Domesticating Spaces in Transition: Politics and Practices in the Gender and Development Literature, 1970-99[1]

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Abstract: Much of how we understand cultural transformation in local and global economies is influenced by a spatiality that directs or governs people's lives and their places of transition. In this article, we employ the concept of "spatial domestication" to interrogate notions of gender and development as they have been predominantly conceptualized in the gender and development literature over the last 30 years. While we argue that this literature contains unexamined spatial dimensions and assumptions, we demonstrate that notions of space are, and have been, crucial to the construction of both "gender" and "development" in particular modernization, dependency, and knowledge/power approaches. Our examination of this literature suggests that the question of how space is, and has been, domesticated may constitute an essential future direction for the discipline of anthropology.

Résumé: La transformation culturelle à laquelle nous assistons dans les économies locales et globales se déroule en grande partie sous l'influence d'une dimension spatiale qui dirige ou gouverne la vie des gens et la place qu'ils occupent dans cette transition. Dans cet article, nous utilisons le concept de «domestication spatiale» pour interroger les catégories de rapports entre les sexes et de développement afin de faire ressortir les principales façons dont elles ont été conceptualisées dans ce type de littérature au cours des 30 dernières années. Même si nous soutenons que cette littérature contient des dimensions spatiales et des postulats acceptés sans critique, nous pouvons démontrer que les notions d'espace sont, et ont été, cruciales pour la construction tant de l'étude des rapports entre les sexes que du développement dans certaines approches de la modernisation, de la dépendance et du savoir/pouvoir. Notre examen de cette littérature montre que la manière dont l'espace est, et a été, domestiqué peut constituer une orientation essentielle pour l'avenir de la discipline anthropologique.

With international capital and global organizations actively seeking to transform political boundaries in the world, urgent concerns have emerged regarding the occupation, surveillance, and meaning of space. In this article we underscore the significance of a spatially-informed understanding of people and places in transition through a rereading of key texts in the women/gender and development literature. This review permits us to address the broader question that has increasingly come to resonate in local and global environments: How is space imagined, represented, and domesticated, and what are the political consequences of these configurations?

Anthropologists have long been aware of how space contributes to an understanding of field sites, but it is only recently that scholars have unearthed the considerable significance of space to the construction of anthropological knowledge itself (Appadurai, 1996; Moore, 1996; Pellow, 1996; Pigg, 1992). Though we still require a full-scale spatial critique of the discipline that meets the benchmark provided by Fabian (1983) on the importance of time to anthropology, it has now become evident that anthropological approaches to such central topics as ethnography, imperialism, and cultural translation (to name only three) contain crucial spatial dimensions that remain underexplored. The aim of this paper is to provide an initial contribution to such explorations by pointing to some of the ways in which spatial thinking inhabits anthropological conceptions of people, places, and change.[2]

In contrast to the anthropological proclivity for analyzing the symbolic meanings of space at the "micro" or experiential level (Moore, 1996), in this paper we focus on texts that elaborate analyses of people and places in transition from the perspective of development. In our view, a spatial inquiry into such texts is a required component of both anthropological knowledge and development processes. Far too important to leave to others to undertake, such analyses provide new insights into anthropological frameworks for organizing cultural data, the effects of these frameworks and the boundaries and

limitations that they establish. Given anthropology's close ties to development issues over the last century, development texts can be usefully read in this way, and indeed have been in the work of Escobar (1995).

In our spatial rereading of the gender and development literature, we find that one of the critical ways in which gender has been situated within development plans is through a process that we call *spatial domestication*. Space in this context refers to boundaries or distinctions that are culturally and technically produced and that therefore always embody particular relational meanings. The concept of spatial domestication identifies a process that ranks, orders, tames, and monitors spatial domains (such as households, rural settings, market towns, informal and formal economies, industrial factories) and the people who engage with them. Though, as a political process, spatial domestication is neither static nor neutral; yet spaces in transition brought about by development regimes often require that they appear so. A focus on these spaces in transition thus alerts us to the conditions by which women and men have been socially and discursively produced and "framed" in anthropological approaches to development.

In this article, we consider key feminist texts within what have been usually labelled the "modernization" (Boserup, 1970), "dependency" (Nash and Safa, 1980), and "knowledge/power" (Mohanty, 1991; Ong, 1987; 1990; Parpart, 1993; 1995a; 1995b; Parpart and Marchand, 1995) approaches to development.[3] We revisit these specific works not only because they have had considerable influence on our understanding of women and development issues over the last 30 years, but also because their challenges to the dominant narratives of development in each case carry unique *spatial* assumptions about gender that have thus far remained unexamined.

