became aware that tourism had an affect on local cultures, and as more and more tourists became aware of it as well, the industry soon developed what was to be the solution to this

problem. Through eco-tourism, or social tourism, the respect and preservation of culture and nature should be in focus.

Eco-tourism, or ecological tourism is "environmentally responsible travel and visitation to relatively undisturbed areas, in order to enjoy and appreciate nature (and any accompanying cultural features, both past and present) that promotes conservation, has low visitor impact, and provides for beneficially active socio-economic involvement of local populations" (Ceballos-Lascuráin, Héctor 1996: 20). Poon (cf. Mowforth and Munt, 2004: 55) claims that eco-tourism, or what she calls "social tourism", is something other than mass tourism: "What they [*the tourists*] wish for is contact with rootedness, true diversity, and an extension of understanding, rather than more escapism, with which their own culture amply supplies them". Poon argues that local entrepreneurism is changing the role of dependency traditionally portrayed in field studies on tourism and development, increasing the local's role in tourism. She argues further that this "new" tourism is growing in importance and that it will replace mass tourism (ibid.: 56).

This seems a little bit too optimistic, the big numbers of tourists that are travelling through the forms we today calls mass tourism cannot all experience the "real rural life", or real culture, this will lay great pressure on poorly developed infrastructure. Mass tourism has been criticized for destroying and exploiting local people, however, it is an efficient way to move large numbers of people. Eco-tourists are often "newspeak" for backpackers. The backpackers, like the eco-tourists, are said to be genuinely interested in the culture and people, but at the same time, they have been criticized for leaving too little money and causing cultural and socio economic drainage. Thomas (cf. ibid.:58) argues that the travelling to the exotic and primitive is "superficially sympathetic or progressive but in many ways resonant of traditional evocations of others". Even though the eco-tourists may be superficially sympathetic, it still opens up a possibility for locally based tourism, tourism that again has a certain place and a certain culture in focus. This new focus might open up for reterritorialization, a new connection of place and local culture. This is, as already mentioned, the focus for chapter six.

3.1.3 Critics of acculturation and deterritorialization: Tourism and power

Acculturation theories predominantly portray a situation where local cultures disappear or adapt in such a way that it looses its meaning, creating social stress and cultural uncertainty (Smith 2003; Zurick 1992). Positive impacts of tourism are often limited to economic development. Measuring socio-cultural impacts of tourism is however difficult, making such conclusions

troublesome. Which changes are caused by tourism, and which are due to other processes in the society? Smith (2003: 55) has suggested some points of departure that make it possible to map the impacts of tourism:

- Ratio of tourists to locals
- Nature of interactions between hosts and guests
- Local perception of tourism
- Concentration of tourism in certain localities
- Degree of usage of local products and facilities
- Extent and nature of local employment
- Degree of commercialisation of local culture
- Changes in family relationship and the role of women
- Increased social problems (e.g. drug use, alcohol abuse, gambling, prostitution)
- Rises in crime

I find these points helpful, but somewhat obvious. I also find some of the points to be only loosely connected to tourism, such as rises in crime, and changes in family relationship. Still it might prove fruitful to use as a background when discussing more general cultural change. It might also be helpful in the analysis of the farming system.

Acculturation takes for granted a skewed power balance between the First and Third World, between centre and periphery. And truly, to travel far and to experience foreign cultures is a privilege that only the richest of the richest can exercise – in this context including myself. The tourists and the tourism industry are the ones who define what "culture" is. Thus, it is essential to understand some of these underlying power structures in a situation where wealthy representatives of the "dominating" cultures bring along changes in a remote village in Nepal. A number of highly critical studies began to look into the impacts of tourism, for example Zurick (1992), Meethan (2001) and Ashley (1997). Discourse theory has lately played an increasing role in writings on tourism (Cheong and Miller 2000; Hollinshead 1999; Mowforth and Munt 2004). "Discourse express how 'facts' can be conveyed in different ways and how the language used to convey these facts can interfere with our ability to decide what is true and what is false" (Mowforth and Munt 2004: 46). Discourse theories are based on the French philosopher Michel Foucault, and I find some of his thoughts helpful. Earlier, I wrote that understandings of tourism and its effects on local cultures are based on the dichotomies of pre-modern and modern. Foucauldian understanding of power gives us an analytical tool to understand how the Western

worldviews, or regimes-of-truth, may conflict with the pre-industrial way of living found in some of the tourist areas in the Third World. It can also be useful in understanding our understanding of the "pre-industrial" way of living we believe are found in traditional societies. Yet, a discourse analysis, to do it justice, demands extensive mapping of traditions and an extensive knowledge of written and oral texts. Still, some tourist researchers argue that Foucauldian understandings are vital in tourism theory. This, however, raises methodological problems. In view of the fact that Foucault is focusing on textual analysis, is it possible to use Foucault in social science, where social relations and practices are in focus? In addition "tourism researchers are generally not very experienced in investigating how the local interacts with the global in tourism" (Hollinshead 1999: 17). We, the researchers interested in this very problem, are not capable of digging through and understand this mechanism of power and knowledge. Thus, parts of the power networks will continue to be hidden. In Foucault's groundbreaking analysis of the prison and sexuality in the Western world, he starts to investigate writings from the Medieval Ages and works his way up to this day (Foucault 1998; 1977). This is the only way, in Foucault's view, that understanding of power structures in a specific discourse can be unearthed. Even when Foucault did this, he found himself as merely a weak historian and a novice writer about today.

If Foucault's discourse approach demands this kind of intensive research, is it possible for a researcher to go to a community, stay there for only two months and then expect to excavate some valid findings? There are enough of examples of Western researchers misrepresenting to fit ethnocentric preconceived notions of those cultures.

> "My contention is that without examining Orientalism as a discourse we cannot possibly understand the enormously systematic discipline by which European culture was able to manage – and even produce – the Orient politically, sociologically, ideologically, scientifically, and imaginatively during the post-Enlightment period." Edward Said (cf. Escobar 1995: 6)

However, when conscious of the existence of discourses, awareness and degree of insight may be heightened. I will not implement discourse analysis directly, still, I find Foucault's understanding of power fruitful in an analysis of how a local village respond to the processes of acculturation and deterritorialization.

In most writings on acculturation and deterritorialization, there is a one directional pressure towards local societies. For Foucault, however, power is not just one-directional, and therefore facilitates a way out for the "subjugated": "Where there is power, there is resistance, and yet, or rather consequently, this resistance is never in a position of exteriority in relation to power […] These points of resistance are present everywhere in the power network" (Foucault 1998: 95). Power is at play among all the different subjects in a power play, and is exercised from a myriad of points. I support Yapa's (1996: 722) understanding of Foucauldian power as productive: "[T]here are creative productive points of resistance everywhere in the power network." Resistance should not just be considered as the locals against the nation, or for or against cultural change. There are as many points of resistance as there are points of power. Foucault sees power as something existing in and around subject positions, he does not limit power, like Weber as Engelstad read him, to something one subject has over another (Engelstad 1999). In this way, Foucault's understanding of power contributes to understanding how tourists affect a village in the Himalayas, extending the perspectives in widely used theories of acculturation, and other approaches to tourism, which often are one-dimensional. Many of the different approaches of tourism employ a one-dimensional flow of influence. I do not claim that only Foucault understands that processes and thereby power relations are multi dimensional. Common sense suggests otherwise, and concepts like Gramsci's hegemony and Polanyi's "double movement" are theoretical examples of the opposite (Mittelmann and Chin 2000). Polanyi analysed the development of western capitalism, and found that the developing of capitalism in addition to increase the wealth of the bourgeoisie, also developed structures that limit the power of the capitalists, such as we have seen in the social democracy in Scandinavia. No development is one-dimensional. Still, I find Foucault's understanding of power, along with his analysis of discourses as extra helpful in developing tourism theory in a right direction.

In traditional analysis of tourism in a Third World country tourists and locals will typically be labelled respectively guests and hosts, or exploiter and exploited. The power relationship is often one-dimensional from the First to the Third World. This normally leads to the conclusion where tourism is "at best benign, while more likely to be seriously negative" (Cheong and Miller 2000: 372). This conclusion is evident in the different forms of tourism theory that I have sketched out here, but the situation in Manang is not necessarily that of an oppressed local community, neither that of a powerless and exploited one. I therefore found the need to look for theories that opens up for empowerment (Friedmann 1992), and theories that not necessarily find the power relations between the tourists and the locals to be repressive or one-sided. In chapter six, I will

try to include these questions in my approach to Manang. The question is whether globalization can strengthen control of the local agricultural system through empowerment of local communities, instead of destroying it as acculturation and deterritorialization models imply.

3.2 Farming theory

The impacts of tourism may be explained by globalization theories and seemingly inoperationable concepts like deterritorialization and acculturation. However, in my thesis I want to trace those impacts on farming systems. Therefore, a short introduction to theories that concern the agricultural system is required. Tourism may change agricultural systems, through impacts on culture as well as through the structural changes tourism development may imply for a village. Banskota and Sharma (1998: 114) argue that tourism is changing land use and agricultural practice by the occupying of land to tent camps, changing demand of special crops and through binding of labour. These changes are concrete and may certainly have an effect on the agricultural system. My analysis will return to what this might entail.

3.2.1 Peasant approach

There is a wide scope of different theories of agricultural change, in different traditions. I will shortly discuss some of them here, and argue for why they might prove helpful or not. A great deal of these theories has been termed peasant theories, as they typically involve farming systems that both produce for consumption and market. Anthropologist Eric Wolf indicated that knowledge of peasants is important in "providing social background for the study of world areas in which peasantry still forms the backbone of social order" (Wolf 1966: viii). Peasant studies may be very useful for all branches of social sciences that are involved in different varieties of development problems in rural communities (a fact we can see in all the hyphenate peasant studies; peasant-economics, peasant-development, peasant-history, and so forth). This is especially important in a rural country like Nepal with more than 80 percent of the total population living in rural areas. According to Redfield (cf. Shanin 1990: 52) "[p]easant society and culture has something generic about it... [that is] an arrangement of humanity with some similarities all over the world.

Some of the problems with peasant theory are its focus on markets. In Manang the market component is not of crucial importance, just the opposite, the market is almost absent. I will

argue in the analysis chapter that tourism may play the role as a market and as a source for capital in Manang, in addition the traditional trading is in a wide sense also opening up for access to the international labour and trade market. Still, this market is not necessarily the same market as is described in traditional peasant theories. Furthermore, this access has diminished over the years, both due to the out-migration of the ones taking part in trading and because of the overall decrease in trading among the Nyeshangbas. Many peasant theories expect a steady growth in the importance of market as the community become more and more capitalistic, this may be a good thing (McNamara 1987) or bad (de Janvry 1987). As long as the infrastructure in Manang places such limitations on both market access, and the access for tourism this complete change from subsistence to market orientation seems unlikely. Like market theories, acculturation theories and deterritorialization for that matter, take for granted an increasing quality of different kinds of infrastructure.

3.2.2 Farming system approach

> "Farming systems is a loosely defined, interdisciplinary approach to the study of
> agriculture that has developed, in part, as a reaction to sectoral and disciplinary
> approaches."
> B.L. Turner and S. B. Brush (1987: 3)

Farming system constitutes a system approach; it deals with the whole system of farming, in a "holistic" perspective, but focuses on micro- or mesospatial scale. In other words, it deals with the farm, the village or another small area as the unit for analysis (ibid.). Even though the focus of farming system are on micro level, one of the main aims in this approach is to gain knowledge that would make it possible to do comparative studies as well. Farming system approach has been developed in order to find comparative ways of understanding agricultural production across geographical and cultural differences. Turner and Brush make a list of three different usages of farming system: to provide case studies, to develop enough data so that comparison between these case studies are possible, and to address some of the forces of change acting on the systems (Turner and Brush 1987: 3).

To do comparative research across geographical and cultural differences are highly cumbersome. There are few common classes of criteria, and each farming system has distinct features that make it hard to put into an already determined matrix. Turner and Brush describe some of the common classifications that may be used to overcome this problem. The two suggest a

formulation of three different trajectories that is designed to be applicable to all systems of cultivation, regardless of cultural and economic differences. These are output intensity, technological type, and production type. "Regardless of environmental, cultural, or socioeconomic conditions", Turner and Brush (1987: 6) claim, "changes in farming system typically involve changes in these components."

Output intensity refers to produce per unit area and time. There is a general historical interpretation that there has been an increase in output intensity, and that this increase is essential in achieving development. *Technological type* ranges from paleotechnic to neotechnic, this trajectory describes the different kinds of input in a farming system. Traditionally the primary input has been labour, but in several farming systems labour has been replaced by machines as the main contributor of energy. Different kinds of fertilizing and seeds are also included in this trajectory. The last trajectory, *production type*, refers to market integration. What kind of produce and what is the produce intended for, for direct consumption or for the market?

These three trajectories do not include the social organization of farming systems. Humans have organized themselves in many different ways in different places. Access to land, labour and resources connected to the farming system has been dominant. The different ways of socially organizing farming systems have to be a part of an analysis, at least when possible changes in the social structures are of interest. All farming systems have customs and rules that organize and regulate the use of resources (Turner and Brush 1987: 15). I will shortly describe how Turner and Brush and some other writers understand the importance of social organization and traditions in terms of change, or lack of change in peasant societies.

One of the main features of peasantry has been the pure persistence of the "class". This has been explained in different ways, some in term of dependency, and others in term of their tradition. At a basic level, customs may hamper change. Certain rituals may for example demand the production of special crops. Moreover, religious rites may direct the agricultural year. As already mentioned, to understand farming systems or other types of social organizations, also as *behavioural* systems, tradition and culture have to be included. The role of religion and rites are considered extra important in traditional societies without a written code or law, like Dobrowolski (1958) argues. He used the case of highland Poland as a backdrop for his theories of traditional peasant societies. Dobrowolski states that "tradition" includes the total cultural heritage handed down from one generation to the next. Through oral (songs, narratives,

conversations) traditions are communicated to the next generation. There are two contrasting tendencies, he claims. First, one conservative and stabilizing tendency, where preservation of social structures and tradition are essential, conversely, a tendency characterized of doubt and dissatisfaction (ibid.: 262). Both of the tendencies are reflected in the very essence of human existence: that of regulating and ordering, and that of improvement. According to Dobrowolski, the first is dominant in traditional peasant societies, the so-called *traditionalism* (ibid.). In societies that are more complex this is believed to play a smaller role; however, tradition can never be ruled out as a behavioural directing factor. Some writers suggest that the tendency of traditionalism can in fact be strengthened by the introduction of modern form for communication. Literacy makes more adequate and precise transmission of tradition possible, and thereby may constitute the tradition and make it more solid, this again mirrors deterritorialization, or more precise, reterritorialization. In chapter five and six I will discuss whether this is the case or not in Manang.

Changes in agricultural practices have traditionally been explained on the background of either technology themes, demand themes or political economy themes (Turner and Brush 1987). Due to infrastructure problems, outlined in the context chapter and further elucidated in the analysis, changes due to technological change are not likely in Manang, at least not large-scale technological development such as tractors and other mechanical equipment. Demand themes, on the other hand, may prove valid. Demand themes have typically focused on two kinds of motivation for change, those that focus on subsistence production and those who focus on production for markets. The former type has focused on how peasants are reluctant to intensify production as long as subsistence is fulfilled (such as in the theories of Boserup and Chayanov). Farmers only intensify when it is needed, and consequently de-intensify if the levels of demand decrease or if circumstances of production (climate, prices) improve. These theories detach the farm from the rest of the society, neglecting demands because of cultural or structural change. These early theories were of course later modified, however they were still strictly based on supply and demand. Although helpful to understand economic systems, I hope to find out whether the approach is helpful in understanding how internationalization has affected the local agro-pastoral production as well.

Chapter 4: Methodology

The main research target of the project is the local agriculture system, in other words at micro level. The agricultural system consists mainly of subsistence farming, but the peasants are also integrated in a greater market, dependent on global macro structures. Tourism and other aspects of globalization have altered parts of this structure, thus implying concomitant changes at micro level. A study of changes at micro level, however, should not exclude global macro structures. Stephen Biggs, one of the writers in the political economy tradition, claims that knowledge of the other and bigger structures that affect a society is necessary for a fruitful outcome of a research on micro level (Biggs and Messerschmidt 2003). I second this notion; global macro structures can make direct impacts on a local level. No society is untouched from global, national and regional discourses. The *untouched place* does not exist. The methodological challenge is how to link the different scales.

To try to locate applicable findings in a study like this I have decided to employ qualitative methodologies. The geographers study agenda is "to understand the processes and practices underlying the evidence of change or conflict that we might see around us" (Dwyer and Limb, 2001: 1) Qualitative methodologies explore feelings, understanding and knowledge through interviews, discussion or participant observation (ibid.), all of them activities that I used in my fieldwork in Manang. These methodologies are useful to describe the case that I want to look into. In this chapter, I will shortly go through approaches I employed in my study.

4.1 Case studies

The case study tradition in geography is strong and my project is a case study. However, the understanding of case is not obvious, thus I will use some time to elaborate how I understand "case" and how I find the concept useful. In chapter two, I described my case, which is Manang Village.

