



0160-7383(94)00096-4

FARM TOURISM, GENDER AND THE ENVIRONMENT IN SPAIN

M. Dolors Garcia-Ramon

Gemma Canoves

Nuria Valdovinos

Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona

Abstract: This study analyzes the changing role of women in the new economic activity of farm tourism in two distinct areas of Spain: Catalonia and Galicia. One of the most evident effects of economic restructuring processes in rural areas is the need to create *in situ* employment alternatives to agriculture. Farm tourism is a valuable alternative for women which both allows the combination of domestic responsibilities with tourism work and represents an income source that supports continued small-scale farming and conservation of the countryside environment. Women's perceptions of the built and natural environments are changing in response to these activities. **Keywords:** farm tourism, gender roles, economic restructuring, women's work, environmental perceptions, Spain.

Résumé: Tourisme rural, rôles de genre et l'environnement en Espagne. Cet article analyse le rôle changeant de la femme dans l'économie rurale en Espagne, spécialement en rapport avec une activité nouvelle, le tourisme rural, en Galice et en Catalogne. Un effet visible du processus de restructuration économique dans les zones rurales est le besoin de créer sur place des emplois alternatifs à l'agriculture. Le tourisme rural est une option favorisée par les femmes parce que, d'une part, elle est aisément compatible avec leurs charges de ménagères et leur travail dans la ferme et, d'autre part, constitue une source complémentaire de revenus nécessaires pour la survie de l'exploitation familiale et la préservation du paysage et de l'environnement — auxquels les femmes rurales attachent une importance particulière. **Mots-clés:** tourisme rural, restructuration économique, perceptions de l'environnement, travail féminin, rôles de genre, Espagne.

INTRODUCTION

Farm tourism is a new activity being developed within the context of a general restructuring of the economic and social norms of rural Spain. This study analyzes the role of women in this type of tourism and related changes in participating women's environmental perception. In this context, the quality and preservation of the environment becomes a crucial asset for the development of this subject area.

The article lays out the conceptual framework, introduces the topic of rural tourism and the role of administration in its development, outlines fieldwork methodology and characteristics of the study areas (the distinct regions of Galicia and Catalonia), and focuses on the results of the fieldwork on rural tourism lodging houses and the role of

M. Dolors Garcia-Ramon, Gemma Canoves, and Nuria Valdovinos (Department de Geografia, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, 08193 Bellaterra, Barcelona, Spain.) are coinvestigators in a national large-scale project on Gender and Agriculture in Spain. This article on farm tourism represents one aspect of their work.

women within the economic production of the family unit. The discussion also refers to the particular awareness of women about the renewed importance of the traditional rural landscape and the conservation of the environment. It then evaluates the role of women in the general restructuring of rural activity, its significance, and some perspective on the future.

Previous studies (Garcia-Ramon and Canoves 1988; Canoves, Garcia-Ramon and Solsona 1989; Garcia-Ramon, Cruz and Salamaña 1995) have concluded that the survival of family-based agriculture in Spain is linked to the active participation of women. However, it is also true that since Spain's inclusion into the European common market in 1986 family-based agriculture, as well as agricultural activity in general, is on the decline. This is due in large part to the politics of European common pricing and market intervention (Cruz 1991). Therefore, the restructuring of economic activity in rural Spain has been intensified in recent years.

Recent studies emphasize the growing role of women in this restructuring worldwide (Bagguley, Mark-Lawson, Shapiro, Urry, Walby and Worde 1990), as well as in Spain (Sabaté 1992). At the same time, these studies point to significant regional differences, which lend themselves to geographic study. It is also observed that the work performed by women is concentrated in specific activity types, such as the transformation of food products (Goodman and Redclift 1991; Whatmore 1994) or in informal sectors of industries such as domestic work (Stratigaki and Vaiou 1994). The article concentrates on the role of women in rural tourism or "agrotourism," designated as such when it is directly related to agricultural activity (Vaqué 1994). Agrotourism in Spain, as in many other countries, is linked to the multiplicity of activities that in large part characterize family based agriculture (Bouquet and Winter 1987; Bryan, 1991; Dernoï, 1991; Momsen, 1986).