While these texts come from quite different orientations within the development field, we argue here that they share a spatial orientation that links specific domesticated locations with gender identities. It is the authors' different ways of thinking about space that reveal, however subtly and indirectly, gendered assumptions and practices of development that not only define but also marginalize and disempower women. At the same time, the alternative frameworks proposed by these authors contain unexamined spatial assumptions that require discussion. A rereading of this literature at this time thus renews our respect for the major contributions that these scholars have made to anthropological understanding of development at the same time that it encourages a more explicit exploration of spatiality, and its political implications, in future considerations of development. The following questions guide the framework of this paper: What is the nature of the spatiality that is born within the women and development literature? How do these notions of space inform us of the placement of gender within the practices and politics of development?

I. Inventing Development: Spaces of Modernization

Initial interest within the social sciences in the relationship between women and international development was precipitated largely by the publication of Ester Boserup's path-breaking *Women's Role in Economic Development* (1970). The well-known term "Women In Development" (WID) came into use after this publication received wide international recognition. The publication inspired considerable scholarship on the issue of women's marginalization in development (for example, Benería, 1982; Bourque and Warren, 1981; Sen and Grown, 1987; Tinker and Bramsen, 1976) and influenced United Nations policy initiatives which led to the 1975 World Conference in Mexico and the launching of the UN Decade for Women. Prior to Boserup's work, it was generally thought that women were not active producers; rather, it was men who were targeted as the "progressive" elements of development plans. Even the declaration that announced the First Development Decade (1961-70) made no specific reference to the economic contributions women made and could make (see Bulbeck, 1998: 174). In fact, one delegate to the ILO Conference of 1964 stated his position on the working opportunities for women in developing societies, a concern echoed by a women's committee at the time: "I firmly believe that it is a serious error of judgement for developing countries to ascribe high action priority to plans for encouraging women to enter the market, especially women with family responsibilities, when those same countries do not have or cannot create sufficient jobs for their male populations" (cited in Boserup, 1970: 194-195). Similar sentiments were expressed one year later at The 1965 World Population Conference of the United Nations.

Boserup's work challenged many of these views of women's positioning in development. In this research, she pointed out that the sexual division of labour varies across countries and regions and that, contrary to Western stereotypes, women often play a central role in economic production generally and in "shifting agricultural" economies specifically, such as those in Africa (Boserup, 1970: 24). Boserup contrasts African economic production with the "plough economies" of Asia where, she asserts, women are secluded and play a diminished role in production. In her words,

> Because village women [in Asia] work less in agriculture, a considerable proportion of them are completely freed from farm work. Sometimes such women perform only purely domestic duties, living in seclusion within their own homes, and appearing in the village street only under the protection of the veil, a phenomenon associated with plough culture, and seemingly unknown in regions of shifting cultivation where women do most of the agricultural toil. (1970: 25-26)

Women's varied productive roles, she argues, are due to population pressure, land tenure, and technology. As economies become more technologically developed, women are increasingly withdrawn from production or forced into the subsistence sector, while men take centre stage in the production of cash crops. From her perspective, these changes have been influenced by ethnocentric colonial policies, which assumed that women were not involved in agricultural production and thus bypassed female farmers in favour of men (Gardner & Lewis, 1996: 60).

As Benería and Sen (1981: 284) point out, Boserup's central argument—that women workers are marginalized in the process of economic development since their economic gains (as wage workers, farmers, and traders) are slight compared to those of male workers—was a remarkable one. This was an argument that was based on an examination of data and evidence that had long been available to social scientists and development planners, but Boserup was the first to use gender systematically as a variable in her analysis. At the time in which she was writing, her work was critical in focussing scholarly attention on the sexual division of labour and the differential impact by gender of developing and modernization strategies (Rathgeber, 1990: 490). However, Boserup's research was later criticized for its oversimplification of the nature of women's work and roles, its failure to address the effects of capital accumulation on diverse populations, kinship relations and women's household lives, and its lack of conceptual focus beyond that of the empirical data presented in largely neo-classical terms (see Benería and Sen, 1981; Rathgeber, 1990; Parpart, 1995). Overall, Boserup's language of development and modernization, or what can be called her textual landscape, obscures the mechanisms of power (for example, capitalism, colonialism) that systematically marginalize exploitable populations.

What has been seemingly ignored by writers in the field about Boserup's textual landscape is the way that spatial contexts influence women's lives. Her work is crowded with references to space and place. Her use of spatial metaphors and her focus on notions of space (for example, villages, towns, regions, export and modern sectors, market places) defines a methodological approach that links issues of development to the spaces in transition where women live and work. The processes of development that she describes are invariably geographic and spatial as well as infused with forms of exploration (often with unintended imperialist overtones) and surveying. In what follows we discuss how the key spatial concepts framing *Women's Role in Economic Development* operate to inscribe the identities of women rather than to produce critical practices that will aid in understanding the domestication of women's lives in the spaces of transition.