There are several usages and meanings of the term "case". Ragin (1992) points at the many dichotomies that are inherent in the term in the introduction to the book "What is a case" (ibid.), but if we want to be concise another writer, Scholz, has this definition: "A case is unique, among

others [...], and always related to something general" (Scholz and Tietje 2002: 1). Further Scholz uses one of Ragins definitions from "What is a case": "Cases are empirical units, theoretical constructs [...], and subject to evaluation, because scientific and practical interests are tied to them" (ibid.: 1). Cases are, in Scholz words, supposed to elucidate something general from something special or unique. I support Ragin, who finds this to be only partly correct. Ragin finds four different approaches, made out by two different dichotomies that lie in the expression "Case". *First*, he says, we define cases either as <u>theoretical units</u> – meaning that the cases we find is constructed by the investigators; they exist so the researcher can find something – or as <u>empirical units,</u> meaning that the cases exists "out there" and that they are investigable. *Second,* we characterize cases either as <u>specific</u>, meaning that findings cannot be deduced to something universal, or <u>general</u>, that the case *can* show us something universal about a specific topic (Ragin, 1992: 8–9). This yields the following table:

Understanding of cases	*Specific*	*General*
As empirical units	1. Cases are found	2. Cases are objects
As theoretical units	3. Cases are made	4. Cases are conventions

Table 2: Different understandings of a case

Source: Ragin 1992: 9

Ragin argues, as mentioned, that there are at least four different ways of understanding cases. My own understanding, and the understanding that correspond best with my fieldwork in Manang, is conception number one. Cases are found, but it is not necessarily easy to find something general from them. The cases can be seen as empirically real and bounded (ibid.: 9). But how is it possible to "bound" a case? Is not a case always infinite complex, with linkages to both global and regional networks? Why is just this village in focus? There is traditionally a strong cultural independency in Manang, and as the project-committee in the NUFU project concludes: "The project considers the local community as constrained in space and time in a […] hierarchical way" (project document, 2000: 4). Although I find this problematic, I find it at the same time pragmatic. The case has to be bounded in some way or the other, and the village was a natural scale of study for me. This does not however, exclude that the village is a social construction; it just implies that the *researcher* does not construct the case.

One of the questions Ragin raises is the possibility of generalizing from a specific case. In natural science, one may deduce from a case to a theory or induce from a theory to case, but when is the

finding in a specific case applicable to other cases? According to postmodern theory, it is not possible to generalize from specific cases (Yapa 1996). However, this is, according to some (Demeritt 1996), too relativistic, even un-scientific. Even though I find it difficult to believe that my case might contribute to an accumulating pool of knowledge that might lead to an ultimate truth, I still feel that there are some universalistic points that can be addressed and discussed in my case. Therefore, even though my case is specific, and not necessarily relevant to other similar situations, the aim of my work is still to increase knowledge and understanding.

4.2 Methods used

This project deals with tourism, and how tourism affects agriculture, accordingly a wide field of complex issues must be studied. To do this I used both qualitative and quantitative methods. In my case, this includes finding the number of tourists, second hand background information on socio economic properties, structured interviews of peasants, informal talks with tourists and so forth. Geography is an interdisciplinary research field, "the science of syntheses" (Peet 1998: 32), thus, it is essential to apply diverse research methods. In a way *synthesis* is the current thesis in geography, emptying the word for the original meaning, but at the same time gaining something new; this time implying that a wide array of methods is necessary to gain geographical knowledge. I do not claim that this is something unique for geography, quite the contrary: the use of different approaches to gain scientific knowledge is common for a great deal of the academic disciplines.

This study makes use of both qualitative methods (participant observation, informal field interviews, field diary), and methods based on statistics (farming system approach, survey). Some will claim that this combination is impossible, since it demands two opposite epistemological views. Still, to employ quantitative approaches, such as arranging a survey, does not exclude a belief in constructivism. The survey and the structured interviews carried out in the field will not be used to back up a general and universal conclusion. It will be a part of the methods needed to increase my understanding of the situation. This study is based on qualitative methodology, quantitative methods will be used to strengthen, or diminish conclusion based on the qualitative methods. Often this has been the other way around; qualitative methodologies have been applied to add depth to quantitative based generalization. This approach, to try to apply diverse methodologies to the same case, has been labelled triangulation (Winchester 2000: 18). However, in my case it will be the qualitative approach that are central, not because I necessarily believe more in qualitative methodologies than in quantitative, but because I find quantitative

methodologies, at least pure statistical analysis, inadequate in such a small community that I am investigating.

4.2.1 Participant observation

Participant observation has been popular in many current academic discourses. This method was considered one of the ways out of the problem of subjectivity, to leave all western ways of seeing things (Escobar 1995; Mohan and Stokke 2000). In our postmodern world, this is considered impossible, even unnecessary. Still, participant observation is a methodology that may help to get a deeper understanding of the society and the practices investigated (see Aase 1997; Hay 2000). Participant observation is more than deep and long interviews, or spending long enough time in a certain place. The researcher has to try actively to be a part of the society. There must be established trust, the researcher must become a *cooperation partner* (samhandlingspartner, Aase 1997: 65). The idea is that becoming a cooperation partner helps the researcher to establish social relations in the society she is studying. A social relation can be defined as a *status set* (status-sett (ibid.: 49). To a certain status, it follows certain duties and expectations. A status set therefore enables the cooperating partners, i.e. the researcher and the villagers in my case, to achieve reliable and foreseeable expectations of each other's behaviour. In this way, the status attained by the researcher is essential for what kind of information the researcher gets. A fieldworker can never, or hardly, become a part of an alien social set. She will always be a stranger. What the researcher can do, on the other hand, is to try to improve her status, for example from visitor to participant farmer. The word participant implies that something must be *done*. For my case, it was mainly during harvest I did something, cutting and threshing buckwheat and wheat, and carrying aluu (potato) bags on my head. My own status in field was therefore of great importance to me. I will discuss how my status evolved later in this chapter.

Figure 7: Threshing wheat

From the left in figure 7, a Ghorka land labourer, the son in the family, the author and a Ghorka woman bunting dried wheat.

4.2.2 Interviews

I chose to interview 40 households in Manang, out of approximately one hundred households in total. During the interviews, I also carried out a short survey. There are usually three ways of separating different ways of interviewing: structured, semi-structured, and unstructured interviews (Dunn 2000). Structured interviews have a regular form of question always asked in the same order, while the unstructured interviews have a more loose form, often ending up completely different determined by the informant. Interviews are useful to gain knowledge or insight, not necessarily to find any *truth*. An interview situation is always a formal setting, giving the informant and the researcher an expectation of what is going to happen, even though the interview allows an open response, contrary to the questionnaire, it is likely that this preconceived understanding of a *researcher* that wants certain information will guide the talk in a specific way.

There are certain facts the researcher is looking for when she carries out planned interviews. On the other hand, this is at the same time the very strengths of interviewing over observation. When the researcher is doing interviews, she is in a setting where she can systematically track opinions and practices with different informants. When interviewing, whether it is structured interview or

a dialog, information is acquired in a more effective way, with possible pitfalls of course, than if just doing observation. My interviews were semi structured. I had an interview guide with some question that had to be asked (concerning my survey), and others that tried to increase my understanding of how the villagers felt about the impacts from tourism. Most of the elderly people in Manang are illiterate; I was therefore dependent on oral interviews for my survey. It was, in other words, not possible to do a written survey. This may have increased the possibility for misunderstandings and irregularities in the answers; it is hard to make sure that the interpreter formulates the questions the same every time. Still, the same problems would arise in a written survey. Most interviews were held with all of the family members present, but sometimes only the woman or the man of the household were present, the former more usual than the latter. I did not use a recorder for my interviews; there were several reasons for this. First, I did all my interviews in English with a Nyeshang speaking interpreter. Small nuances that I would not detect the first time would then be lost in translation. Second, I felt that I came closer to my informants when I could sit in the kitchen around the fireplace and drink my *morche* (salt butter tea) without the disturbing element a microphone and a recorder would imply. Every night I took my notes from the interviews and wrote them out more extensively, with diverse comments. If there was something I felt I had missed, or something that I did not fully grasp I could return the next day. In this way, I was able to get a substantial data collection of quotes and opinions without losing the intimacy of a talk around the fireplace.

The work in field is cumbersome; I wanted to use the same translator for the part of my interviews that included my survey, so the risks for irregularities were minimized. Still, my interpreter was not always available, and some of the days were frustrating. Especially for the formal interviewing, I was dependent on interpreters. I wanted to get access to families with no English-speaking youngsters in the family. The dependency on interpreters made the interviews less fluent, and diminished the opportunity for me to intervene in the interviews, in a way making the interview more structured than they would have been if I were fluent in the local language.

According to Jakobson (cf. Briggs 1986), interpreting is only one of many different problems concerning interviews. When doing interviews there is a whole set of factors influencing which way the respondent interprets the "message form". The "message form" is the concrete signals, both auditory and visual, which serve as sign between the interviewer and the respondent. The message form's ability to get through to the respondent is according to Jakobson dependent on social roles, referent, interactional goals, channel (how is the interview mediated) and code. All of

these factors, along with the social situation, were important in my interviewing. I will discuss some of these factors when I describe my changing social statuses in paragraph 4.4. However, I feel the need to elaborate on the role of referent. Referent roughly corresponds to the notion of signifier I used in my theory chapter. Moreover, the referent is that "something else" that is represented by the sign (Briggs 1986: 40). Words, and other types of signs like gestures, are understood differently in different cultures, of that reason I cannot be sure that what I wanted to say was understood the right way. In my survey of livestock, for example, some considered yak the name of the breed, which I first thought, and sometimes yak meant just the male yak, the female yak is called nak. To make sure that the informant and I had the same category, I had to ask for how many yaks *and* naks the household kept (in my analysis the reader will only find the notion "yak", then denoting both sexes of the animal, this is most convenient for readers not familiar with the animal). There were probably more examples like this, and I cannot exclude the possibility that some of my conclusions partly rest on misunderstandings due to inadequate interpretation.

In addition to these interviews explained here, I interviewed tourists. This was done mainly in the evenings, at the hotels. These interviews were done to try to track opinions and feelings towards the implications of tourism in Manang.

4.2.3 Survey

When doing a survey many of the same methodological problems as with interviews have to be taken into consideration. In both cases, the researcher has to deal with the problem of representation. The main point of my survey was to gain a better insight into how tourism affected agricultural practices and general socio-economic life. Manang Village is a small village, and it would have been possible to do a survey with close to 100 percent attendance, but this was not considered fruitful, both due the relative short duration of the fieldwork and because of the increasing time limits the villagers experienced because of the upcoming harvest. At the start of my fieldwork, both interpreters and informants were available. When the harvest started the situation was reversed. Suddenly my interpreters had to stay in the field all day; I therefore changed focus to participant observation, a shift in focus that was already planned. Of course, a 40 percent sample is a high number, but data obtained trough a survey in a small society like this should be handled with care, since just one extreme finding could change the conclusion, if the conclusion was based on numbers alone. Some households earn hundreds times more than the average in the village; however, the households with so big income are so few in numbers that it

would have been wrong to include these numbers in an argument based only on quantitative data. Still, if a full attendance to the survey was possible, the extreme findings could be included.

4.3 Interpreting qualitative and quantitative findings

This research is based primarily on qualitative data, the hypotheses are bases on qualitative data, and my analysis will be based on qualitative data. However, this qualitative analysis will be supported by the quantitative work I carried out during my fieldwork. The interpretation of quantitative data is based on analysing data in tables and charts. This data set undermines or strengthens the arguments that are based on qualitative data. The quantitative data will therefore be secondary, not in importance, but as a base for analysis. I have collected a certain number of interviews and observations. These observations are then interpreted and written out in text, so the reader and I understand more. In my fieldwork, I was present with my red beard, tall figure and poor behaviour; consequently, it is natural that I will be present in the text as well. Not in such a way that the "I" overshadow the very essence in the text, but present when I believe it could be fruitful for the analysis. This is especially important when I believe that my presence may have influenced the situation.

All analysis is based on prejudice. According to Gadamer, prejudice is what makes it possible to gain new knowledge (Kjørup 1996). Without this pre-understanding, it would have been impossible to move on. Still the prejudice is full of challenges. What is fruitful prejudice? What is helping and what is counterproductive? The researcher has to be conscious of her own knowledge, and aware of how she is gaining this knowledge. She must be aware that any kind of qualitative (and quantitative) enquiry is about adopting a particular kind of position in relation to the study "objects". Calling the objects of research for *object* is also problematic. The term *object* refers to the thing or person being studied (Yapa 1996: 711). Just to call the researched object for *object* indicates that the description is unbiased according to race, ethnicity, religion, class and so forth. Postmodernist thought challenge that it is possible to reduce the person or thing studied to an object. *Objects* are constituted by discourse (ibid.: 712), hence it is important to understand the *object* in relation to its discourse, and thereby making it a subject. A subject is also constituted by discourse (and vice versa), but a subject can take a more active role in accordance to its discourse. The subject – object discussion is long, and the traditions are numerous. Nevertheless, for me the main point is that the researcher is aware of the relation she has to the object of research. In some ways, it is impossible not to objectify, as Mead argued when he concluded that everything

that we think of becomes an object, even ourselves (Craib 1992: 88–89). In any case, the researcher's active role in relation to the discourses she is a part of is important. It is not possible to be aware of all discourses that are shaping the world. Just think of all the discourses that decide how I am supposed to write my methodology chapter in my Master's thesis. Moreover, most of the discourses are hidden. Many of the discourses that are shaping Manang Village, for example, will remain hidden no matter how long I stay in Manang. These are discourses and thereby power plays I hardly could expect to understand fully. This would simply be impossible. Even if it is difficult, bordering the impossible, to understand and excavate social relations or discourses, it is still important to be aware of their existence: for example in relation to old power structures (according to race and geopolitical power).

Tracking social change is challenging, culture are "invisible" and constituted in systems of meaning that are unknown to the researcher (Wadel cf. Fossåskaret 1997). To improve one's status in the field is one way of methodologically handle this challenge. However, analytically it is important to have an understanding of what constitutes practice. Aase (1998) have tried to solve this problem. Relying on Bourdieu, Aase finds the specific in the relationship between objective reality, *social organization* (practice) and *social representation* (meaning) (cf. ibid.). Aase introduces a third level, *social structure*, to help methodologically overcome the challenge of investigating social change (ibid.: 84). Social organization is the observable behaviour level, what people actually do. This behaviour is grounded in rules and norms, what Aase calls social structure. These structures are contested, but continuity is created through a common understanding of theses rules and norms, what we can call culture. This yields the three analytical levels already mentioned: social organization, social structure and culture, three levels that help understand changes in local communities. A change in social behaviour is a dialectical relationship between practice, structure, and meaning. Used on small scale Aase calls this *local dialectics*. What I find most important and fruitful with this approach, is its stress on process and its focus on the local differences. Every phenomenon that takes place in a place has a certain specific local outcome. In this way will every social formation be historically and geographically specific. Moreover, every practice has a certain meaning (thesis) in a certain time and space that will have a synthesis in another time and space. *Local dialectics* show quite elegantly how change in practice might be understood. In my fieldwork, I used this approach as a background for my understanding of social change in Manang, and in chapter six the reader will find traces of this way of understanding social practice.

Culture in this context is constructed and subjective for every person, but still this sum of subjectivity creates some sort of identity. The researcher who works to understand a culture like this constructs his own version of what the villager constructs. This makes the idea of the objective researcher impossible. Furthermore, some academics claim that there is no analytical divergence between the observer and the observed (ibid.: 66; Yapa 1996). The researcher is always constructing his own research findings, thus it is more fruitful to be aware of this and consequently get the best possible outcome. In light of this fact Aase, relying on Tyler, suggests that instead of participant observation it can be called participant construction (Aase 1997: 67). Knowledge about a society is constructed, but not just through passive observation or interviews, but also through participating in every day life and in communicating actively with the subjects under study.

Some human geographers have dismissed this kind of constructivism as "naive relativism" (Demeritt 1996: 485), claiming that it is unscientific, since it at the same time tends to dismiss and dispute the traditional stories about scientific knowledge as an objective reflection. This is not the place to go into the debate about constructivism versus objectivism; however, I feel the need to stress my own point of view. As already indicated, I consider my self as being a constructivist, or at least that I share some of the epistemological views of constructivism.

The construction of my knowledge was heavily affected by the different kind of statuses I attained in Manang. I will therefore in the following shortly describe how I experienced my fieldwork and how my status changed during it.

4.4 Experiences in the field

I came to Manang Airport in Humde, confused and disorientated. My supervisor had given me lots of advice on what to do first, but it was all very far away in time, and space, right there and then. I knew that my research topic was tourism, I knew I was supposed to go to a place called Manang and I knew I was supposed to spend 45 days there. Lonely and slightly affected by the thin air (Manang lays at an altitude of 3500 meter above sea level) I turned to the right and walked while my overloaded backpack was cutting off an already insufficient flow of blood to my head. The two-hour walk from Humde to Manang was a strange and silent cultural chock. Along the dust road, my only company was porters with loads taller and probably heavier than they were. Above me big eagles, which I later learned were vultures, circled and the great Annapurna

massif towered to my left. I came to Manang; at least that what was the signpost said, stumbled in to what was to be my home the next six weeks and did not know what to do. The village seemed abandoned and there was no sign of the tourists I was to analyze the effects of. This was before the village was to be swarmed by Western tourist.