One of the results of the restructuring of rural activity is the need for creating employment alternatives *in situ* by transforming the agrarian family unit into a multiactivity domestic unit. Family based agriculture in some areas has demonstrated great resilience in the face of the modernization of agricultural production. However, it is no less true that in other areas the persistence of family based agricultural seems to be a carry over of agrarian tradition, a survival strategy for domestic economies during periods of profound change (Barthez 1884; Whatmore, Lowe and Marsden 1991). Rural tourism, although still limited, presents itself as an alternative or as complement to the traditional activities of women within the agrarian family unit. The objective of this study is to determine the degree to which women participate in these new activities and to distinguish the women's emergent environmental perceptions brought upon by these tourism activities. In other words, their reappraisal of the value of the scenic landscape is a resource to be conserved because it enhances and attracts this new tourism in search for a contrast to the anxieties of modern urban life.

Therefore, this study is concerned with verifying that the integration of women into "production" work is crucial in the process of restructuring rural areas in developed countries of Europe. Tourism is a new activity in rural areas (at least in a quantitatively significant way), in

part facilitated by the restructuring of rural society. The work of women in rural tourism is fundamental and indispensable within the context of family based agrarian activity. Due to traditional gender roles, women have had little difficulty in transition into service roles (care of the customer), considering it an extension of her domestic role (care of the family). This new work could mean a level of economic independence, and it has a higher profile than does helping with agricultural production or domestic work. The involvement of women in the rural tourism sector has resulted in women developing greater sensibility for their immediate surroundings (the house, the garden and farmed land) and to the scenic values of areas. This transforms them into noteworthy "conservationists" of scenery and the environment. The areas selected for study are the regions of Catalonia and Galicia. These distinct regions with differences in the family structure and agricultural activities provide a suitable basis for a comparative study.

FARM TOURISM AND GENDER

One result of the restructuring of the rural economies of Europe has been the progressive loss of a large portion of its population and its principal economic activities: agriculture and animal husbandry. As a result, since the mid 1980s, a number of agricultural policies enacted by members of the European Union have been designed to encourage the diversification of agricultural activity. The common market reforms of 1992 have reinforced this shift by establishing a framework for the utilization of resources to different or complementary ends other than those that are strictly agrarian (Gomez Gil 1992). In essence, it is a paradigm shift from a "productionist" paradigm to a "post-productionist" one, the legitimizing of nonproductive functions of the rural environment (Commins 1990).

Of all these new activities, rural tourism or "agro-tourism," is most attractive due to its potential to diversify rural economies and, therefore, to help slow the rural exodus. It can be an important agent in local development (Kowalczyk 1994). The initiatives of the European common market establish that economic development must be founded on the reevaluation of the local resources (environment, patrimony, human resources, etc.) and must be brought about primarily by local means. Rural tourism, therefore, is relevant to two problems central to European agriculture today: the protection of the rural heritage and environment; and the abandonment of the agrarian lifestyle and the corresponding increase in rural exodus. At the same time, in all the countries of the European Union there has been an observed change in the leisure and vacation habits of the middle class away from the sun and beach to the benefit of rural tourism.

In countries such as France, Austria, and the United Kingdom rural tourism already represents a significant factor and has a growing demand (Clark, 1991; Prevezet, 1991). Within Spain, it is less significant but is developing under numerous initiatives in a majority of the regions (Alonso 1991). Capital investment and financing of professional training by a diverse group of administrative units (from munic-

ipalities to the European Union) has increased the supply, that now exceeds 1,000 establishments (Guia 1994) (Figure 1). For the moment, these developments have been isolated in dispersed regions and have diverse qualities. What is clear is that it has been the initiatives of regional and local administrative units, and not the policies of the central government, that have had a very direct impact on the quality and momentum of these developments.

In effect, national tourism legislation of Spain has not addressed itself to rural lodging, and it has been up to the local and regional governments to furnish guidelines for lodging and the necessary financial assistance. All the regional regulations on lodging of rural tourists allow for diverse options. They range from the rental of entire homes to the rental of one or several rooms in homes that are inhabited by the proprietors. This last option implies a higher level of immersion by tourism in the everyday experience of rural life. Lodging and other services to rural tourism are cast as secondary activities (the main being agriculture) by regional legislation. Rural tourism is also supplemented by diverse activities (such as rock climbing, mountain biking, equestrian trails, cross-country skiing, etc.) that foster small industries. These are helped by institutional assistance earmarked for rural areas (Guia 1994).