Interestingly, Boserup's book is organized into three main sections, with each section having an explicit spatial orientation. Part 1 of her book begins with a discussion of "In the Village" and a focus on the sexual division of labour in farming systems and the status of women in domestic and casual agricultural work relations from various parts of the "underdeveloped" regions of the world. Boserup advances the argument that village women in Africa engage in farming at remarkably higher levels than men (particularly in sparsely populated regions of shifting agriculture) and form the bulk of the agricultural labour force. In the more densely populated regions of plough cultivation in Asia, however, the situation is different in that a male family labour force predominates in the villages. This gender split is due to the technical nature of local farming operations, village women's seclusion within the home and under the "protection of the veil," and the villages' general reliance on male family members and landless families working for wages which Boserup associates with "plough cultures" (1970: 22-26).

Boserup presents the village scenes of Africa, Asia, Latin America, or the Middle East in a modern language of liberation that, first, tends to overlook the historical and cultural specificity of village transformation in the context of global development and that, second, tends to privilege the village in such a way as to essentialize the content of the "local." Separating the activities of the village from those of the town is difficult since one infiltrates the other (Kaplan, 1998; Kirby, 1993). The concept of village as it is employed by the author displays elements of a liberal, modernist discourse that relies on binary oppositional categories (for example, village vs. town; developed vs. undeveloped) (Chowdhry, 1995; Parpart, 1995b). It also represents village women as either bound to a tradition of domesticity that they are unable to resist on their own or incorporated into a world of economic work that places them, in comparison to men, near the bottom and therefore fails to "liberate" them from their domestication.

Part 2 of the book is entitled "In the Town" and deals with the activities and the peripheralization of women in market towns or in, what she calls, the "men's world." She identifies many towns in the developing world as being "male towns." There are the African male townships (such as those in South Africa and Rhodesia) where women are often barred from entering and where companies recruit men, provide living quarters to men only, and pay wages insufficient to support a family. There are also the male townships of ancient origin where the economic demands of the town and all outdoor activities are the responsibility of men, while "women live in seclusion within the family dwelling." This gendered organization of towns has many implications for women's participation in urban work relations within various parts of the developing world. In Boserup's words,

> With women confined to the homes, the streets, marketplaces, shops, factories, offices, restaurants and cinemas become a male world with an enormous surplus of men over women. In the Arab towns, the veil is gradually disappearing, but this does not necessarily mean that women now take more part in urban life than they did before. The main change may be that women now stay within the protecting walls of their own homes, instead of venturing into the streets protected by the veil. In villages in North African and Asian countries, few women stay indoors, even if they do no field work, for they have their daily chores, such as the fetching of water and fuel for the household. But in towns in Arab countries, India and Pakistan, many women leave even the daily shopping to their men (unless they can afford to keep servants) and hardly ever appear outside the home. It is true that the surplus of men in the streets, cinemas, etc., is declining gradually with the advent of new, less timid generations of girls, but even in this type of "male towns" it will be a long time before more balanced sex proportions are established in outdoor life. (1970: 86)

Boserup's clear linking of urban development and gender with notions of space was unique for the time in which she wrote as other writers working within this field of development did not see the relevance of space. As in her discussion of villages, however, towns are presented without adequate analysis of their organization of flows of capital, of the effects that they have on the resources of power and the commodification of social relations, and of the kind of contradictions they produce for women and men of varying class, age and ethnic backgrounds. Also, since Boserup's assessment of African and Asian towns (and villages) derives from large-scale surveys, secondary data sets, and brief, touristic travels to particular "underdeveloped" regions, there is neither a sense of how particular groups of women perceive community transformation, nor an understanding of how they negotiate changing power dynamics in light of economic development. Likewise, there is no indication of how women's stories or histories intersect with the local politics of modernity. Perhaps this lack of women's voices is not so surprising because Boserup herself remains geographically distant (physically, culturally, linguistically) from the very built environments she describes.

Part 3, "From Village to Town," takes a closer look at economic development as a gradual movement of the population from village to town and from agricultural to non-agricultural occupations. Here two successive steps in development include the replacement of subsistence family activities by commercial production and small market trade (the bazaar and service sector) in mainly rural areas and then by employment in largely urban factories and service industries. The overall effect of these steps in development is that more women are found employed in the bazaar and service sector than in the "modern sector." Their lack of employment in the modern sector is related, according to Boserup, to the discrimination of female employment and to the low levels of appropriate, modern educational training that women receive (1970: 212). One way to overcome women's marginalization in modern work spheres involves, from Boserup's liberal perspective of universal human equality and individual freedom, an improvement in women's education so that they can compete more successfully in urban labour markets and gain access to improved agricultural techniques in the rural areas (Benería and Sen, 1981: 297).