The next days I started to navigate in this society. Because my project is a part of a larger one, and there had been people doing fieldwork in Manang before, the locals were used to academics asking strange questions. An American geographer had recently spent almost a year here, and a friend from the Department of Geography back home had spent some time here that spring, I came early September. In addition to the researchers that had been in Manang, there is of course also a great presence of tourists, almost all year round. The great presence of tourists, however, easily put me in the same category as them, affecting what kind of status it was possible to achieve, at least in the start. To improve his-/her status, a researcher has to communicate in some way or the other. As my Nepali was very limited, I was dependent on interpreters. Manang has always had intensive contact with other places, both during their trading days, and because of the later year's tourism. A great deal of the locals spoke therefore some English, especially the youngsters, several of them spending years in English speaking boarding schools in Kathmandu. It was however mostly wealthy people that spoke English, raising new methodological problems.

To do research in a society, where the language as well as the culture is new, is problematic. Language is one of the main signifiers of meaning, therefore it is important to know and use the language in research; through metaphors and stories further insight is possible. To be dependent on interpreters in a research situation is therefore not ideal, but just the same, this hindrance must not prevent researchers from doing research in foreign communities. In that case, the best possible approach may be to learn their language, but is it possible to become an insider, and is it desirable? I tried to learn a little Nepali and even some Nyeshang, the local language, while staying in Manang. My efforts were only slightly rewarded, the locals appreciated my clumsy Nepali, but it was appreciated merely as an effort of showing interest. I was not able to have a conversation. Then again, just to say hello and "the tea is good" open up doors and creates a good atmosphere.

There is no lack of interpreters in Manang. However, they are a part of an unknown social set; they have statuses a researcher could not possibly fully understand, especially if the fieldwork is of limited duration. For the first two weeks in my fieldwork, my interpreter took me to what I

assumed as relatively rich people: they had many Yaks, and most of the families owned guesthouses. I had to ask my interpreter, kindly, to take me to all kinds of families. He reluctantly did so in the start. During my fieldwork, I found that some of the families argued that the Manang society was egalitarian. There were, the families claimed, no, or small differences between the families. The locals wanted to preserve this image for outsiders. My interpreter, who first also claimed this, tried to illustrate this by taking me to the same type of families. However, I soon discovered other social structures. When he understood that my understanding of the village grew, he changed and took me to the less fortunate families.

This interpreter also became more important as a key informant. He understood that I understood, and wanted to discuss and talk about Manang with me. Some weeks later, a Slovakian girl came and joined us for a birthday party we threw for one of the local girls. The Slovakian girl started to ask him (my interpreter) quite blunt questions about Manang; he answered shortly and looked at me while he shook his head over this ignorance. I felt acknowledged as an insider. I had been admitted to a short visit "back stage" to use Goffman's terminology (Aase 1997). After this incident, I felt more accepted, not just as a friend and visitor, but as a member of the society. I am not alleging that I was totally accepted, and became a "native", far from it, but I claim that I achieved a certain level of acceptance. My status had then changed from a normal tourist, to a "yet another researcher" and finally to a researcher *and* participant friend. This is also reflected in the names the villagers gave me. At first, they clumsily tried to pronounce my Norwegian name. My name is easily forgettable for Nepalese and some started after a while to call me *Lombo*, a kindly meant, I hope, reference to my tall stature (*Lombo* is Nepali for tall). One of the mothers in the village was not satisfied with my name, and renamed me *Ash Bahadur*, most because of a slight resemblance to my Norwegian name, but also, they claimed, because of my small attempts to be a part of the daily life in the village (*Bahadur* is Nepali/Hindi for brave).

The incident of the Slovakian girl happened after the harvest, a happening that I was a part of, not just as an observer, but also as a participant. There is a lack of labour power in Manang, as I will return to in my analysis, in particular during the harvest. Thus, it was easy to be accepted as a part of the workforce, even though I found myself useless, taking breaks and doing it wrongly. I spent the days of harvesting picking, cutting, threshing and carrying. This shift in social status, described in an earlier paragraph, affected my research. Something that could be exemplified by an incident mentioned elsewhere in the thesis. At the end of my fieldwork I took part in a *pang*

chong (village meeting) that helped me a great deal to understand what kind of significance a festival that was to be held had to the local villagers (see chapter six for the discussion). In the start of my fieldwork I was just a tourist, and a *pang chong* does not concern tourists, and therefore was I not aware of it taking place, I am thinking here of the *pang chong* that was held in advance of the harvest. This, on the other hand, means that there probably are much more practices and rituals that I did not take part in.

4.5 Ethics and power relations

I discussed how I attained new statuses in relation to my informants. These relations are of course also power relations. In chapter three I discussed how power relations not necessarily are one-dimensional, and not only from the First to the Third world. However, there was still a skewed power balance when I came to Manang to do research. The power balance was dominantly against me! England (cf. Dowing 2000) outlines three different relationships typically entered into by social researchers: *reciprocal, asymmetrical* and *potentially exploitative* relationships. Reciprocal are those where the researcher and her informants are in comparable social positions, although there are power relations in every relationship, of course, the difference in internal power, according to England, is minimal in reciprocal relationships. Asymmetrical relationships are in this context only those power relations where the researcher is in a subordinate relationship to the informant. In Manang, I did not have the access to the cultural resources that the locals had. I was fully dependent on the villagers. During my fieldwork, I will therefore argue that I was in an asymmetrical relationship with my informants. Still, when I now write down the story of the villagers and how I understand the situation I want to study I might come in a potentially exploitative relationship. The local community has no or small possibilities to read and argue against what I write here. It is therefore vital that I present the case as truthfully as possible, according to my understandings of course, and that I have in mind that the community I am describing is very much a real one. It is impossible to eliminate the power dimension from your research; the best way to deal with it is to be aware of the potential problem this raises.

One other problem that arises is my position in a Western academic science discourse. My findings and conclusions have to use a certain academic language, which I try to manage the best I can. This language includes certain understandings that affect my analyses of the case. These discourses manifest themselves as I am writing this. One example is the use of the word development, what is really development? In addition, is it a good thing, or a bad thing? I will not

go into the big discussion of Western scientific understanding's domination of the development debate (see Escobar 1995 and Yapa 1997, for interesting points in that matter). I still feel the need to stress the problem. Another related example is my use of the notion "the Third World" The use of the concept is of course problematic, but at the same time, the other alternative "developing world" is even more problematic. Developing world implies that something is in motion, and herein lays the prerequisite that the countries are going to take the same route as the already "developed" world. Hardt and Negri (2000), among others, have criticized this thought, arguing that the Third World cannot take the same road, because the Third World countries have a completely different place in the hierarchy than the First World countries had at the time of their development. Still the hierarchical denotations of the word "Third" are problematic. It is, however, a word that is in use and helpful in this thesis. I send the task over to other people to find other or different categorizations. There exist a third notion for this difference, North and South. This notion is increasingly popular, as it contains no negative or hierarchical connotations. Still, I feel that "Third World" is the best notion available, for now.

Chapter 5: Tourism impact on farming system

"We plant dollars, and harvest buckwheat"

A frustrated guesthouse owner, wanting more tourists

My analysis has two different approaches: first, I will try to analyze the farming system, trying to find changes, or lack of changes. This first chapter will be descriptive, trying to understand the different parts of the farming system. Especially important is the role tourism plays in the framing system. Secondly, in chapter six I will make use of the theoretical insights and understandings introduced in chapter three, trying to apply or discuss if it is possible to apply the theories to this specific case.

Figure 8: Overview of Manang Village and its terraced fields

5.1 Overview

The fields of Manang lay beautifully terraced along the riverbed of the Marshyangdi River. The alluvial soils are quite dry, and the precipitation is too low to secure the most efficient agricultural practices. Although the precipitation is low, it is uncertain how low, most sources estimate the yearly average to be less than 400 mm (Aase and Vetaas 2006). To deal with this low amount of rain the villagers developed an intricate irrigation system, although the irrigation system is of great significance in this farming system (Dannevig 2005; Rogers 2004), it will not be central in my analysis. The fields in the village lie at a very high altitude, with an average of about 3500 m.a.s.l. The high altitude and the cold climate this brings further limits the agricultural production. The climate is harsh and from November through February, there is partial snow cover, making it impossible to have more than one harvest per year.

Stein called the farming system in Manang a "dual morphology of contrasted yet complementary natural environments, which may be summed up in the opposing terms mountain pasture and sown field, grazing and agriculture" (cf. van Spengen 1987: 162). The farming system is based on pastoralism and agriculture; on this background, this farming system can be labelled agro-pastoralist. Moreover, the farming system can be included among the Trans-Himalayan agro-pastoral systems (Mishra et. al. 2003). This implies that it shares some common features with those systems, but it does not mean that it is possible to find a common generalization among the different farming systems in the Himalayas. I will return to the similarities when they appear in the analysis.

In my analysis, I will use a system approach. This approach tries to define and find different units of the farming system and see how they affect each other through different kinds of flows. In this case, the definition of farming system will be "any level of unit(s) engaged in agricultural production as it is wedded in social, political, economic, and environmental context" (Turner and Brush 1987: 13). In the farming system, these different components are typically the household (depending on which kind of farming system), livestock, cultivated fields, pastures and market. These components will also be dominant in my analysis.

5.1.1 Defining the farming system

As described in chapter three, Turner and Brush introduce three different trajectories to find the hierarchical position of the farming system. These three are *output intensity, technological type and production type*. The placing of a system in a hierarchical position is problematic, but at the same time, it may be useful to start to define what kind of system I am discussing. After discussing these three trajectories, I will look into what I define as the most important factors in this farming system.

1. Output intensity

The output intensity of the farming system in Manang was not of my highest priority, other parts of the NUFU project outlined in the second chapter focus on this question. However, the survey held during my fieldwork indicated that the current limiting factor concerning output intensity was climatic constraints and the access to manure. The numbers of animals had decreased somewhat over the last 30 years, some farmers claimed, and therefore it was likely that manure increasingly was becoming a limiting factor. Due to the limited access to market, in terms of geographical, and for some of the villagers in economic-, accessibility, the farmers are dependent on natural fertilizers. A decrease in numbers of animals, along with the sometimes limited access to labour, will therefore decrease the output intensity. On the other hand, the increase in abandoned land suggests that the farmers are focusing their work on a few and probably better fields and in this way maintaining the same output intensity – even heighten it because less favourable fields are abandoned. If this is the case, the output intensity is kept at the same level, but the overall output is reduced. The re-migration Manang has experienced since the arrival of tourism (Rogers 2004; own fieldwork) may increase the pressure on output intensity yet again, because of the probable increase in demand this yields. Although output intensity is not in focus in my analysis, I will still return to it during this descriptive analysis. I will return to the analytical points in this paragraph soon.

While trying to assess output intensity I experienced methodological problems. When I asked informants to estimate how much produce their fields produced, all used the number of *khets* (fields in Nepali) as a measurement. However, I soon discovered that there was no standardized size of these fields. In the areas around the village Humde, which traditionally have been grazing land for Manang, the fields were larger than in Manang. Also in Manang there were great size differences between different fields. When I made my questions more precise, on the other hand, almost all quoted an amount in kilograms. Although the numbers retained should be looked

upon as rough, the average amount of buckwheat or wheat produced per field in Manang was 175 kg at the time of fieldwork. A wheat field produces slightly more than a buckwheat field per area unit.

2. Technological type

Turner and Brush divides farming systems into a continuum from paleotechnic to neotechnic. The paleotechnic is a system based on hoe and labour and the neotechnic is based on machines and artificial fertilizer. The farming system of Manang is of a mixed technological type. There exist no tractors, with the exception of one non-functioning three-wheeler in Humde. The tools are mainly of wood and the harvesting is done either by a small sickle made by the local blacksmith, or just by pulling the plants up by its roots. However, the use of animals for ploughing is extensive. The ploughing is done with a rather primitive one steel-bladed wooden plough. This low technological level of the farming system may seem surprising, considering the close contact with international milieus I elucidated in the context chapter; nevertheless, two factors, money and infrastructure, the latter of greatest importance, can explain the low technological level. Although several families in Manang have a quite substantial source of money, a great deal of the families must be considered poor, also in Nepali scale. The biggest hindrance for an increase in technological level is still infrastructure. As mentioned in chapter two, Manang is a strenuous five-day walk from the nearest road head. This limits the access to modern agricultural equipment, which is both expensive *and* very heavy. In addition, the access to skilled mechanics and spare parts are limited, to say the least. Helicopter transportation is expensive, and mule transportations are not suitable for fragile goods, therefore everything is limited to what is possible to carry on foot. Another problem is the demand for reliable and affordable fuel; increasing fuel prices along with the enhancing of fuel price due to transportation costs further make the possibilities of change in technological level unlikely.

3. Production type

Turner and Brush divide the farming system into a production hierarchy. On the least developed end of the scale, we find subsistence farming and on the opposite side complete market-oriented farming. In between there is the mixed farming system, with both production for self-consumption and for market – the so-called peasant system. Again, the farming system in Manang is hard to classify. The subsistence system is based on self-consumption, just as the situation in Manang. However, the system in Manang is not completely based on subsistence, first because some of the farmers sell parts of their produce to tourists, secondly because of the

dominant feature of a non-local staple (rice) in the village. According to my interviews and observations, the traditional food staples in Manang have changed over the 20 years. Traditionally the main staples have been buckwheat and later potato, staples that still are dominant among the elders and the poorer families of Manang. In addition, barley was a dominant crop, but due to changes in practice, wheat has substituted barley, also as a ritual cereal. I will return to these discussions later.

The biggest change however, is the increasing importance of rice and lentils. Nowadays rice and lentils are the biggest contributors to energy for the villagers in Manang. This increases the need for capital, as rice and lentils have to be carried up by porters or by mule caravans. The fact that the local diet is based primarily on an extra-local component, make it necessary for the farmers to have some kind of income. Even though the farmers in Manang have to earn money in some way or the other, they are more likely to be characterized as subsistence farmers than the "peasant", that are so dominant in most writings from the Third World (Gill 1987; Knox and Marstons 2004). Writings on the peasant system often focus on the market component. The market component in Manang, however, is limited to the demands of the tourists. Traditionally trading opened up foreign markets for the community in Manang, as discussed in chapter two. Via trading ventures in places as far as Singapore, the community in Manang got access to capital that maintained the farming system. However, over the last couple of decades the decreased importance of trade made the Manang community more dependent on their own produce. I will therefore argue that a great deal of the farmers in Manang more correctly could be termed subsistence farmers than peasants. This does not exclude that writings on peasants are useless in analysing Manang. The access to the market provided by the tourists, make the peasant classification still fruitful.

All the three trajectories used here indicate that the level of the farming system in Manang is limited by transportation difficulties. Transportation in Manang is as already mentioned cumbersome. All transportation in Upper-Manang, including Manang Village, is dependent on porters and mule caravans. The tourists share the trails with porters who carry loads up to 80 kg (sic), greatly exceeding their own body weight[14]. This further limits the opportunity of additional development and is therefore an important factor in analysis of Manang. In the conclusion of this thesis, chapter seven, a future development of infrastructure is shortly discussed.

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[14] The picture on the cover shows porters on their way to Manang with different utilities to be used in the tourism industry.

5.1.2 Organization of the farming system

As already noticed, I find it difficult to classify the farmers in Manang. The Nyeshangbas of Manang have travelled and worked way beyond their traditional communities, challenging the traditional categorizations of the peasant as easily definable, harmonious and isolated (McNeish 2005). The Nyeshangbas are not really wholly dependent on subsistence, or wholly dependent on the market. If the typical peasant is dependent on market access, and the typical subsistence farmers are not dependent on money, what is the farming system in Manang? These typologies are often one-dimensional, and not necessarily fruitful, still I will use Shanin's six typologies of the peasant as a backdrop for my discussion on social organization of the farming system (Shanin 1990: 52–54). According to Shanin the peasant…

1. …has a distinctive blend of self-employment (i.e. family labour), self-control over means of production, self-consumption of produce, and multidimensional occupational expertise (the ability to be engaged in different types of activities)

2. …has similar political organization across both geographical and social space

3. …has a pre-eminence of traditional and conformist rationalization

4. …has a specific social organization, a subdominant role in relation to bureaucrats and capitalists

5. …has a repetitive social dynamics, in particular social reproduction; for example because of special types of inheritance systems

6. …has similar patterns and causes of structural change

According to Turner and Brush (1987) the peasant is placed in the middle of the three continuum discussed in the previous paragraph, as the situation was in Manang. This, along with the writings of Teodor Shanin, made me realize that the categorizations done in peasant studies might prove helpful, such as the six typologies of peasants referred to above.

Almost all family members take part in the harvest, so self-employment in their own food production is very much the case; still, most of the families also hire wage labourers. The implication the wage labourers have on farming practices is discussed later in this analysis. Moreover, the farmers have a great deal of self-control over their means of production, at least the ethnic Nyeshangbas. Most families own their fields; still some families have to sharecrop to get sufficient amounts of produce (ten percent (n=41) according to my survey), and a still smaller

number of families exclusively sharecrop (five percent). The households whose farming solely was based on sharecropping were families who had migrated to Manang relative recently.