One important theme that permeates Boserup's work centres around the idea that for women to be equal participants in development first requires recognition of the spaces of their domestication and inequality (for example, family domains; plough, subsistence, and market economies). Once these spaces are identified in relation to what women do in them, then it is foreseeable to produce more appropriate, and less marginal, sites for women to live in and work in the modern world of capitalism. Boserup depicts women as having a lack of "control" over their lives since cultural traditions have been involved in domesticating their places of work. In this way, from Boserup's perspective, it is through a woman's particular connection to space that her "identity" is made coherent and knowable. For example, a woman's cultural identity is contextualized by spatial terms that segregate her places of work and her activities of consumption. "African" and "South East Asian" women are shown to

participate in market trading, selling and buying, while "Hindu" and "Arab" women are prevented from being the sellers in the market and are in a minority among market customers (1970: 87). Here, by connecting women's ethnicity to their level of involvement in market activities, Boserup spatially separates one group of women from another and ensures that "cultural traditions" determine the "place of women" in the modern trade sectors (1970: 97).

What Boserup provides us with, in effect, is a subtle introduction to the importance of space in structuring women's lives in developing "worlds," but one that is not articulated in ways to allow us to grasp its politics and the way that politics marks modernization processes. Nevertheless she does alert us to how geographic and spatial notions become infused in modernizing plans. Boserup herself conceives of modernization in terms of a real or imagined geography (developed countries) and relates that geography to what is different from it (developing countries). Even though she analyzes numerous sites of change in her assessment of women in development, one major limitation of her work is the lack of conceptual focus on *how* the very spaces of development that she explicitly talks about emerged as sites of modernization and stood as the basis of comparison between the West and the rest. This is a terrain of debate, however, that other scholars have taken up more directly.

II. Revisioning Development: Spaces of Dependency

While Boserup's study, with its consistent focus on women's work, was a turning point for the analysis of women and development, by the mid-1970s a theoretical shift was taking place to re-vision national and international economic systems and broaden definitions of women's work within them. Responding to Boserup's call for more research on the situation of women in developing countries, a flurry of academic and government conferences took up the theme of women and development during this period. The 1975 United Nations conference on the International Women's Year in Mexico was a significant conference because it represented a high point in gaining consensus for the view that there was a need for "intensified action to ensure the full integration of women in the development process"[4] at the same time that it revealed the stark differences between Western and Third World[5] views of women's situations.

As a critique of modernization theory that stood "at the forefront of theory on women and development" (Elliott 1977: 4), June Nash and Helen Safa's *Sex and Class in Latin America* (1976, 1980) was perhaps the most important text formulating new ways to conceptualize women's place.[6] Taking the 1975 Mexico conference as their starting point in the Introduction, Nash and Safa forcefully argue that the emphasis of the Western women's movement on improving education, political opportunities and employment will not benefit the majority of women in developing countries. This is because the "structure of inequality" evident in the Third World ensures that it is only a small minority of women from the "modernizing elite" who are in a position to take advantage of such new opportunities. According to Nash and Safa, structural inequalities are a product of two factors that work in combination to "subordinate" women: class and "uneven" development. The rigid class structure in place in most Third World countries is exacerbated by an international system that gears economic growth primarily to the benefit of "the developed centers," with the economies of dependent countries serving the needs of multinational corporations through a supply of cheap labour and the creation of new markets for manufactured goods. While some in the "periphery" may benefit from this process, "the mass of the people continue living in abject poverty" (1980: x). Given this context, talk of raising women's status "makes little sense" (ibid.), and Nash and Safa conclude that:

> In Third World countries, therefore, class inequalities take priority over sexual inequality, since only a basic structural change aiming at a more equitable distribution of wealth and income, coupled with the recognition of the needs for sexual equality, will benefit working-class women as well as their more privileged sisters. Even in the United States, the failure of the women's movement to take into account the persistent inequalities based on class has limited its appeal to working-class women (ibid.: xi).

Nash and Safa's argument is premised on a gendered reading of the historical development of capitalism itself. Noting a shift from a domestic mode of production "in which women shared the tasks of production" (ibid.) to a capitalist mode of production that creates "differential spheres of male and female activity," they argue that "the relegation of women to unpaid labor in the home is the primary determinant of their subordinate status in modern capitalist society" (ibid.). The significance of this process for women is twofold. First, women's position is *systemically* determined. As they put it: "It is not men who keep women at home—though they may appear to be the most direct oppressors—but the structure of the capitalist system, which benefits from the unpaid labor of

housewives or, in wartime, draws upon this reserve labor supply" (ibid.). Second, because the public-private distinction is largely a product of one system (capitalism) it becomes essential to analyse the *relations* between the public and the private (rather than understand them as distinct entities) if we are to document fully the subordination and exploitation of women. Concepts such as the "personal" need to be related analytically to the "political," the "family" related to the "polity," and domestic production related to "total social production" (ibid.). From this perspective, it is possible to see, for example, not only how the domestic image of women is extended to their public roles, but why this image maintains their subordination (ibid.). According to Nash and Safa, the failure to connect "reproduction" with industry, production, or the market (a major criticism levied against Boserup's work), is a characteristic that all existing analytical models share; neither liberal social science nor Marxism, developmentalism nor even dependency theory, can escape the criticism.