The Nyeshangbas have traditionally not wanted to sell land to non-Nyeshangbas. This problem has postponed plans of building a museum funded by aid money several times, because it was not really owned by a local person. However, families that have lived in Manang for a long time are generally included socially. To buy land, on the other hand, a person has to intermarry with a Nyeshangba. The availability of land, in spite of the great number of abandoned fields, is small. Families living in Kathmandu are reluctant to sell land. They rather cling on to it in case of bad times, but these families are also reluctant to sell for nostalgic reasons. For many Nyeshangbas, as for other people, the roots to the motherland is strong, selling their land would be the same as cutting the last string to the place where they grew up. This inclination is probably increasing the amount of abandoned land, which generally is widespread in the valley. According to some writers, half of the "ethnic" Nyeshangbas now live permanently in Kathmandu (Rogers 2004), interviews indicate that many of those families still cling to their fields in Manang, both in case of bad times, and to maintain their traditional contact with the region. These landowners, as already mentioned, rent their land to non-Nyeshangbas in Manang and to Nyeshangbas who do not own enough land. The dominant practice is a one to two ratio sharecropping. The degree of sharecropping is elaborated in the discussion of the agricultural production system. Although the non-Nyeshang families are interesting in terms of understanding the landowner structures of Manang, they are not in focus when I am discussing the effect of tourism on farming practices.

Peasants tend to be vertically orientated, as the situation is in Manang. Even though Manang traditionally has had a unique horizontal orientation as well, because of the tradition of international and national trading, the focus for most people has been the farm, at least for the ones remaining in Manang. Even though peasants, according to Shanin (1990), have generally lacked political organization, the factionalism in many peasant societies creates a strong outward unity. Factionalism, in this context, is the forming of a cohesive group inside a bigger group, a minority inside a majority, such as the Nyeshangbas in Nepal. Shanin has argued that this unity makes peasant societies the base of guerrilla struggle, the power of the powerless. Guerrilla struggle is not an imminent factor in Manang today, but factionalism is. The village and the district have a distinct outward unity, which helped them in their trading days and in the establishment of Nyeshang business in Kathmandu. The awareness of a distinct group helped the Nyeshangbas, resulting in an access to a high level of social capital for all members of the

community (van Spengen 1987; Rogers 2004). The Nyeshangbas, contrary to peasants in general, achieved in this way some political influence. In addition, the governmental control in the whole of Upper-Manang is very small, something the very rare reporting of committed crime indicates. Only one single case is known to have ended up in the courtrooms. All other disagreements are settled locally.

The religion is central in the farming system in Manang; the Lama (Buddhist priest) of the village plays a dominant role in organizing the farming system. He decides important dates concerning the harvest; moreover, the Lama is important as an advisor and as the leader of *pujas* (Buddhist mass) held to get a good harvest. Such religious rationalization is a distinct feature in several Trans-Himalayan farming systems (Mishra et. al. 2003). Furthermore, tradition is an important factor. A great deal of the practices in the farming system is explained as *parampara,* the Nepali word for tradition. When informants were asked for the background for different practices (e.g. the common date for the start of harvest) the answer was often only *"parampara"*. Such a conformist reasoning make religion and tradition an important part of the farming system's rationalization. The following description, highlighted to indicate that it is different from the other parts of the text, might help to show how religious rationalization might manifest itself in Manang:

A typical day in the harvest starts early in the morning, between seven and eight, however, before anything else is done juniper is burned as a sacrifice. Every morning you can see smoke rising from all of the houses in Manang. The same ritual is repeated when the family come to the fields. A small fire is made and some juniper branches along with champa (roasted and grinded wheat flour) are burned. In addition, Chopro (roasted wheat) is thrown into the air as an offering to the god. This is done every day, to make sure that the harvest will take place without any problems.

The burning of juniper reflects the central place animistic belief still holds in the village. Every big juniper tree is treated with great respect, and some special trees are believed to be resided by gods. The Nyeshang word for juniper, Chukri, is also the name of the most important goddess in the village, Badhe Chukri. Badhe Chukri is a goddess for fertility, this goddess is especially important for the harvest. When the fields are sown, some juniper branches are placed under two rocks in the middle of the field. After the harvest, these branches are burned. All year round, the ritual burning of juniper is an important rite. During my fieldwork, an informant told me how she once neglected this burning. Soon after, she fell ill. Her situation deteriorated and the local health workers predicted that she soon

would die. The family, however, consulted the lama, and it was decided to hold a big puja as an excuse for her oblivion. Soon after, she was fit, and now, more than ever, she takes part in offerings to the gods.

According to Shanin (1990: 54), peasant societies have proved to have repetitive social systems, systems that may be reflected in the repetitions in nature, such as the rhythm of life and of the seasons. These social systems reproduce through in-family learning of practice and through special inheritance customs. Agricultural practices are present all day long, from the collecting of manure in the morning to the cleaning of cereal in the evening; the practices are a way of life. It is not something learned through formal channels of education; it is a life form, or *genre de vie*. Nevertheless, these repetitive systems of social dynamics may just as well be the result of lack of choices as because of a specific wanted one. As Turner and Brush (1987) argued, changes in farming system are based on the background of technology, demand or political economy themes. A possible *lack* of change, on the other hand, might be understood on the background of tradition. Dobrowolski (1958) stated that a society exists in a balance between conservation and progression. A society with a lot of traditional rationalization will in this context progress slower than a society based on "modern" or "western" types of rationalization. As a society becomes more aware of its own culture and heritage, this might both lead to a diminishing and a strengthening of traditions, depending on local historical and geographical factors. This discussion on culture and heritage will be reintroduced in chapter six.

5.2 Agriculture

In the following, I will introduce the agricultural production system, with an extra focus on the harvest. The harvest will be my main empirical case for the discussion on tourism and the farming system, and therefore also in focus in the description leading up to this discussion. But before I start my description of the harvest, I feel the need to broaden my general description of the agricultural system.

The dominant crops are wheat, buckwheat and potato. Most households have at least one, often smaller, field they use to grow *aluu* (potato in Nepali). In addition, several types of vegetables are grown, including sag (mustard leaves), cauliflower, cabbage, onion and garlic. There is a fallow cultivation schema between buckwheat and wheat, the seemingly most dominant practice is a one to one rotation between buckwheat and wheat. Wheat is a crop that demands more fertilizer and

extracts more energy from the soil than buckwheat. Therefore the need for fallow is less if the farmer chooses to produce only buckwheat.

A surprisingly small amount of the wheat production ends up as food. There are several reasons for this, one is the quality of the cereal at this altitude, and another reason is that the local water based mills are not capable of grinding the wheat to required quality. Instead, the guesthouses actually import wheat flour that is used in bread and pasta for the tourists. Approximately 50 percent of the locally produced wheat goes directly to horse fodder during the winter, 30 percent goes to making the local beer, *cheng*, and 20 percent goes to making roasted wheat flour, *champa*. *Champa* is mainly used in *pho*, a mix of butter tea and wheat (numbers retrieved in different interviews). Some of the roasted wheat is not grinded and is used as snack, *chropro. Champa* and *chropro* are also used for religious purposes[15]. The buckwheat, on the other hand, is an important part of the traditional diet. Buckwheat is used in a flat bread (resembling the Indian chapatti), which they eat preferably with chilli chutney and in a stew, which they mix with yak butter (*ghee*) and yak meat. The practice of using buckwheat was declining, both due to practical reasons and of change of preferences. After the opening of a mule track to Manang in the 1960s, it was possible to transport bigger quantities of rice to Manang, making a change in diet feasible. This, along with the greater contact with the rest of Nepal and South East Asia led to changes in diet that I will discuss further later.

5.2.1 The Harvest

The year I was in Manang (2004) the harvest was late. This was due to seasonal differences, but also due to a big Buddhist mass (puja) that one wealthy widow held the week before. The wheat and buckwheat were ripe, and every day there were new rumours as to when the harvest was ready to start. Still, every day I awoke from the horns of the lamas, not of the sound of people in the fields. To arrange a puja for the whole village the arranging person or family has to provide a great amount of rice, two hundred grams for each villager, I was informed. If enough rice is provided, the whole village will take part in the puja, increasing the esteem of the organizer in both religious and social terms. Although such a puja is a good deed, there was discontent among the villagers. The first day of harvest was expected any time soon, but the puja had to end before

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[15] Roasted wheat flour (*champa/tsampa*) is burned for several religious purposes, for example as an offering to the gods before and after harvest, and in some rites of passage. The throwing of *champa* into the air is considered a remnant from the ancient animistic Bon Pho religion, which some still practice in the region.

the Lama and the VDC could decide when it was time to start the harvest. The harvest was already some days late, and the impatience rose, but soon there was no need to wait any longer.

There was an aura of anticipation and tension in the village. I was still not an "insider" in the village and the *pang chong* (village meeting) had been held without my knowledge. I was therefore surprised when I was invited to join a friend of mine for a movie in the local "movie theatre". The film started late in the evening, at a time when people usually were already tucked in bed, but not this day – the village was buzzing with life. After the movie, my friend asked me if I would join their family in the gathering of horse grass.

Figure 9: Gathering horse grass in the middle of the night
(Notice the motion of the headlamps in the background, as the villagers bend towards the ground to gather grass)

Horse grass (*clematis tibetana*) is a low shrubbery, which due to a special property helps the horses to keep warm during the long and at times cold winter (it is actually mildly poisonous). This grass grows mainly on the otherwise barren riverbed. The riverbed is common land. However, it is not enough grass to suffice for the whole village. This insufficiency creates demand that reportedly leads to arguments and even fights every year. The importance of this grass, along with the shortage of it, makes this the number one priority in the harvest. Because of the common start

date of the harvest, every family start to gather grass already at midnight the night before the first day of harvest.

The fields were full of people at midnight the day the lama decided to be the first day of harvest. All of the families went out with torches and headlamps trying to gather as much grass as possible. The night was swarming of lights, as each family tried to get as much as possible for their horses (see figure 9). The differences between the different families became clearer than ever this night. The rich families stayed at home, sending land labourers to gather for them. The other families, conversely, were dependent on all the labour they could get hold of. The rich families who had money to hire a great number of labourers therefore got the upper hand. They had the possibility to use an almost unlimited amount of labour. On the other hand, since the rich families also have many horses, they also needed more horse grass than the poorer families.

At sunrise the next morning the village exploded with life, everybody was out in the fields. The families who had wheat fields started with wheat, letting the wheat dry one or two days before they started the threshing. The wheat is uprooted by hand, and let to dry. Before the threshing, the farmers tie the wheat into bunts and beat the roots free from soil, making sure that the straw is usable for fodder. The farmers use a small sickle to harvest the buckwheat. Like the wheat, the buckwheat is dried for one to two days before the threshing. To do the threshing they assemble big piles of buckwheat on top of carpets and tarpaulins. The farmers then beat the buckwheat with a big stick to loose the seeds from the buckwheat flowers. The seeds, which they pile up on the carpets, are gathered in big bags and prepared for grinding. Before the cereal can be grinded it has to be cleaned. It is time-consuming work to clean the produce, continuing for days and days after the harvest. All of the harvest, however, is extremely time consuming. This will be in focus when I discuss the relationship between hired labour and tourism (paragraph 5.4.3).

The following days the village was full of life from dawn to dusk. As families soon finished their harvesting more and more families started threshing. Although it is not a fixed division of labour, threshing is done mostly by men. One family consisting of a daughter and a mother, whom I helped during the harvest, did the buckwheat threshing with small sticks. This was not very effective, and a land labourer did the main part of the threshing. The daughter in this family was in her early twenties and quite strong, but still she did no threshing. Therefore, this family had to hire land labourers to finish their harvest.

The reason to the common start date of harvest in Manang, can be explained on background of religious purposes. According to Aase (1998), religion can be defined as part of culture. Culture is what constitutes meaning. A great deal of the farming practices are based on both pragmatic and religious grounds. Culture is then the deeper lying structures that the farming practices are based on. The start of harvest is truly a part of culture in this respect. However, the Lama also listens to the advice of the villager before deciding which date is the most appropriate. The reasons to continue with a common start date, therefore, can be based on a cultural rationalization. Other types of rationalization might nonetheless expand the understanding of this practice. A fixed date for the start of harvest could be a hindrance for maximum output, since there will always be different soil qualities and micro-climatic differences between different fields. On the other hand, the shortage of winter fodder for the animals might also be part of the reason to this tradition. In the current practice, everyone can have the animals on the limited pastures around the village for the same amount of time. Snow settles in the mountains before and more lastingly than down in the village, making the mountain pastures useless from the middle of October until late March. The fact that common grazing lands are not opened before everybody has finished with the harvest puts pressure on the farmers to finish as fast as possible. As October is closing in, the chances of snow down in the valley are increasing. This creates further pressure to finish the harvest as soon as possible, a rush that creates a large demand for labour. The harvest finished in approximately two weeks. If there are some families who are late, they usually get help from neighbours the last days, so everyone can send down their animals to the village. The arrival of tourism to the village has further increased the importance of finishing the harvest in the shortest possible time. In the middle of October the big influx of tourists has started, demanding a lot of labour.

After the families had finished their harvest, they started the gathering of grass. Grass meadows around the village are common property, and were an important contributor to winter fodder for the animals. The Nyeshangbas keep a substantial number of animals; the following paragraph will discuss the importance of these animals.

5.3 Pastoral production system

Almost all families have some animals. Only five percent of the locally based households did not have any animals at all. According to van Spengen (1987: 165), this percentage was twenty-five at the time of his fieldwork. Even though my numbers are not certain and van Spengen stress that

his numbers do not represent the full truth, I will suggest that the percentage of the households that hold animals have increased. This does not mean that the overall number of animals has increased, but that also the poorest families are able to hold a few animals. The overall number of animals, conversely, was reported to have decreased over the last few decades. This must be understood on the background of the general out-migration. The better distribution of animals suggests that the output intensity is likely to be more even between the different households now than in the times of van Spengen's work.

5.3.1 Domesticated animals

The traditional animals in Manang are horses, yaks, goats and cattle. Van Spengen included jyupa (also called *dzo*), a hybrid between cattle and yak, but did not mention cattle. This situation seems to have changed over the last twenty years. I saw dzos in Manang only once, and then it was as a part of caravan coming from Mustang. This indicates that dzos for some reason are no longer a part of the farming system in Manang. According to van Spengen, dzos were important for ploughing. Nowadays, however, the villagers use oxen to pull the plough.

Horses are another important animal in Manang. Horses play different roles in the community. First, the horses are a fast and efficient way of getting to and from the different villages. Secondly, they are an important part of defining the village, so to say. Horses play a dominant role all year round, but it is most evident in the yearly *yartung* festival, which includes a spectacular horse race. The number of horses seems unnecessarily high for an outsider. The same seems true for yaks. This may be because of the high prestige that yak and horse imply to the villagers in Manang. When someone was speaking of wealth, yaks and horses were often at the centre of attention, or maybe more important, the lack of such. Yaks, in addition to contribute with manure and wool, are the most important traditional source of meat protein. Yaks are like horses also one of the great bearers of tradition. One of the great gods is believed to be reincarnated in a great yak, and yaks, as horses, are important in festivals. In addition, the yaks are important as cultural signifiers. The animals are generic for the Himalayas, important in folklore and in popular descriptions of the region. The yaks are therefore one of the most well known signifiers for the "real" Himalayan culture. Besides being cultural signifiers the animals are hardy and excellently adapted to the local environment in Manang.

There are several reasons to hold such a great variety of animals. Still, fieldwork indicates that the access of manure is especially important, as will be discussed in the next paragraph. Although

yaks and horses are important as a source of manure, goats are the biggest contributor of fertilizer. According to informants, the biggest reason to keep goats is that the goats contribute with manure. Goats also are important as a source of meat protein, at least for the non-Nyeshang residents in Manang. The Nyeshangbas prefer yak meat, as I will discuss later. Cattle, contrary from yaks and goats, are never butchered. Some of the villagers supposedly ate beef in earlier times, the difference between the Ghales and the Gurungs were traditionally, among other things, that the latter ate beef. But nowadays cattle are held primarily to be used for ploughing. Oxen are the only animal that is used for this purpose, so every family has to get access to oxen in some way or another. Approximately three quarters of the households keep oxen (29/39). Twenty-five percent must therefore get access to draught animals in other ways, usually bartering with the families who keep oxen. I will now discuss the different primary functions of animals in the farming system in Manang.

5.3.2 Access to manure

The access to manure is essential in the farming system in Manang, and one of the most important reasons to keep animals. The villagers consider horse dung to be the most valuable manure, but goat dung mixed with pine needles is most widespread[16]. The households with too small amount or no animals at all, have to get access to manure through other means. It is possible to barter or to buy *dokos* with fertilizer, usually the mix of goat dung and pine needles. A *doko* is a traditional woven wooden basket, used all over Nepal. The doko is also a measurement of what is possible to get in one of those baskets. One doko of a mixture of goat and pine needles costs about 60 NPR (6 NOK/0.8 USD). Depending on the size of the fields, households may buy from 4–5 *dokos* up to 25 *dokos*. The families who have few, or no animals at all, did not have enough manure, but on the other hand, they had too much straw after the harvest. Therefore, it was possible for them to do barter. Manure is essential to achieve a good wheat production, but buckwheat is less dependent on manure for a good result. To get enough money, or straw, for manure, some families did two years buckwheat one year wheat rotation. The increase in the production of vegetables also increased the need for fertilizing. There is no, or negligible access to artificial fertilizer, the demand for fertilizer has to be met by natural fertilizers.

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[16] Interestingly, this is much of the same practices as in older farming systems in Norway. In some farming systems in Norway, horse dung was held to be of extra value, used only on produce that demanded extra fertilizing.