This latter point is taken up by June Nash in her critical opening essay (1980) on social science and its failure to understand women's situation in Latin America. While Nash touches on a wide range of issues in this chapter, she has two key concerns. The first is to clarify the importance of good research which makes a "sex perspective an objective part of our analysis" (Nash and Safa, 1980: 3). For Nash, it was not surprising that development policy had failed to take women into account since it had not been based on what she called "good," that is, "objective," social science; but rather on values that perpetuate myths about women.

Nash's second concern was to delineate the relationship between women's "objective conditions" and their "consciousness." She insisted on structural analyses of how women's world views are linked to a discriminatory process (capitalist development) that may threaten their activities. The class consciousness of working-class women, she argued, might differ from that of working-class men because of their spatial domestication, that is, their confinement to the domestic setting. However, working-class women's consciousness must still be understood analytically in terms of capitalist exploitation and the "chains of dependencies" produced and controlled by the "metropolitan centers of production" (1980: 7). This argument is central to Nash's perspective because of the emphasis she placed on the women's movement in both challenging androcentric social science models and fostering positive social change for women. Developmentalists, given their infatuation with Western progress, would likely favour external "aid" as a solution to women's subordination, and liberal social science, with its stereotyping of women as "wives, mothers, and lovers" (1980: 2), might well find women's liberation in their roles as consumers. However, in Nash's view, a "good" social science should be sensitive to the global dynamics of sex and class. In this regard, she recognizes the common ground of working-class women, envisions their contributions to society beyond the household, and takes the position that positive social change begins with women's own efforts to improve their lives. This stance requires the acceptance of the view that political challenges to uneven capitalist development are without question a "feminist concern."

Nash and Safa were not the first to identify post-World War II development as part of the process of capital accumulation, but they were the first, as far as we know, to explore this topic with a feminist anthropology sensibility. Not only do they amend Boserup's view of the "modern" world and its relationship to the "traditional" village but they insist on positioning women within this relationship. Rather than being excluded by modernization, women in developing countries form an integral part of the capitalist development process that feeds off of the labour of working people everywhere. Various levels of dependencies, including women's dependency on men, are a by-product of this process, as the "shift from artisan and household production to industrialization controlled from metropolitan centers of production" (1980: 7) creates new spaces for exploitation. The marginality thesis[7] is thus challenged because women are in fact "integrated in the process of production as both producers and consumers of goods and services" (ibid.: xii). That is, women's subordination in domestic and other settings occurs *through* their integration into the process of capital accumulation. In this way, women's spatial domestication is specifically related to the way in which they are integrated into uneven spaces of development.

While these global processes set the stage for their arguments, Nash and Safa are careful not to generalize about the negative consequences for all women. Indeed, the concept of class effectively serves to disturb assumptions about a universal woman in their analysis. Mention of the particular absurdity of imposing development models in "Indian areas" in Latin America, "where women have shared the basic productive functions of the society with men" (1980: 2), also hints that, for Nash and Safa, relations of ethnicity as well as of class need to be explored to appreciate fully the varieties of women's spatial experiences in developing regions.

Finally, in its wide-ranging critique of social science, the volume draws out the political dimensions of how scientific knowledge is produced and exposes the myth of

the objective researcher in this process. June Nash in particular expands on how women researchers, if they are to be accepted as "honorary members" (1980: 3) in the social sciences, must abide by men's rules of objectivity and universalism, and accept men's status as the measurement of progress.[8] Hinting at epistemological concerns in the discipline that were not to be fully developed until a decade later, she points to the "ritual rules" in the social sciences of "divorcing the personal perspective from the subject of discourse; eliminating empathetic understanding from observation; and accepting the terms of universal discourse without recognizing the particularistic elements that influence the field of observation" (1980: 2-3). Nash and Safa suggested that, by refusing to adopt the fiction of "stranger" in a strange land, women researchers can employ their view as "insiders ... aware of the subtleties of discrimination against a second-class citizen" (ibid.: xii).

> Women, as outsiders in the men's house of social science, are in a liminal state. The kind of perspective they develop in this state is not exclusively feminine; it is the response of any group that has been objectified in social discourse without having an opportunity to define propositions dealing with its own being. (ibid.)

Nash and Safa's identification of the "men's house of social science" creates a spatially-based domain of power and knowledge that subordinates or restricts entry for non-members at the same time that it introduces a spatial metaphor (liminality) to provide a "place" from which to criticize dominant visions of the world. This spatial dimension of their framework is important for a number of reasons, not the least of which is that it underlies how Nash and Safa *link* women in the "periphery" to women in the "developed centres." The connection between the two is hinted at by Nash in her retrospective of the 1974 conference on which the book was based: "One of the problems in organizing that meeting was to identify the people who had done empirical research on women, since the researchers, like their subjects, were with few exceptions invisible" (1986: 3). The same spatial framework was employed, then, to "reveal" women's liminal place in both the social sciences and the development process; to clarify women's important—though subordinate—positions in the production process (of knowledge, of the economy); and to offer a common and "objectively" valid space for the production of alternative views.