5.3.3 Pastures

The pastoral farming of Manang is based on a long grazing season when Yaks, horses and goats are scattered in mountain pastures. Here they are looked after by herders, both local and workers coming from other regions. These mountain pastures are essential for the farming system, the mountain pastures, often called *kharka* (grass meadows), are lush and green well over 4000 m.a.s.l. and contribute with important energy to the fields in the valley floor. Goat dung is stored in big heaps and carried down to the village. Yak dung is dried on big rocks and used as a source of fire or for manure.
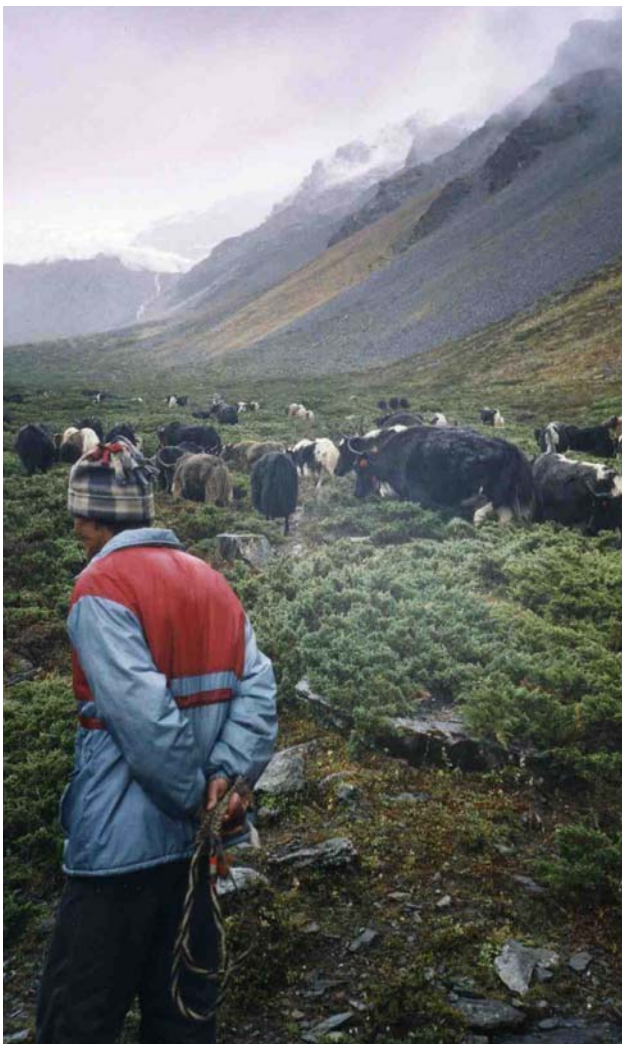
The yaks are in the pastures from before sowing of the fields in the spring until after the harvest in late September, like the other animals on pasture. Usually, several families come together to establish "yak farms". These yak farms are typically a gathering of the yak herds of four to five families, depending on the size of the herds. These families team together and share the great costs of keeping yaks on pasture. Interestingly, almost all of the herders working on these yak farms are local farmers. Yaks are often described as "semi-wild" cattle that demands long experience and great skill. This fact, and the production, however small, of yak cheese and yak yoghurt carried out on the summer farms, demand higher density of workers for yak than for any other breed. The great demand of local based labour is increasing the costs of holding yaks.

Figure 10: The yak meadows at Yak Kharka with herdsman

My survey indicated that 35 percent held yak in 2004 of whom only five percent held yak exclusively. According to van Spengen, 19 percent held yak exclusively in the time of his fieldwork (one quarter of seventy-five percents (van Spengen 1987)). This seemingly decreasing importance of yak might be due to the high costs in labour. The costs of herding can be quite substantial. One family reporting to have 17 yaks and 15 goats used 30 000 NPR on herding, respectively 25 000 on yaks and 5 000 on goats. This was of a reported income of 66 500 NPR. Even if the costs of keeping yak are high, it can be reduced by paying the herders in kind. Both the meat and the dairy products are popular locally. However, the cheese and yoghurt production from the summer farms have mainly been for local use and therefore not generating any, or at least just a small amount of money for the households. The yak cheese used in hotels and sold in the tourist shops is from more industrialized production from outside of Upper-Manang.

As soon as all the families have finished the harvest, all of the fields become common grazing land. There is no first claim for the families who own the different fields; therefore, all of the villagers have to be finished before the animals are allowed to graze in the fields. The herders follow the animals down to the village when the harvest is expected to end. It is important that no animals start grazing on the stubble fields before everyone have finished with the harvest. The *chipen*[17] assigned a group to oversee to that no animals started grazing the stubble fields before everyone was finished. Every five years one person from each household has to report to this group. Every morning and afternoon, the group has to take a walk around the fields to check that there are no animals in the fields. If there is, the group has to lead the animals away and fine the family the animal come from. This practice is known from other Trans-Himalayan agricultural systems (Mishra et. al. 2003).

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[17] The group in charge of giving fines to the families who break the local rules, see chapter two

Figure 11: Yaks and horses grazing the buckwheat stubble fields after the harvest

5.3.4 The importance of meat

Meat is an important part of the local traditional diet. It was an especially important contributor to protein before the opening of the mule track. Yak was the dominant source of animal protein, and it still is an important source. Each autumn the villagers gather in groups, the same groups that collaborated with the yak farms, to decide how many animals that is to be slaughtered. It is not considered proper Buddhist conduct to kill animals, the local Nyeshangbas therefore seldom, or never, kill animals. Buddhists of other ethnicities were hired to do this job. Some of them had recently worked in the harvest, but also an expert slaughterer was in Manang for this occasion. Even though the killing was done by hired labour, it was under strict scrutiny from the males of the families who owned the yaks. Yak meat is important for the villagers, and the yaks were prepared in big chunks of meat that were distributed to different families according to how much they had done during the slaughtering or herding. The head was of extra importance, given to a family who had done something special that year for the family who owned the yak. Yak meat is actually used as barter, the herdsmen and women are often paid in kind. For the local herdsmen and women, working for yak meat may be acceptable, but for land labourers who come from other districts, this is more problematic. This may also explain why all of the yak herders were local, while more of the goat herders were from other districts. Goat is more likely to generate money than yaks. Still, in the future yak beef could be an important source of money.

The yak is slaughtered only once a year, in some busy weeks after the harvest and before the winter comes. Traditionally the only time for fresh meat has been during this short slaughtering season, almost all of the meat is then dried to last through the winter. The slaughter time

coincides with the high peak of tourism (medio October). Yak burgers and yak steak in the hotels are therefore one of the big hits for the hotels during the short slaughtering season. Yak meat is popular among the tourists, and this increased demand for fresh meat probably prolongs the slaughtering season, but the local hotel owners were quite determined not to alter this tradition of a short and intensive slaughter period. There is a strong local sense of tradition, and even though the tourists make a market for yak that outlasts the traditional time for fresh meat, the slaughtering period is, until now, restricted to a couple in late October and early November. However, the fact that this period coincides with the high peak of tourism raises the number of Yaks killed. Then again, yaks generate income from a locally produced product, making yak meat one of the few products sold to the tourists that do not demand import. The side dish to the local yak steaks are potato and cabbage two locally produced cultivars. Imported food and appliances make up to fifty percent of the tourism rev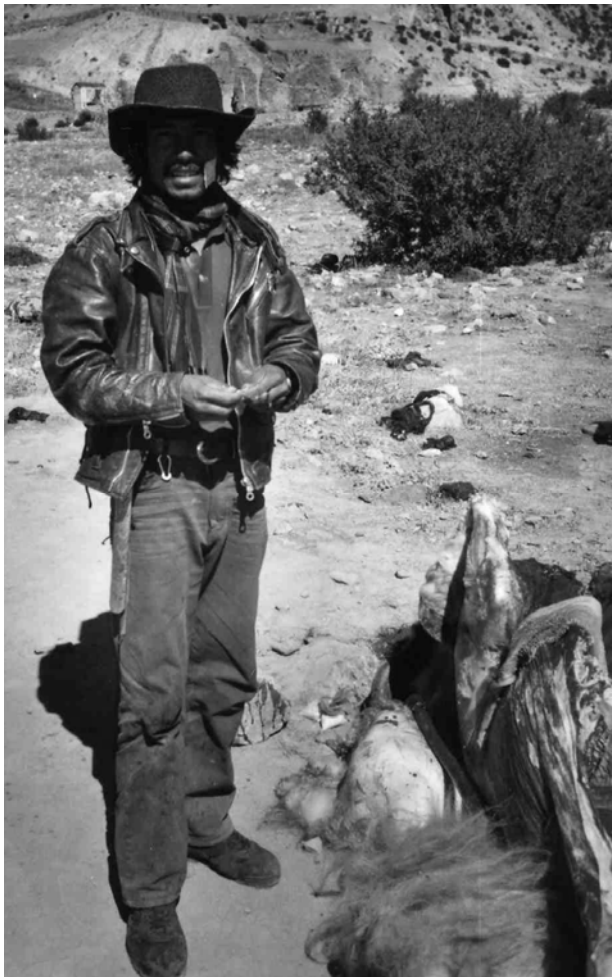enues in Manang as evident from fieldwork, to sell yak meat in the hotel is therefore one possible approach to decrease the dependency on imported goods.

Figure 12: Butcher from Gorkha

Goats are mainly a source of manure, but goat's meat is used in Manang, even though it is not common among the locals. Among Hindus, on the other hand, goat is widely used. There are Hindus present all year round, mainly as teachers or other sorts of governmental employees, in addition to porters and guides working for the tourists. Among the locals, goats are considered more sacred than yaks, at least when it comes to what they eat. Still, my experience is that when goats are slaughtered, the locals do not hesitate to eat.

One informant claimed that he never killed or sold his goats for killing. However, most of the farmers sold goats to Hindus, but it was not spoken freely about. The son of the informant, who

claimed no to sell any goats to be slaughtered, slaughtered goats to his employees. There was also a small economy in selling and buying goats. The price was between 2000 and 3000 NPR[18]. The killing of any animal is believed to give bad karma for both Hindus and Buddhist. Most Nyeshangbas are therefore reluctant to do any slaughtering. Although my informant slaughtered a goat, he did not do the actual killing, this was left to one of his carpenters. The carpenter was from another Buddhist ethnicity.

This double standard is also evident in the yak slaughtering. Although the Nyeshangbas never kill the animal, they easily do the carving, not to speak of eating the meat. Slaughtering is a job for the "lower caste" Buddhist from other villages. I have already argued that it is more correct to speak of ethnicity than caste in Manang. However, there is still some sort of hierarchy between the different ethnicities, as evident from the division of labour. During the slaughtering, I walked around the riverbed with my camera, but not one of the butchers allowed me to take pictures of the very killing. I was more than welcome to take pictures of the other parts of the process, on the other hand. Although vegetarianism is widespread among Buddhist, the Nyeshangbas have developed a pragmatic view to meat. The environment in Manang is harsh, and without the fat and proteins from meat, it would have been difficult to maintain the settlement during the winter. In the wintertime there are no caravans with rice and other produce from the lush areas just on the other side of the mountains and the villagers that stay, although they are not many, are dependent on meat to uphold nutritional levels during the long winter. This reasoning is historical and not necessarily valid as the situation is today. Still, the traditions of meat could be explained in this way.

5.4 Tourism and the agro-pastoral production system

The description above of the farming system is meant to lead up to an analysis of tourism's effect on it. The increased influence of tourism in Nepal-Himalaya has reportedly undermined local subsistence agricultural systems (Stevens 1993; Bjønnes 1983). Although tourism has affected local employment, land use and diet, I found a substantial continuity based on local knowledge and techniques. In the following I will, based on my own analysis and of other writers, try to summarize and discuss how and in what way tourism has affected the local agricultural system.

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[18] Interestingly this price is quite high compared to prices in the west; a Norwegian farmer could expect about the same price for a goat as in Manang.

There has been a change in cultivation over the last 20 years. All families now grow a small selection of vegetables. According to Banskota and Sharma (1998), tourism may change cultivars and thereby local food traditions. As many other writers on tourism, Banskota and Sharma are vaguer when they discuss why such a change might occur. However, cultural influences and structural change due to increased demands from the tourists are likely explanatory factors. This is the case also in Manang, but in interviews, local villagers claimed that the influence from living in Kathmandu and trading in other South East Asian countries were of bigger importance than the demand for vegetables and cultural impacts from the tourists. Additionally, local structural changes, like the making of a mule track in the 1960s, inarguably did more to change the diet than any cultural influence. The mule track made it possible to import large quantities of rice and lentils for a more reasonable price, and was one of the main reasons to why the main staple changed from buckwheat and yak to rice and lentils, the so-called dal bhat (bhat being rice and dal lentils). Dal bhat is the staple food in rest of Nepal as well.

Even though informants question the influence from tourism themselves, tourism has increased the overall production of vegetables. The raise in production of vegetables must in some way have affected general production practices. Furthermore, the selling of vegetables, along with the labour opportunities in tourism, has provided Manang with a market. This market is however small and unreliable, and its consequences for the agro-pastoral production system are uncertain.

In the start of the research programme my project is a part of (Local Effects of Large-scale Global Changes), it was discussed whether the change from barley to wheat was induced by the big demand for wheat from the tourists, for example in the many bakeries (Vetaas 2002). However, as I already argued, the wheat in Manang is not of the required quality to make pasta, white loaf or German cinnamon rolls. The reasons to change from barley to wheat are rather explained by the decrease of labour resources in the 80s, 90s and changing local preferences. Barely is generally less labour demanding than wheat. During the harvest, on the other hand, barley demands more work. The harvest is one of two periods in the agricultural year when there is a shortage of labour power in Manang. This fact led Aase to suggest that the introduction of wheat at the expense of barley best can be explained as an adaptation to woman labourers. The wheat is easier to thresh and therefore more suitable for women (Aase 2003). In a situation where more men than women travel to Kathmandu and to foreign countries to do trade this would make sense, however, my experience was that there were almost no women doing threshing,

wheat or buckwheat (I will stress that these findings are only valid for Manang Village). Therefore, I am more inclined to conclude that the overall lack of labour is the reason to this change in practice, a lack of labour that is caused, among other things, by tourism. The abandoning of less favourable land, which renders it possible to use higher demanding crops such as wheat on more fields, might also be a reason.

Moreover, wheat is not a new cereal in Manang. Informants were unsure when it was introduced, but estimated it to be "several hundred years ago". I do not exclude that tourism indeed has had some impact on the composition of produce. Nevertheless, I will argue that it is sometimes too easy to jump to such a conclusion, as this specific example indicates. During my fieldwork, I nonetheless found on concrete example on how influence from tourism might manifest itself. ACAP, an organization started to monitor and help sustainable tourism, organized a programme in growing vegetables in the late 1980s to increase the nutrition level of the diet in the area. The importance of this course, however, is arguable.

"I started with vegetables 12–15 years ago; ACAP had a course in how to grow vegetables and people learned from the people who attained this course. Most of what I grow is used in my hotel, but we also use more in our family."
Guesthouse owner in Manang

According to local informants, these courses got some families started; others claimed that the ACAP courses were just adding to an already increasing trend. As already noted there have been seasonal migrations as long as we have historical records for Manang, it is therefore just as likely that the local villagers introduced vegetables. To assert that one simple demand from tourists may change a whole set of agricultural practices is troublesome. An analytical conclusion like this is too focused on tourism as agent and the local village as the place where tourism take part, making the local community a passive receiver of influences. During my interviews, no one saw the start of tourism as a direct, or the only, reason for changing his or her produce. On the other hand, tourism has increased the amount of vegetables grown altogether. Today vegetables are important as a source, however small, of income and as a dominant part of the diet. Several families sold vegetables to hotels. Nonetheless, the families in question reported that only a small part of the income came from selling this produce. It was not a main activity for any farmer, and just a small or not an income at all for the others. There are several reasons for this: most of the hotels are self-sufficient with vegetables from their own fields, and furthermore, most of the

increased demand for food because of tourism is met primarily by importing foodstuff from outside the region.

Although buying and selling vegetables does not constitute a substantial market in Manang, it still contributes to the overall economic activity in Manang. Moreover, the role of the market component in the farming system, understanding the market in the strict sense as a market for products, is unsure. It seems like the effects of tourism is more evident in other parts of the farming system. I am especially thinking on the effects of extra-local labour. The next paragraph will focus on these labourers.

5.4.3 The demand for workers, and the conflict with tourism activities

The lack of labour is used as an argument for the low farming output in Manang, both in terms of absolute numbers and intensity (van Spengen 1987: 140). Van Spengen claimed that like many other traditional farming systems it was not the lack of physical resources that limited the possibilities for subsistence, it was rather the availability of sufficient labour (ibid.). Nevertheless, the increasing instability in Nepal and especially the presence of Maoists in the neighbouring regions of Manang have increased the availability of cheap labour in Manang. In chapter two, I outlined how the latest conflicts in Nepal made available a new pool of labourers. At the same time, the increasing amount of tourists and money generated from the tourists enabled the Nyeshangbas to hire workers from outside the village. This has created a pool of labourers and resources to pay for them that undermine or make van Spengen's conclusion less valid.

During the tourist season, the non-Nyeshang wage labourers are crucial to the tourism business. During the harvest, the labourers are not only important for the tourism business, but also in the farming system. The labourers are mostly young men, from the ages of twelve to forty, but there are also whole families taking the long walk from Dholpa or Ghorka to work in Manang (see figure 2 for map reference). In addition to land labourers and people hired in the tourist business, there are also governmental workers in Manang: schoolteachers (only two of the teachers were local), a postal worker, and the ones working in the ACAP office. These workers are usually Hindus from the lowlands. Most of the land labourers, on the other hand, were Buddhist.

The Nyeshangbas hired land labourers to do the work they did not want to do themselves, such as butchering and carrying. "Life is harsh", many Nyeshangbas told me, but life is even harsher for some of the people they hire as porters and labourers. The income from tourism along with capital acquired through trading make the Nyeshangbas relatively affluent. But how big is the impact of land labour for the agro-pastoral production system? I tried to track this impact by finding the amount of labour used during the harvest. The survey carried out during my fieldwork showed that most families used outside labour in some degree during the harvest, but not everyone. The families that reported no use of outside labours tended to be the ones least involved with tourism.
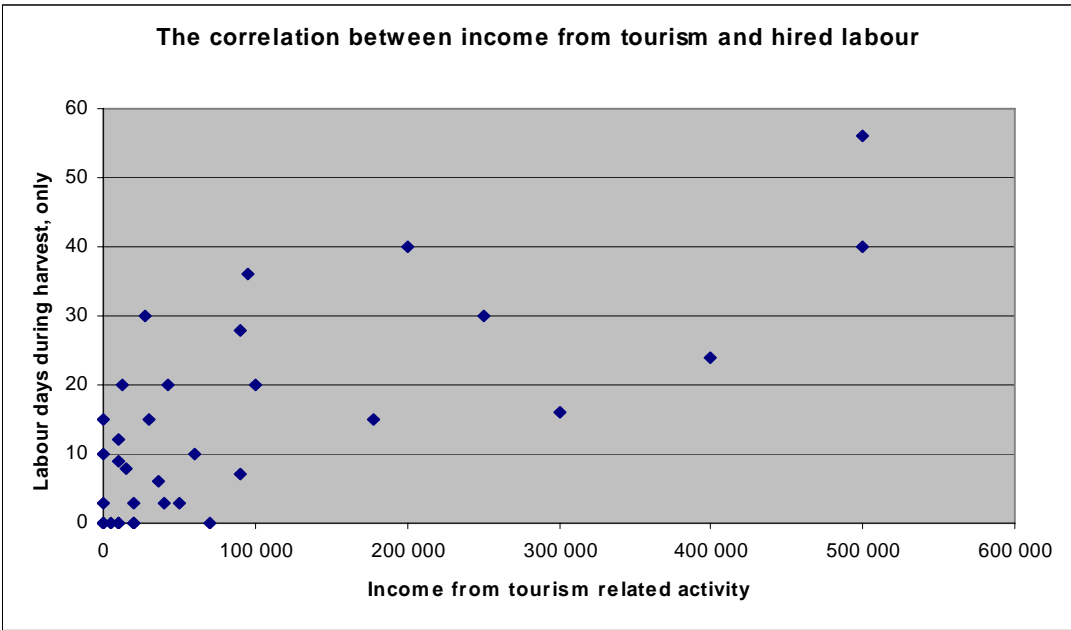

Figure 13: The relationship between income from tourism and hired labour

Source: Authors fieldwork

$(r = 0.72, r^2 = 0.5184, n = 33)$[19]

It is a significant correlation between income from tourism and the rate of hired labour during the harvest ($p < 0.001$). However, there are several statistical problems with this analysis and my main goal was only to indicate the relation between the two. One of the problems of the analysis is that not only income from tourism makes it possible to hire land labourers. A number of the families depend on remittance only, and others are partly dependent on remittance. In addition, some families have old savings that were acquired through trading. These alternative sources to

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[19] The correlation estimated are the Pearson's r, where income from tourism is the dependent variable

capital also make it possible to hire land labour. Yet another problem is whether income from ACAP is tourism related income. I chose not to include the income from ACAP here (if included the correlation would come to 0.75 (r^2=0.5625), still p< 0.001). I will argue that the families living on saved capital are somewhat of an anomaly. These are people who in their golden years retreat to Manang to meditate and are not actively taking part in the farming. During my fieldwork, I interviewed only three such families, two in Manang and one in Humde.

The year I was in Manang, 2004, the harvest started the 27th of September, which was at least a week late according to the villagers, and the livestock was released to graze on the fields the 8th of October, making the harvest last for twelve days. One of my main questions before arriving in Manang was how the demand for workers during the high peaks of tourism conflicts with the demand for workers during the harvest. During my fieldwork, I experienced that this problem was not as acute as I first believed. The following findings support this conclusion. There is little information on the day-to-day basis for tourist, but week-to-week numbers from the check post in Humde for 2003 was derived. These numbers are uncertain since they originate from a check post that quite a few of the tourists avoid due to an alternative path. However, they indicate the fluctuation of the tourists.
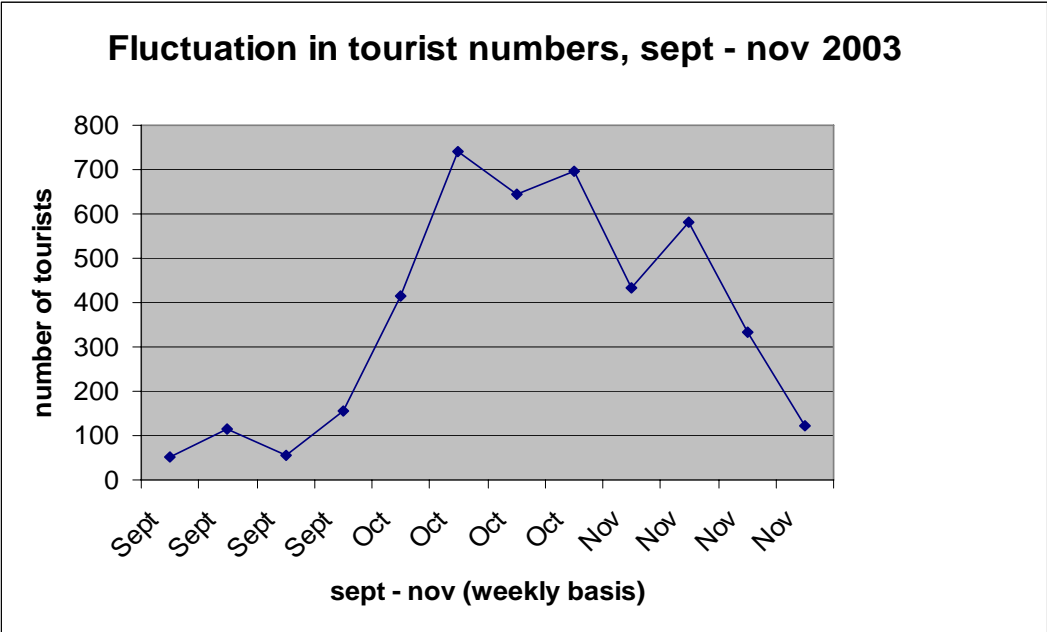

Figure 14: Fluctuation in tourism arrivals in Manang, autumn 2003
Source: Police check post, Humde

As we can see in figure 14, there was a big increase in tourists the first and second week in October, and it remains high in the third and forth week of October and the first two weeks of

November. These numbers are surprisingly consistent from year to year; both due to the clear advices in the dominant guidebooks and the advice from the big tourist agencies (see Woodhatch 1997: 391, for example). Rogers (2004: 48) confirms these findings: "the peak tourist season lasting for only about a month between mid October and mid November". As mentioned in chapter two, almost half of the tourists come in the months of October and November according to numbers from Tal, this is verified by the numbers from Humde (52.8 percent in October and November). In the last days of September, which was the busiest in the harvest, the big influx of tourists had not yet started. One of the bigger hotels even closed, arguing that there were so few tourists that it was better to focus on the harvest. Most of the workers in the hotels worked on farms during the first days of harvest. The same was the case for the carpenters and porters working in the village. A museum, funded by a Non Governmental Organization (NGO) from New Zealand, was constructed in the village, and all of the workers and porters working on this project were available to the villagers during the intense days of harvesting. The intense period of harvesting was over such a short time span that it was possible to wait with other not so urgent chores until after the harvest.

The access to land labourers was important to maintain both tourism and the harvest. The access to these land labourers, on the other hand, was not the same for everyone. The following quotes are from four different farmers in Manang, all of them also in various degree involved with tourism.

"It's hard to get Ghorkalis; we are not a part of the rich people"

"There are a lot of problems in Ghorka, before they came from Muktinath during the harvest, now they come from Ghorka, and everyone can get workers"

"No workers, the rich people take all!"

There is no problem to get workers, just see around you: Almost everybody who works for the hotels are not from around here"

My interviews and field observations verified both views. It is true that the "big men" or the "rich people" (the ones who owns guesthouses) use a lot of land labourers, but also the families who were poor have access to land labourers, just not in the same extent. One of the families I

followed during the harvest is a good example how tourism generates money used to hire workers during the harvest, and thereby probably increasing production output for relatively poor families. The small income this family had from a small teashop and a little work in the tourist information (adding up to 40 000 NPR per year for the household), sufficed to pay for rice, some imported "luxury" (such as shoes and batteries) *and* wages to labourers during the harvest. In addition, this family – as many other families – used a substantial part of their income to pay for a brother who was monk and for a second brother who attended boarding school in Kathmandu. The costs of land labourers for this family are estimated to about 450 NPR (3 *150 NPR), only slightly more than one percent of the yearly income. The geographer Stanley Stevens drew a similar conclusion in Khombo, the area around Mount Everest: "Households may have to hire wage labourers to compensate for the absence of tourism-employed family members. The low wages paid for most agricultural day labor, however, make this a relatively small expense […]" (Stevens 1993: 414). The important factor in this context is the fact that income from tourism makes it possible to hire land labourers.

5.5 Conclusion

One of the main concerns of tourism in remote places has been the binding of labour to tourist activity (Ashley 2000); it was therefore natural to expect a change in production methods or change in produce outcome due to a smaller workforce, especially since the peaks in the traffic of tourists and harvesting seemingly coincided. In Manang, however, tourism attracted labourers and made it possible for the families to rent labourers quite cheaply, and thereby maintain labour resources, even increasing it when compared to the 1980s (van Spengen 1987). The salary for unskilled workers was about 150 NPR (about 13 NOK or 2 USD) a day and 250 NPR for skilled workers, both including food and lodging. This salary may seem low, but higher than in some other areas of Nepal. The average income in Nepal is uncertain, but likely to be under 250 USD a year[20]. The rural average is likely to be even smaller. The current problems many Nepalese meet because of the repressive control Maoist rebels have over many regions in Nepal, such as in Ghorka, has created a big pool of labourers that are available for the Nyeshangbas in Manang. There are, in other words, both available labour resources and capital to pay for it. Manang is therefore highly competitive, both for skilled and unskilled labour. One chef I spoke to earn the same, or more, in six months in Manang than he did in a whole year in Pokhara. Although he had

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[20] USD 210 a year according to MS-Nepal, www.msnepal.org/

to spend a long time away from his family, it was better than working twelve-hour shifts every day, all year round, in Pokhara.

Tourism is very much a part of the farming system in Manang; almost all households are in some way dependent on it. Only 18 percent of the households reported to have no income from tourism at all. Of the ones not dependent on tourism, some had capital from earlier times, some received remittance from husbands/children and some were government workers. Like already noted, some of the government employed were also indirectly dependent on tourism. Tourism was the direct cause for the foundation of ACAP. Still, a salary from ACAP is more reliable than that from direct involvement in tourism. As a result, ACAP employees are not that dependent and thereby not that vulnerable from periodical fluctuations in tourist numbers as households dependent on guesthouses, teashops or other tourism related activities. Still, a more persistent decrease in tourism numbers may threaten the very existence of the ACAP field office in Manang.

This great dependency on tourism in Manang is problematic for several reasons. As I will show in the next paragraph, Manang experienced a great out-migration from the 1960s and onward. The tourism opportunities helped to reverse this tendency, and Manang experienced in the late 1990s a new enthusiasm and decreasing out-migration. However, a permanent decrease in tourism will probably lead to a reappearing of the out-migration, and again jeopardize the farming system (see chapter seven for a further discussion of possible future scenarios).

There has been a large and dominant out-migration from Manang. Rogers (2004) argues that more and more of the entrepreneurs of Manang settled permanently in Kathmandu in the 1980s and early 90s. Most of them still kept their fields and houses in Manang, but either leaving the fields in fallow or renting them out to other families through sharecropping. As already noted, about half of the Nyeshang community live in Kathmandu, and according to one of my informants, this number might be too low, claiming that up to 75 percent of the Nyeshangbas live in Kathmandu (and Pokhara).

This dominant out-migration from Manang made the village to a higher degree dependent on subsistence farming. The families remaining in Manang had a decreasing chance of trading, and were therefore more dependent on marginal farming. In addition, the decrease in population, led to a shortage of labour, especially during harvest. The organization of the farming system, based

on intensive harvest and sowing periods was threatened. The shortage of labour was one of the main reasons to why there was a deterioration of the farming system in the 1980s (van Spengen 1987: 246–251). Van Spengen argues that most of the weakening of the farming system was because of the out-migration that peaked in the 1980s. In addition, there was a decreased access to land labour. Traditionally farmers from Muktinath, in Lower-Mustang, walked over the high Thorong La mountain pass to partake in the harvest in Manang. Due to different climatic conditions, Muktinath has a different harvesting time than Manang. In the late 1960s and especially in the 70s and 80s, Lower-Mustang experienced an increase in tourism, and thereby in job opportunities. The farmers in Muktinath were no longer available for the farmers in Manang, as evident from interviews. This combination of decreased availability of both local and extra-local labour resources, due to out-migration from Manang and tourism in Lower-Mustang, made the farming system vulnerable. Van Spengen argues that the traditional farming system was in danger of collapsing. The farming system was in other words under a lot of stress due to changing structural conditions.

I argue that no farming system is stable, and therefore changes in practices have to occur. Nonetheless, if I assume that the traditional farming system was originally quite stable, and that it was threatened by the developments in the 1960s and onward, it is possible to make a schematic figure of the traditional farming system as it was during this period. This figure is based on own fieldwork and the work of van Spengen (ibid.).
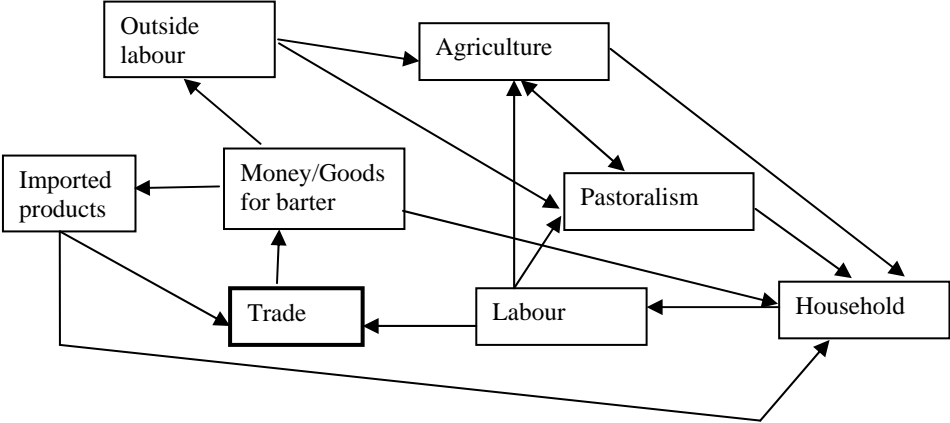

Figure 15: A model of the traditional farming system

I then conclude, by interviewing and the help of van Spengen, that this farming system developed over a long time, and proved to be sustainable.

The most important factor in this context is the role of trade. This farming system was dependent, as already noted because of climatic conditions, on an extra-local component to fulfil a whole year's livelihood. As the figure depicts the source for this extra local component was the traditional trade, along with seasonal migration. The traditional trade was both caravans to other parts of Nepal and India to barter and later international trading in the big hubs of South-East Asia. This activity made "the market" available for this remote village. The trade further made it possible to hire labour during labour demanding periods in the agricultural year. However, the trade was only indirectly a part of the farming system, but still important given that it reproduced labour possibilities for the local farmers.

The increased possibilities for international trade, however, encouraged a substantial portion of the residents in Manang to move permanently to Kathmandu. The professionalization of trade made it necessary for the Nyeshangbas to be in Kathmandu all year round. Still the contact with Manang was substantial, and the traditional farming system was upheld. There is reason to believe that the remittance was considerable (Rogers 2004; own fieldwork). With the help of remittance and a still functioning society in Manang, the farming system was maintained, however volatile. The shift towards international trade was nonetheless the start of the declining of the farming system (Rogers 2004). The substantial out-migration as Rogers (2004) and van Spengen (1987) concludes, led to an increase in abandoned land, this was confirmed by my fieldwork. In Manang, and even more so in Ghyaru, Ngawal and Braga, there are still many houses falling apart and a great deal of the fields were clogging.

When the opportunities for tourism appeared there was a period of re-migration (Rogers 2004; own fieldwork), there was especially a re-migration of what we can call *entrepreneurs,* formerly based in Kathmandu. All of the main tourism entrepreneurs in Manang are former traders based in Kathmandu who have returned to try to gain profit from the tourists. Tourism did two things. It opened up a new source of income locally and it was a new occupational opportunity for families struggling to get by in a harsher working environment in the cities. On top of that, not only re-migration and occupational opportunities have changed the prospect of maintaining, or improving the farming system, also the access to labour has increased, as already argued, from the Maoist-dominated Ghorka-region. Nonetheless, the farming system is still dependent on cash flow, both to pay for the needed land labourers, but also to pay for the extra-local component needed to maintain a minimum nutrition base for settlement in Manang, such as rice and lentils.