Reframing the spaces of social change and development in this way, Nash and Safa appeared to bring Third World women into alliances with First World women so as to imagine the possibility of a global sisterhood.[9] The boundaries of women's place are thus redrawn for a political purpose: we are all living in the same global space of capitalist development, connected by the same systems of production and reproduction, and for them—because structure determines identity—we potentially share the same goals of defeating the structures of subordination.

A spatial reading of this perspective clarifies its benefits over Boserup's framework at the same time that it defines its weaknesses. Nash and Safa rename the global space of modernization as capitalist development. They also attempt to resolve the conceptual problem, noted by Papenek (1977) and others, that women were recognized by this time to be full participants of social change but were not equal beneficiaries of development. The term "subordination," a concept closely tied to the framework of capitalist development, accommodated the emerging view of women's place as central to development but marginalized in development. At the same time, this concept checked the tendency to view women in particularistic rather than universal terms, not only because their domestic work and paid work were now understood to be a product of a *global* process but also because their sources of subordination were removed from traditional spaces to modern centres of production. It was not cultural traditions that limited women's mobility, as Boserup would have it, but an "international system" dependent upon reproductive labour. In developing this perspective over a quarter of a century ago, Nash and Safa offered a resounding wake-up call to anthropologists, whose spatially-bound methodologies were notoriously inappropriate for understanding transnational processes, and whose temporally-bound theories were dependent on the production of an Other that did not exist. An emphasis on local culture by both anthropology and development agencies had, Nash and Safa imply, essentially mystified women's "real" place in the world.

And yet within the contribution of Nash and Safa's model also lies the key limitation: there is an assumed unity of women's "real" spatial locations and their identity. For their remapping of spaces of development is premised on the view that, with unbiased research, "the" map of women's structural place in the world will ultimately be produced and that, once accomplished, a full elaboration of women's interests in it will be possible. Though operating with a different sense of spatiality than Boserup, Nash and Safa still abide by the "ritual rules" of positivist science, where prediction and planning form an integral part of knowledge production. Not only are women "knowable" once their subordinate structural positions have been identified, but this redrawn (global)

map is bound up with plans for predicting the future—in this case, forecasting women's "consciousness" to support the development of an international women's movement, the linchpin of a more just development. Despite the trenchant epistemological critique of the male domain of social science, it is not recognized that the spaces that women occupy are being socially constituted, and that their particular map, once designed, would be one of many possibilities.

III. Alternative Developments: Knowledge/Power

Though some time ago Nash and Safa hinted at an approach to rethinking development as knowledge/power, this approach did not come into its own until the late 1980s, when a move to "deconstruct" development opened new terrain for questioning its practices, and indeed its very existence (e.g., Apffel-Marglin & Marglin, 1990; Sachs, 1992b; Schurman, 1993). Coming from the different (though often related) frameworks of postcolonial, postmodern, and cultural feminist studies, a theoretical shift that emphasized the language, contested meanings and practices of development has now unsettled the view that economic growth should provide the unquestionable "core" from which all other development thinking should flow. This shift can be traced to Escobar's (1984, 1988) recognition, following Foucault, that development operates as a "regime" of knowledge and disciplinary power. That development is still able "to constantly reinvent itself as the solution to problems of national and global disorder" (Crush, 1995, back cover), despite several decades of documented failures and theoretical critique, is testimony to its power and status as an industry in its own right. Development, in this view, is clearly about something more than structures and the economic logic of making profits: it is also about drawing and patrolling boundaries, monitoring populations, and reconstituting identities (see also Ilcan and Phillips, 2000). And we begin to hear explicit questions about how development reorders and rescripts space, in part because geography has played an important role in fielding these questions, but also because the discourses and practices of development are, as we have seen, spatially informed.

In feminist contributions to the knowledge/power approach, the structural critiques of women and development during the 1980s texts that arguably benefited from Nash and Safa's earlier emphasis on class and material conditions are still valued for their analysis of gender inequalities (e.g., Benería & Sen, 1981; Mies, 1982, 1989; and Young, Walkowitz & McCallogh, 1981). The knowledge/power approach, exemplified here by the work of Ong, Mohanty, and Parpart, recognizes that women in the world are produced by multiple regimes of power/knowledge that not only situate them in the practices and spaces of development but also inform their challenges to various forms of domestication.

Aihwa Ong's work fits squarely into the knowledge/power approach, with her 1987 book (*Spirits of Resistance and Capitalist Discipline*) perhaps being the first to mark the transition in ethnographies on women and development. We focus here on her 1990 article that deals with how the state and Islam have reworked ideas about, and the places of, family and gender relations in a "modernizing" Malaysia. Ong is working with new themes: the state, religion, and sexuality are the key sources of power that determine the flow of women and men into and out of the village, the home, the factory and the nation. Moreover, theoretical concepts such as "structure" and "subordination" are replaced by terms such as "subjectification" and "social agency" based on a Foucauldian concern to understand "subjects as materially constituted by power relations and always part of them" (1990: 259). An awareness of how "space" and "social boundaries" are reconstituted through power relations is evident throughout this work. It focusses attention on spatial domestication in that women come to identify the new places mapped for them by state capitalism and Islam.