Until now, and after the decrease of trading possibilities, this source of cash flow has almost exclusively been from tourism. On the background of van Spengen's historical analysis and my own fieldwork, I have found that tourism has replaced the role of trade in Manang. Figure 16, is the farming system as it works today. Compared to figure 15, the component of trade has been replaced by tourism as a source of income; otherwise, the models are almost identical. Two other changes is that now, compared to then, outside labour is used in the village to non-farm activities (tourism) and that some of the produce and animals are used in the tourism industry, especially vegetables and yak-meat, as evident from my analysis.
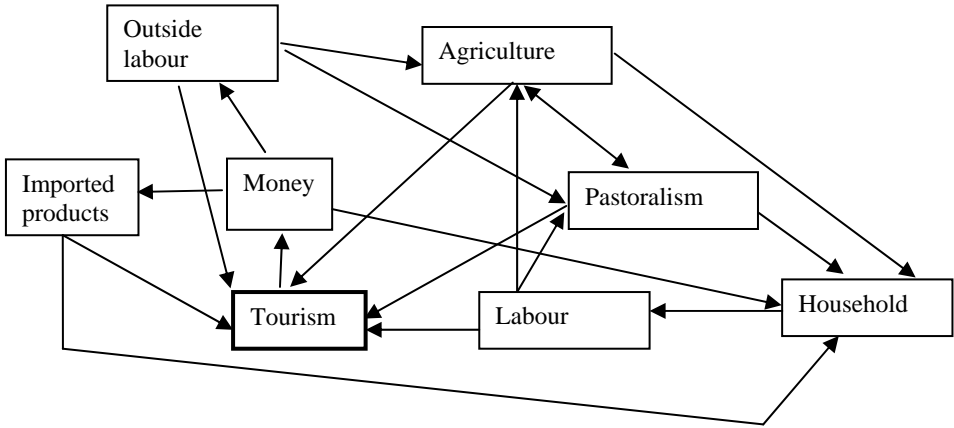

Figure 16: A model of the present farming system

Such a schematic version of reality is of course only a certain interpretation of the real world. Seeing these figures the reader might jump to the conclusion that all that has happened is that one "box" (trade) has been replaced by another (tourism). This is, however, only partly true. The most important reason to use these figures is to show that tourism is a vital part of the farming system. Tourism has made it possible to maintain and continue a certain traditional way of producing food. As this figure, and my argumentation shows: The farming system is dependent on a cash flow to maintain certain characteristics, such as the access to extra-local food and the demand for land labourers. Therefore, tourism is essential to maintain the existence of the present farming system.

Chapter 6: Local effects of tourism in Manang

> "What is striking about the political history of the modern world-systems, as it has historically developed, is the ever more frequent and ever more efficacious utilization by oppressed elements of what might generically be called cultural resistance."
>
> Immanuel Wallerstein (1991: 193)

This chapter will discuss a possible theoretical approach to tourism and its effect in Manang. In chapter five, I described the farming system in Manang and in which way it was affected by tourism. However, most theories on tourism and change are concerned with effects in a broader sense than the conclusions of chapter five. Therefore, I will raise the analysis' level of abstraction, leaving the focus on agro-pastoral production, but not forgetting it. While reading tourism theories, I, as many other before me, was frustrated by the big amounts of seemingly similar concepts. One of the most unclear concepts was deterritorialization; still this concept might increase my understanding of the case in Manang. Deterritorialization, as it is used in tourism theory and writings on globalization, the process of breaking down cultural ties to its place (Tomlinson 1999). Might deterritorialization be a valid theoretical approach to the situation in Manang? In this context, the concept might be helpful to look into what some think is happening in the world, the increasing homogenization of the world.

6.1 Tourism and local change

In the theory chapter, I briefly introduced some of the theories on tourism and local change. I discussed the use of deterritorialization in tourism theory, but more as an example of dominant thinking in academic discourses than as a recipe for good tourism analysis. Still, I chose to include these thoughts in my thesis. I do this to include what I see as one of the most important and influential debates in tourism, but also to use my theoretical knowledge as a base for a broadening analysis of the field. MacCannel's concept of staged authenticity, combined with a modified deterritorialization and Foucault's view of power as knowledge can help to understand what I described in chapter five. Writers such as Cheong and Miller (2000) and more satisfyingly, Shepherd (2003) and Hazbun (2004) have included Foucauldian understandings in tourism theory, the latter two also included deterritorialization theories.

6.1.1 Introducing the case

The Badhe Festival was traditionally a festival celebrated every three years in Manang. The festival was a celebration to the goddess *Badhe chukri* (chukri is Nyeshang for juniper), which still is an important god in the village. Different informants claimed that this also included the killing of 12 girls younger than 12 years. It was uncertain how long ago this part of the tradition had been abandoned, however, some claimed that it was as recently as in the 1960s. The festival was traditionally said to be important to keep peace and stability in the village, along with driving out evil spirits. This is reflected in the play that takes place in the festival, a play of two brothers in a fight of good against evil. Most of the men in the village take part in the festival that includes a parade, *pujas* along with more theatrical components. Historically it was one of the biggest festivals in Manang, however, over the years this festival's importance declined. According to my informants, it is more than 20 years since it had been last celebrated (according to promotional material on the festival it was just ten years ago, see appendix 2).

The festival was not reintroduced on the initiative of the Nyeshangbas in Manang. The Nyeshang community in Kathmandu reintroduced it. Many local villagers looked upon the festival with great scepticism, as is evident from my interviews. Because of the extra work it would imply, but also because they considered it a remnant of the Bon Pho traditions in the region. Bon Pho religion fused together with Buddhist belief in this part of the Tibetan Himalaya. However, Bon Pho is considered paganism by many Nyeshangbas, and is often seen as the opposite of Buddhism. This demarcation is very serious for many Nyeshangbas; still, the goddess Badhe Chukri is important in the village. Therefore, even though the festival was not popular among the locals, some parts of it, such as the erection of a flag near one of the older junipers, were taken very seriously.

One of the most striking features of this festival was its lack of local embeddedness. The festival was organized by people from the Nyeshang community in Kathmandu, not by local villagers. A couple of weeks before the festival a *pang chong* (village meeting) was arranged, and the intention of the *pang chong* was to distribute the different chores in the festival. The *pang chong* is the highest governmental level in Manang. This *pang chong*, however, was led by "big men" from Kathmandu. The local men were passive partakers in this meeting, given roles in the play that took place during the festival. The *pang chong* decided that all of the villagers had to take part in this festival (except the Ghale, as explained in chapter two). This meeting, along with several interviews and field conversations showed that the festival was not based on a local initiative. Another indication

of the strong influence of the Nyeshang community in Kathmandu was the festival's strategic arranging date. The festival was arranged in late October, at the same time as Dasein, the biggest Hindu festival and a national holiday in Nepal. The national holiday made it a lot easier for Kathmandu based Nyeshangbas to travel to Manang.

The reintroduction of the festival was important part of a promotional package prepared by the Nyeshang community in Kathmandu, and must therefore be understood against the background of the increased tourism traffic in the village. A former minister and representative of the Nyeshang community in Kathmandu argued that:

"Manang should be marketed as a destination where tradition and custom go hand in hand with nature."

Another important man in Kathmandu was quoted in the following way:

"MYS [Manang Youth Society] is planning to restart the Badhe Festival that has not been marked for the last ten years. […] the only way to promote such places is tourism.
Both quotes from The Kathmandu Post, March 13th, 2003

The festival was not planned and controlled by the local community, but from "big men" mostly from Kathmandu. This is, in my opinion, interesting in light of the creation of culture and place. What consequences for the understanding of place and culture does such a "foreign" influence imply? To understand this question I will embrace the concept of deterritorialization.

6.1.2 Deterritorialization theories and tourism

In my discussion of deterritorialization, I found it problematic for two reasons. First, the concept, or at least as it is used in theories on tourism, takes for granted that cultures were isolated before the processes of modernity and globalization. Secondly, it exaggerates the compression of space and time. As I noted in chapter three, the absolute geographical distance is still the same as before. Moreover, for the dominant section of the world's population the relative distance is also the same as before. People still live in places, not in a global "smooth space". The critique of tourism as a deterritorialization process is thus based on the inherent understanding of tourism as a one-way process inherent in the concept. In this understanding, tourism necessarily leads to change in cultural features in the host community. However, recent writings on globalization and power have stressed the opportunity to reterritorialize, to reify the local space –

to reclaim local cultural control. These writings are often inspired by examples of local subaltern opposition to global powers (Haarstad 2005; Andolina et. al. 2005; Amoore 2005) [21]. These writings often focus on the construction of local identities.

> "Spatial representations are important for political process identity theory because they often anchor claims that validate/invalidate identities. They are significant for social constructivism by informing definitions of regions and group identities that orient the entry of 'outside' actors into those areas and cultures […]."
> Robert Andolina et. al. (2005: 680)

I understand Andolina's "group identities" as culture in this context, the important point for me, is his focus on spatial representations as important for the definitions of regions. Andolina et. al. (2005) and Haarstad (2005) have demonstrated how local villagers, by applying and using global networks, overcome scalar limits. By the use of hegemonic discourses, the subaltern can overcome different types of suppression; they can "orient the entry of 'outside' actors". This is a new approach for understanding local resistance. This new approach opens up the possibility for small local societies to confront suppression by for example a national government, or from the influence of tourism. The use of hegemonic discourses, in my case it will mean arguing for the Buddhist culture and way of living in Manang as especially valuable and worth preserving, might however boomerang. The local expectations and needs might conflict with the expectations in international networks. The local community might want another development than which is dominant in well-meant western discourses. If this is the case, the local community might experience difficulties communicating their point of view.

Dominant discourses help shape how we think as tourists, academics and aid workers; therefore, it is important to deconstruct our own mindsets. One dominating discourse proved especially important in my case. In many NGOs and in dominant international academic discourses *biologic diversity* is now followed by *cultural diversity* (see, for example the Human Development Report from 2004: *Cultural liberty in today's diverse world*). Cultural diversity has often meant that traditional societies should be saved from external influences. Although cultural diversity is a notion with good intentions, it can prevent development in societies that are defined as "authentic" "real" or

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[21] The word "subaltern" is based on Gramsci, denoting the classes that are not capable to play an active role in shaping the dominant hegemonies (Spivak 1988).

"pre-modern". The hegemonic control that is inherent in such a dominating discourse may therefore rather close, than open up for alternative developments for a small village.

In theories of local subaltern control, there is a great belief in the ability of local groups to construct their own identities on the background of hegemonic discourses. I find it problematic how the local villagers in Manang can in practice use global discourses to produce or strengthen their own identity, or culture. Still, I acknowledge that there is a constant construction of culture in Manang, and other places for that matter. Moreover, I agree that this construction of culture can be understood as a part of the process of deterritorialization and its counterpart, reterritorialization. To clarify, I do mean that there is a process of deterritorialization going on in the world today. Globalization is leading to a spread of mass culture, a process that is threatening to cause a homogenization of world culture. But if globalization leads to deterritorialization, I will argue that it at the same time leads to a reterritorialization. This pairing of concepts is inherent in the very notion of deterritorialization. Deleuze and Gauttari claimed that "*what they deterritorialize with one hand, they reterritiorialize with the other*" (2002: 275)[22]. The problem here is then that in a great deal of the writings on globalization processes, the focus has mainly been on deterritorialization (Amin 2002; Tomlinson 1999). The focus on deterritorialization has lead to a focus on globalization, and therein tourism, as homogenization. "[…] the most firmly anchored identities are weakened, torn from their moorings" (Lanfant 1995: 8). While deterritorialization opens up to a homogenization of cultures, reterritorialization opens up to local definitions of place (Appadurai 2003).

If deterritorialization is the uncoupling of place and culture, then reterritorialization has to be the re-coupling of place and culture, or at least a redefinition of place and culture. Tourism might then redefine the local place. However, if we keep Foucault in mind, this redefining is not mediated from a fixed point (the tourist industry for example), but from a myriad of points that together produce the place. Social scientists have, as already mentioned, increasingly been aware of the many small pockets, or points, of resistance that accompany the global processes, what Wallerstein calls cultural resistance. In this understanding, the villager is a player in his own construction of culture. This might seem somewhat obvious, but in many theories on tourism the local villager has been termed a passive player, such as in acculturation theories discussed in chapter three.

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[22] Emphasis in the original, translated by the author from the Norwegian: "*det de deterritorialiserer på den ene siden, reterritorialiserer de på den andre*".

6.1.3 Deterritorialization, reterritorialization and the Badhe Festival

Deterritorialization is the uncoupling of place and culture and reterritorialization is its counter-part, therefore it may prove to be helpful analytic tool here. At the same time as tourism brings changes, globalization processes, in a broader sense but certainly very concretely by tourism, is increasing the importance of the local culture and place. What is there to show, if it was not for the local culture? The reintroduction of an old, place specific festival therefore seemed to me as an obvious example how tourism might lead to reterritorialization. Festivals are traditionally central in writings on culture, when describing a culture, the "festival" is supposed to bring forth many of the symbolic practices that take place in every day life. A festival was therefore intuitively a good concrete example of "culture". Even though I soon discovered that this understanding was troublesome, as paragraph 6.2 will discuss, I still understand the introduction of Badhe as a form of reterritorialization; it is a re-coupling of place and culture. The reintroduction of the Badhe Festival might easily be understood as an act to protect local culture. Still, I will argue that the need to make an identity for the Nyeshangbas in Kathmandu, along with the need to put up, or make an "authentic culture" available for tourists was the main reasons to reintroduce the Badhe Festival. How the local villagers experienced this festival was in this context not central, even though it was supposedly their rich culture that was portrayed.

Originally, this festival had a concrete purpose. It was a festival in celebration of the gods, to keep them on their side. However, in this new context it attained a different meaning, and became important in a new definition of Manang. I argued in chapter five that the local villagers use a religious and traditional rationalization, so it was not for the lack of such that the festival took shape as theatre rather than rite. It was rather because of the lack of local embeddedness. As already noted, the festival was reintroduced mainly for two reasons: to increase the traffic of tourists (and the duration of the stays) and to increase the bonds between the Nyeshang community in Kathmandu and Manang. This community has acquired wealth and power due to the described trading ventures. Even though they now live in the capital city, Manang is still important in defining the identity of the community (Aase and Vetaas 2006). Manang is now the "land left behind", the land of earlier time's unproblematic bliss. The views of the Nyeshangbas in Kathmandu are especially important in this context. The out-migration of the most successful businessmen from Manang to Kathmandu led to a skewed power balance between Manang and the Nyeshangbas in Kathmandu (Rogers 2004). This power balance is manifested very clearly through the big flow of money that goes from Kathmandu to Manang (Rogers 2004; own fieldwork). This flow of money has been necessary when developing the tourism industry in

Manang. The Nyeshang community in Kathmandu are central in Manang, and because of the great dependence the Nyeshang community in Kathmandu have on tourism, the tourists also becomes an important factor.

6.1.4 Conclusion

The reterritorialization of culture indicates that culture consists of signs that float around and are defined on a super-local basis: the local identity is "constructed on a trans or super-local basis [,] in other words, much of the promotion of locality is in fact done from above or outside" (Robertson 1995: 26). I find Robertson a little bit too rigid here. As already noted, inspired by Foucault, I open up for this identity being constructed locally as well. However, the current example of the Badhe Festival supports the conclusion of Robertson. The new reterritorialized culture is not defined by local voices; it is more a result of several voices, where the local voice is small. Still, the example of a single festival does not yield enough empirical proof to such an unambiguous conclusion. I will still argue that the arranging of this festival revealed power structures (as evident in the *pang chong*) that have more general implications for the situation in Manang. I will nonetheless not exclude the possibilities for local cultural control that has to be included in the analysis of effects of tourism in Manang.

Deterritorialization processes, in the sense discussed in chapter three, brake down the ties culture has to its place; reterritorialization builds new ones. This does not mean, on the other hand, that cultures did not change before these described processes: social science did not invent social change. Behaviour is and always has been rooted in a special meaning, which has its special context in time and space, like in Aase's local dialectics discussed in chapter four (Aase 1998). Still, in the situation of tourism, it redefines or reterritorialize very concretely. In the situation that I found in Manang, reterritorialization processes manifested it self very concretely by what MacCannel would call staged authenticities. MacCannel's "staged authenticity" is just such a construction of a local identity that Andolina et. al. (2005) talks about.

If tourism, along with other parts of globalization brings forth changes to the culture, is the culture then "reduced" or made less "real"? "Tourism is part of an overall process of development that brings external influences, serving as a catalyst for changes to traditional lifestyles", Price et. al. argues (1997: 255). A lot of the research and models predicted a shift in cultural perspective, external financial linkages and the creation of new ethnic images due to tourism: "status has become associated less with yak herding […] and more with mountaineering

exploits and material acquisitions" Zurick concludes (1992: 621). There is no doubt that tourism may speed up a development like this, but it is problematic to blame tourism alone. Another question is whether assertions like this are based on normative value judgements and imprecise conceptual divisions between the "authentic" and the "inauthentic" [23].