Though Ong argues that greater gender equality existed in the past because women "held the purse strings," had special *adat* knowledge concerning sexuality, and "could move freely" in their economic activities, she counterposes this argument with the idea that men derived their honour and their masculine identity through their control of women. When women were "at home" (i.e., not doing factory work outside the village), their virtue was "protected," and thus men were able "to fulfill their duties as fathers and husbands" (1990: 265). This gendered spatial control was also important for "protecting the boundaries between [Muslim] Malays and non Malays" (1990: 262) and thus became central to both the new (imported) morality of Islam and the modernizing goals of the (racialized) capitalist state.

The spaces in transition that interest Ong are a consequence of the ways in which capitalism creates chaos by transgressing borders. For example, as young women are drawn from the village as cheap labour for the factories and free trade zones, their potential immorality (sexual activities, autonomous lifestyles) weakens male control and blurs the boundaries between Malays and

non-Malays. While this chaos was enhanced by the state's development plans, the state (with the help of Islamic revivalism) attempted to maintain order without threatening the nation's path to modernity. It did so by reinventing the gendered and class-differentiated spaces of "tradition." In this way, middle-class women are remade into moral defenders of the community through their virtuous commitment to the family and domestic affairs, leaving public life to men. Women's bodies are also marked by a "spatialization of power" through dress: "the *dakwa* obsession with women's 'modesty' in 'male' and multiethnic spaces was reflected in their insistence that women cover themselves... [a practice that] marked off the female body as an enclosed, 'pregnant' space, symbolic of the boundaries drawn around Malay society, and the male authority within it" (1990: 269-270).

Ong's strength is her elaboration of how "competing knowledge/power schemes" and "shifting fields of power" spatially orchestrated gender in this case. Had she been able to widen her methodology to encourage middle class women to voice their understanding of the new situations confronting them (rather than relying primarily on secondary sources), we would get a better sense of the relationship between the new spaces of transition and women's "adherence" to them. We would also be able to identify more clearly the potential sources that these "upwardly mobile" women draw upon to challenge "revivalist ideals of motherhood, male authority, and the imagined body politic" (Ong, 1990: 258).

Other researchers interested in understanding the situation of women from a knowledge/power approach point to the ways in which women in the Third World were often homogenized as "victims" and created as a captive, "powerless" population dependent upon outside development expertise for salvation. In "Under Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourses," Chandra Mohanty takes it as her task to analyze the discursive production of the "Third World Woman" in some Western feminist texts, particularly through the use of universal and binary analytical strategies that gloss spaces in transition. One of her central arguments is that these particular writings not only objectify women by analyzing them as "victims of male violence" or "universal dependents" but place women within religious, economic, kinship or legal structures that, in turn, are assumed to grant women (across class, ethnic, age differences) their individual identity. In effect, the latent ethnocentrism of these writings "discursively colonize the material and historical heterogeneities of the lives of women in the Third World, thereby producing/representing a composite, singular 'Third World Woman.'" (1991: 257). This process of spatial domestication has numerous political effects: it situates women in opposition to men; establishes undifferentiated, transcultural populations of people; focusses on a codification of scholarship and knowledge that renders Third World women as non-Western, and limits the possibility of coalitions among Western, working-class, and women of colour feminists. Through her interest and investment in contemporary feminist debates, Mohanty calls our attention to the politics of feminist scholarly practices (reading, writing, critiquing) and the ways in which they too are inscribed in relations of power, knowledge, and struggle. She alerts us to the worthwhile consequences of what self-reflexive, context-specific, politically focussed analysis can accomplish.

Jane Parpart (1995b), parallelling some of Mohanty's concerns related to Third World women's identities,[10] analyzes the (re)presentation of Third World women by development experts. In historically tracing the emergence of development experts, Parpart emphasizes the institutionalization of this group's training in universities (which offer programs in development studies and other development-related subjects) as well as the demand for, and necessity of, experts in development projects and their spaces in transition. Among other things, what she brings out in her analysis is the way in which the Women in Development (WID) discourse established the need for technical assistance (such as skill transmission) from the North or Northern experts and thereby reinforced the authority of the WID development expert in a hierarchy of knowledge (1995b: 229).[11] She also discusses the Gender and Development approach (GAD), where gender relations and not just women are the object of concern, and how this approach regards the solution to women's development problems dependent upon "expert knowledge" (1995b: 236). As an effect of the process of spatial domestication, the representation of Third World women as helpless victims or as the impoverished, vulnerable "other" is, according to Parpart, embodied in the demand for technical aid in the form of (often foreign) expertise.