6.2 What is authentic?

In the traditional meaning of the term, as described in chapter three, culture has been defined as authentic if it is developed and exercised in the same place. In this understanding, culture is inherently tied to place. In other words, culture is authentic if it is not affected by foreign forces. However, this way of defining the authentic place, or culture, is highly problematic. Moreover, the question is if whether we need a new way of understanding the connections between place and culture. Chapter five showed us that foreign influences could even make traditional practices possible and thereby "preserve" local culture. Extra-local influence does not necessarily lead to a degrading of local culture, quite the opposite; cultures have always experienced extra-local influence. In addition, the increased time-space compression challenges a traditional way of understanding the place-culture nexus. Amin (2004) has argued that globalization processes demand a new understanding of place. He argues that the processes that I have described above, of a place that is defined by many voices do not necessarily lead to a weakened sense of place…

> …"but a *heterotopic sense of place* that is no longer reducible to regional mooring or to a territorially confined public sphere, but is made up of influences that fold together the culturally plural and the geographically proximate and distant."
> Ash Amin (2004: 37), emphasis in original

I claim that this heterotopic sense of place challenges a traditional way of understanding authenticity. If I return to MacCannel, whom I discussed in chapter three, I can take a closer look at how this is manifested in tourism theory. I found MacCannel's approach to tourism interesting. Bruner (1991), resting on MacCannel, argues that tourism is highly transformative business. According to Bruner, tourism is an active agent in transforming local culture, but because of the preconceived ideas of culture, for example in the Himalayas, the places toured are

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[23] Similar concerns about the concept "authenticity" has been raised many places, especially among constructivists (Bruner 1991; Lanfant 1995). Reisinger and Steiner (2006) have in an interesting summary of tourism literature suggested to abandon the whole concept.

more likely to change than the tourists are. MacCannel introduced concepts from semiotics to understand and explain the processes taking place. His main point was that the signifier, the sign, is often more important than the signified, the object, for tourists. The signs, mediated through popular description of a culture, decide if the culture is perceived as authentic. If the signifier the tourists want to see is not there, there is an experience that the culture is "inauthentic". Alternatively, the other way around, if the tourists experience the wrong signs, such as modern appliances, coca cola bottles and so forth, the culture is experienced as inauthentic. The main argument for MacCannel, however, is how the expectations for certain kinds of signs lead our interpretation of the culture as authentic or not. The reintroduction of the Badhe Festival might therefore also be understood as an adaptation to the preconceived signifier. The festival becomes an "authentic" experience. This resembles the big mass staging of "authentic" Thai culture I experienced when travelling in Thailand. Busloads of tourists were transported to big venues where the tourists, me included, were fed supposedly authentic traditional dances. It is not likely that we will see such bizarre versions of staged authenticities in Manang in any time soon, still the same development seem to be relevant in Manang. The difference is, however, that in Manang there is not such a big discrepancy between the signifier and the signified. The culture in Manang is different; it has "exotic" parts. Still, the development desired by the locals in Manang, might increase the conflict between the different discourses present in Manang. The important aspect of the authenticity debate, in my opinion, is to be aware that some hegemonic discourses over-emphasize place-culture connections, and overlook the discussions presented in paragraph 6.1. and what Amin (2004) called a heterotopic sense of place.

The different discourses I introduce here might perhaps benefit by some clarification: In paragraph 6.1 I discussed how different actors contribute to define Manang. In that discussion, I actually introduced three major voices in Manang, the local villager, the Nyeshangbas in Kathmandu and the tourists. In the previous chapters I have focused on the first two, for now I will shift focus towards the latter, the tourists. As mentioned in chapter four, I carried out several interviews with tourists visiting Manang. These informants were asked whether they think that tourism contributes to or ruins the local culture in Manang:

"*Does the western tourist bring "development" to this place without ruining all that is good here with our evils?"* American, mid twenties

"Protect the local culture and environment! Do not allow artificial-looking/obtrusive commercial development. Do not import plastics, candy and so on…" American, early twenties,

"And no more development!" Australian student, late twenties

"There are too many power lines!" American, late twenties

The main goal among travellers has been the desire to experience the unspoiled before it is too late. This is clearly reflected in the slogan of the biggest travelling agency for "alternative" travellers in Norway: *"Go before it's too late…"* [24]. The three dots at the end probably allude to the gruesome future where every place is ruined by the "evils" of our modern society. This general belief that tourism ruins a local culture is strong among travellers (Mowforth and Munt 2004), which is reflected in the statements of my informants. It is interesting to see what kind of categorizations the tourists use in this survey. The word "development" has a negative connotation in this context. Development is "obtrusive", or in quotation marks. It is "artificial-looking" and some of the tourists do not want any more of it! Furthermore, there seems to be a dichotomy between development and protecting the local culture. Theoretically, this dichotomy between development-as-evil and protection-as-good has dominated at least earlier writings on tourism (see MacCannel 1972; Zurick 1992; Price 1997). Among the tourists I talked to during my fieldwork, there existed a strong belief in the Himalaya as "unspoiled" from Western or modern development. This understanding, that no development and no contact with outsiders are better, is reflected in for example Zurick (1992): "[…] people have become increasingly *estranged* from customary environmental relations […]" (ibid.: 621, emphasis added). Furthermore, Bodley (1990: 135) argues: "where large numbers of backpacking trekkers hike into "authentic" native areas, they may unwittingly degrade the environment, increase pressure on local resources, distort local value systems by the sudden injection of cash into the economy, and create internal inequalities and dependency […]". These views asserted by the tourists and in dominating academic discourses, are in many ways consistent with the view of the Nyeshang community in Kathmandu. This is evident in the promotional of the Manang Youth Society, an organization formed by the Nyeshang community in Kathmandu that work to promote tourism in Manang, along with maintaining Nyeshang identity among the Nyeshang community in Kathmandu.

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[24] www.kilroytravels.com, retrieved November 2005

"Today, the upper Manang or Nyeshang valley is home to an age-old, relatively unaltered way of life, evident in the valley's many monasteries, its numerous festivals, and the hardiness of its people – skilled itinerant traders who call themselves Nyeshang."
Manang Youth Society, see appendix 1

Two important actors in Manang, the Nyeshang community in Kathmandu and the tourists, support the notion of a relatively unaltered way of life. This longing for an "authentic" culture among tourists and partly among the Nyeshang community in Kathmandu, is not necessarily reflected among the local villagers in Manang.

"I really want a road, then I can do business in Pokhara, the vegetable season here is much later than in other parts of Nepal."

"The best would have been 24hrs electricity!"

"We really need a hospital, a good full-year doctor"

"Tourism is good: it brings more facilities and uplifts living standards."

Very few local informants stressed that a further increase in tourism might lead to stress on local practices, most of the local villagers welcomed any improvement of their own living standards. They wished further development, even though it might be "inauthentic".

There is, in other words, not a common understanding of authenticity and culture among tourists, the local villagers and the Nyeshang community in Kathmandu. The place "Manang" is created, not from a local community, or from a dominating world culture, but precisely from the absolute particularity of the mixtures of influences found together there, to paraphrase Massey's definition of place (Amin 2002: 392). There exists many definitions of the place, and every definition is affected by the other definitions. Therefore, I find the traditional notion of authenticity, as tied to a specific place, troublesome and counterproductive when doing research on a small allegedly traditional village. There must be an open understanding of the place, and the changes occurring there, because of the contested meaning of "Manang" and its culture.

6.3 Chapter summary

Traditionally, writings on tourism and globalization have focused too much on deterritorialization, neglecting the fact that every place is in a constant evolution of defining and redefining itself. I therefore focused on reterritorialization and discussed how a distinct example of the reintroduction of a festival might unveil more general development patterns. I further discussed how tourism research often has over-generalized the "traditional society" because of dominant discourses of cultural diversity. This has often led to a one-sided understanding of effects of tourism, forgetting that cultures not likely change only because of extra-local influences. The dialectic understanding of globalization and tourism that lies inherent in deterritorialization/ reterritorialization might supply a theoretical tool to overcome this problem, opening for a more pluralistic understanding of tourism and cultural change. A local definition of place or at least the possibility of a local definition of place, that reterritorialization opens up to, was something that helped my analysis. In paragraph 6.2, I discussed this point more specifically with the demarcation of authenticity/ in-authenticity, which is so dominant in the tourism discourse. Nevertheless, the main point of this analysis was the focus on the dialectic effects of tourism. Tourism is an active agent in a process of de-linking and re-linking culture and place. I find the Badhe festival as a concrete example on how this process, called de- and reterritorialization, manifests itself in a village in Himalaya.

Chapter 7: Breaking the imagined bubble

As I have argued, there are several factors determining the future of the local production system in Manang. In chapter five, I discussed the direct affects of tourism, and in chapter six I discussed some possible ways of understanding how the local culture adapts to foreign influences. Although the Badhe Festival described in chapter six is not directly related to the production system, it was reintroduced to maintain and promote tourism, which in turn have effects on the pressure on the local production system, as discussed in chapter five.

Tourism to "pre-modern" places is paradoxical. On the one hand the "authentic" culture is the reason (at least a major reason, if not the only) why the tourists come to Manang. On the other hand the very consequences of tourism might be the "ruining of what is good with our evils", as one of my informants said. Another, related, paradox is evident in my analysis as well. Tourism might be understood both as a saviour and as a "threat". However, the paradox makes it necessary to avoid drawing a normative conclusion, even though much of the discourse on the authenticity of culture is normative. This thesis will not include, at least not directly, such a conclusion. This does not, on the other hand, restrict me from exploring possible future scenarios in Manang. In the following, I will try to look into some of the possible futures in the valley.

I see, mainly, three possible scenarios for Manang. One is an increase in tourism, both in quantity and in terms of available facilities. Interviews and my own experience of the place indicate that "authentic culture" is the dominant factor why tourists come to Manang. Still, it is likely that the valley could experience a great increase even if the culture the tourists want to experience disappear, or more likely change and become "staged". The extreme beauty of the valley might very well be enough to attract tourists. However, there has to be a strong improvement in the access to the valley for this to happen. Today the long walk only strengthens the feeling of coming to a "hidden valley" or Shangri-La, and is therefore a part of the whole experience[25]. Still, the lack of infrastructure is the biggest hindrance for a substantial increase in tourism. As commented earlier in the thesis, there are plans to extend the road to Chame. Some reports indicate that this road is just a couple of years away from completion. Chame is just a two-day

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[25] There is a dirt air strip in Manang, however, the air service from Pokhara and Kathmandu is only seldom used by tourists, therefore the dominant mean of transportation for the tourists is their own feet.

walk from Manang, and a road to Chame would dramatically change the situation in Manang, both in terms of market access, discussed in chapter five, and in terms of the level of scale of tourism and concomitant implications for social life.

A second scenario is a decrease in tourism. The current unstable situation in Nepal has already led to a temporarily drop in tourism numbers. A long lasting conflict might lead to a situation as we see in parts of Kashmir, where unrest in 1989 created a lasting decrease in tourism[26]. A lasting decrease in Manang might lead to an increasing out-migration from Manang. The Nyeshang farming practices will then be in jeopardy, as argued in chapter five. However, other ethnic groups could come to Manang and settle permanently there, importing new practices, and thereby a new culture. It is however unsure how the current ban on land sales to non-Nyeshangbas will develop if an increased out-migration continues. There is evidence from Pisang, also a village in Upper-Manang, which indicates that the ban on land sales to non-Nyeshangbas leads to a high level of abandoned land, even though there are enough people that wish to buy land (Ghimire 2005). The situation in Kathmandu is however also important. The main source of employment among the Nyeshang community in Kathmandu is the tourism industry. A decrease in tourists in Manang is necessarily related to the situation in Kathmandu. Another question is therefore whether a decreasing possibility of a successful business career in Kathmandu might eventually rather lead to a *re*-migration to Manang. A decrease in tourism might therefore both lead to out-migration and re-migration. In my interviews, it was evident that many of the Nyeshangbas in Kathmandu were reluctant to sell their fields because the fields were looked upon as some sort of safety valve. If everything failed, at least they had their fields.

A third scenario is a continuing of the current (2004) level of tourism. The flow of tourists has showed only minor fluctuations, apart from the extreme situation after the royal coup in 2005. Therefore, such a scenario could be expected. This scenario does not exclude a slow improvement of tourist facilities, just the opposite. However, it does not take into consideration the possibility of a large increase in tourism. The farming system, in such a situation, is likely to continue as explained in chapter five. At least if there is no major improvement in infrastructure. Still, even in a situation with only small changes in tourism numbers, other factors will affect the situation in Manang, and as noted, no culture is stable.

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[26] According to AFP (Agence France-Presse), march 23, 2005, retrieved from AFP.com

These scenarios do not lead to a stringent and clear conclusion. One of the clearest things these scenarios depict is still that the future is very uncertain. Two seemingly different responses to the same question, "what will happen if the tourists stopped coming?", further illustrate this.

"If the tourists stopped coming? … Then we must grow these empty ones as well"
Young owner of a small guesthouse, pointing towards some abandoned fields behind his guesthouse

"It will be as it were for twenty/thirty years ago, with more and more people moving to Kathmandu."
Nyeshangba employee at the ACAP office, former trader

As one of my informant already argued, he has the abandoned fields as a back up plan in case of the tourism lastingly or temporarily disappears. This is most relevant for the small guesthouse owners. Most of the owners of the big hotels are people who returned to Manang just for the possibilities that tourism offered. According to them, it is very likely that they will return to Kathmandu if the prospects of tourism diminish further, as in scenario one. Some informants were already thinking that this might be the case in the autumn of 2004, before the royal takeover in February 2005. A substantial part of the youths in Manang goes to Kathmandu for education. Some of these return to Manang to take care of the tourism business, their field and, importantly, their elderly parents. The availability of "modern life" is important for these young people. However, even though the life in Manang has changed dramatically over the last twenty years, it is still a long way from Kathmandu.

"It is impossible for my children to move up here if they cannot work in the tourist industry. They lack local knowledge, both culturally and practically, especially when it comes to farming" Guesthouse owner

The possibility to work in the tourism business in Manang renders it possible for people without local knowledge to move to Manang. Several informants concluded that the very reason to stay in Manang was tourism.

The "authentic native" the tourists come to see is in other words people who have lived parts of their lives in Kathmandu, have brothers in America and friends in Europe. How is it possible to conserve, or try to avoid changes in such an environment? This community is not a sealed community with ancient traditions that has been unchanged for centuries. Of course, there are

specific agricultural practices in Manang, but these customs do not exist in a "bubble" and have changed continuously. One example is the aforementioned change from barley to wheat. Another is the introduction of potato, which happened before the tourism started. Another change in tradition is the big transition from Bon Pho to Buddhism; imagine what a great change in practice this must have been! Customs, in the geographer Kenneth Olwig (2001) terms, is traditions that keep changing. The very term "tradition" denotes conscious preservation. Customs, on the other hand, are always changing, thus are more likely to survive. The solution, then, cannot be to make conservation parks where culture becomes a part of the park. Do we want to make this "bubble" where they can live in their "authentic" way, against their own will? It is also hardly valid, and at least ethnocentric, to conclude that tourism is changing the society by itself as if tourism was the only active agent, and the local society was a passive receiver of influence.

Chapter five and six came up with two seemingly contrasting conclusions: Chapter five analytically showed that tourism contributes to maintaining the traditional farming system and thereby contribute to maintaining a "traditional" way of living, at least to a certain degree. Chapter six on the other hand, showed how the Nyeshang community in Kathmandu, along with tourists and important academic narratives of preservation, might impose stress on what writers have seen as "natural" evolution of practices in Manang. Still, both chapters indicate that impacts of tourism are complex and contradictory; changes in practices need to be understood in pluralistic ways. If we keep this in mind, the two conclusions are not contradictory: tourism might very well lead to a continuation of the farming system at the same time as it is affecting the construction of local identity.

Theoretically, this paradox has not been solved satisfactorily in writings on tourism. As noted, theories often focused on a one-way influence from tourism (MacCannel 1976; Zurick 1992), this is also reflected in general discussions of effects of globalization, especially in writers concerned with deterritorialization (Amin 2002). Later some theories over-emphasized the possibilities of local control (Andolina et. al. 2005). My investigation shows that it is important to accept that tourism has complex effects. Instead of seeing tourism as *either* homogenizing *or* sustaining, it is important to see that tourism is part of multiple local, national and global discourses that together produce the reality we see in Manang today.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Promotional material from Manang Youth Society

Organised by Manang Youth Society, a non-profit group run by young professional Manangis working for the improved and sustainable livelihood of the people of Manang, *Destination Manang' 2004* is supported by Trekking Agents Association of Nepal and the Annapurna Conservation Area Project and promoted by Nepal Tourism Board.

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Nepal Tourism Board

Destination
Manang 2004
See You in Manang...

My Manang My Shangri-La
Destination
Manang 2004

Over the Himalaya is a hidden valley. Surrounded by the 8,000 m Annapurna range and the great peaks of Pisang and Chulu, the valley is wild and wonderful. Tibeto-Burman people who followed the nomadic tradition of moving across the mountains, hunting and searching for food, found the valley and settled in it centuries ago. Today, the upper Manang or *Nyeshang Valley* is home to an age-old, relatively-unaltered way of life, evident in the Valley's many monasteries, its numerous festivals, and the hardiness of its people - skilled itinerant traders who call themselves *Nyeshang*.

116

Appendix 2

Appendix 2 is from the webpage destinationmanang.com, with a facsimile of the promotional material for the Badhe Festival