Ong, Mohanty, and Parpart all point to the importance of analyzing competing regimes of knowledge and power within context-specific sites of development. Each, in their own way, shows how the discourses of development, and their master narratives, embody the mechanisms of power operating in women's lives, in scholarly representations of "Third World Women," or in the organization of development projects that depend on "expert" knowledge. In contrast to the modernization and dependency perspectives outlined in the previous sections, these authors are committed to recognizing

how the concept of difference challenges hegemonic ways of thinking about development and alerts us to the feminist necessity of mobilizing those categories that have domesticated populations in the "name" of development. Yet the concept of difference (Western-non-Western, local-global) also hinges on a spatiality that is left largely unexplored in these works. So while these writers do attend to some issues of space and politics, we suggest that an explicit focus on the spatial construction of knowledge/power would reveal alternative mechanisms of power permeating the struggles of people's lives, their identities, and their ability to effect change. For, politically, these spaces in transition help to mark who we are becoming and signal a potential to change where and how we live. If we want to change the spatial power that developed worlds have used to anchor our identities, we have to, as Geraldine Pratt (1998: 27) implies, fully understand how they have constructed us first in order to claim them as our own.

Our spatial reading of the modernization, dependency, and knowledge/power approaches enables us to recognize other dimensions of development in a way that reframes the "gender and development" problem by taking us beyond the discursive field. It becomes important to recognize how concepts of space and the processes of spatial domestication infiltrate the practices of development in ways that not only direct our attention to the social geographies and cultural economies of transformation but also reproduce categories like north-south, centre-periphery, or global-local. While it has been noted that these kinds of categories are "predicated upon binary oppositions [that] cannot move us out of the paradigms of colonial discourse" (Kaplan, 1998: 62), our point is that there is always a knowledge/power dynamic that characterizes the spatial and a spatial dynamic that characterizes knowledge/power. Without interrogating these dimensions of development processes, both researchers and "vulnerable" populations become trapped in the spatiality of the discursive.

Notes

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2 Our theoretical orientation is informed by emerging conceptions of space in a range of recent literature that includes Anthropology, Geography, and Sociology (see, for example, Blunt & Rose (1994); Crush (1995); Escobar (1995); Friedland & Boden (1994); Lefebvre (1991); Moore (1996); and Shields (1991); as well as the spatial analyses of earlier feminist work (for example, Anzaldúa (1987); Ardener (1975); and Spain (1992). A conceptual framework for the exploration of what we call "gendered spatial development" is discussed in S. Ilcan and L. Phillips (2000).

3 Though Boserup is an economist, her work is widely recognized as *the* text that triggered the interdisciplinary explosion of literature, including anthropology, on women and development in the last quarter of the 20th century. Her work is thus included here as an influential text representing the modernization framework. Because we are currently living in the age of "deconstructing development," identifying one key text in the power/knowledge framework is more problematic. We have identified Ong, Mohanty and Parpart as loosely fitting into this framework, though we see them as contributing to it in different ways. Due to the limitations of space, there are of course many important texts that have been excluded here, for example, we do not deal at all with the rich literature on environmental feminisms by Sandra Harding (1998), Ariel Salleh (1997), Vandana Shiva (1994), among others.

4 This is Point 14 of the introduction to the *UN Report of the World Conference of the International Women's Year* (1975), as cited in Elliott (1977: 4).

5 The term Third World was introduced to designate the poorest areas of the world after the Second World War (Sachs, 1992a: 3).

6 The book is based on papers presented at the Congress on Feminine Perspectives in the Social Sciences held in Buenos Aires in 1974.

7 Nash associates this thesis with the work of Jose Nun (1969) and Rodolfo Stavenhagen (1970).

8 Nash includes in her analysis an indictment of researchers such as S. N. Eisenstadt (1966), Alex Inkeles (1969), and Joseph Kahl (1968), all of whom developed influential arguments about progress through modernization without considering the situation of women. Inkeles apparently interviewed 5,500 people for his analysis, "none of whom were women" (Nash, 1980: 5).

9 Nash and Safa considered that the disagreements at the 1975 conference in Mexico between women from the industrialized nations and women from Third World countries was, in the U.S. press, "interpreted as an attempt to divert the aims of the conference from strictly defined feminist concerns" (1980: x).

10 Parpart (1993, 1995a), for example, focusses on the concept of "difference" to break up universal categories and to argue for "a closer, more localized and contextualized examination of women's strategies for survival" (1995a: 264). The goal, in her view, is to challenge the myth of women's vulnerability "by uncovering their voices and subjugated knowledge" and to understand local knowledges as spaces inscribed by both resistance and power.

11 "The North" and "the South" are geographic designations that originated recently as less disparaging alternatives to "First World" and "Third World." However, these spatial designations continue to present problems since "the North" is typically ranked above "the South" in terms of levels of education, knowledge and technology.

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