The two regions of Spain studied present a very diverse experience in this sense. In Catalonia the initiatives to promote rural tourism were implemented as early as 1983 (well in advance of European

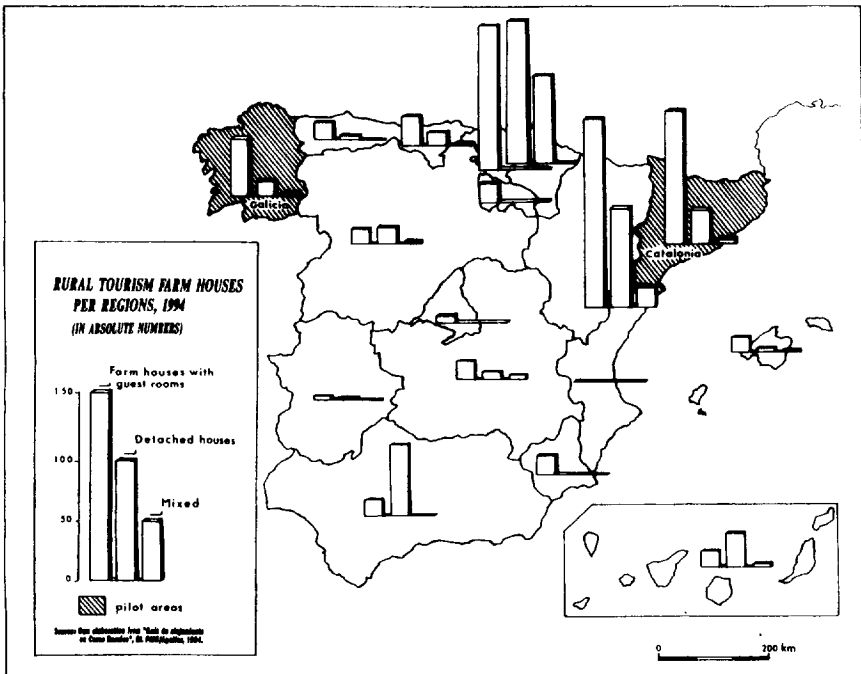


Figure 1. Farm Tourism Development in Spain

market unification), while in Galicia they have only been in place since 1992 (although some initiatives of the 1960s had similar intent). At present, 137 lodging homes exist in Catalonia (of which 105 are for room rentals) and 62 in Galicia (of which 46 are for room rentals) (Guia 1994). The most important difference in the policies of the two regions is the specification in Catalonia that the proprietor (petitioner) continue his/her agrarian activity, which has the policy objective of diversifying the economic activities in support of rural tourism at the family production unit level. The maximum subsidy for refurbishing a home for the purpose of providing tourist lodging was 500,000 pesetas to begin with and is now 1,500,000 pesetas (approximately 130 pesetas = US\$1). Initiatives in Galicia do not mandate the continuation of agricultural activity by the petitioner. In many cases this has resulted in the refurbishment of rural homes becoming the primary objective of the petitioner (the homes must be at least 50 years old). The amount of financial help offered for the refurbishment can be as much as 50% of the investment (however, the petitioner must use the home for tourism activities for at least 10 years after the grant is awarded). The possible importance of women in these activities has not been overlooked by the regional administrations. For example, in Catalonia a training courses designed specifically for women has been organized (financed by the leadership program of the EC). In Valencia, the Institute Valencia de la Dona (a regional government agency dedicated to women's issues) organized a course in "Alternative Tourism" for women in 1992-93 within a "New Opportunities for Women" community program. The course took place over 600 hour and was held in Valencia and Germany in rural areas with some tradition of these tourism activities.

The Study Area and Fieldwork

The region of Catalonia has one of the highest per capita incomes in Spain, and its industrial base was the catalyst for its development until recently. The proportion of the population engaged in agriculture is relatively low (lower than 6% of the economically active population), but its productivity is high. Locally owned small and medium enterprises predominate. Production is diverse and the cattle industry is important. The proportion of women in the agricultural workforce is comparable to other regions (18% of the active agrarian population). Their contribution is performed mainly without salary compensation as part of a family based agricultural enterprise (Garcia Bartolomé 1994).

Galicia has one of the lowest per capita incomes of any region in Spain, and its industrial base has always been very weak. A large proportion of the population is engaged in primary production (40%), and the proportion of women in this sector is correspondingly high (approximately 53% of the active agrarian population). Emigration (especially of men) has been a permanent feature of Galician society since the beginning of this century, first to Latin America and then to Europe. Therefore, a significant proportion of rural Galician families have been headed by women.

The methodology of this study is qualitative. It is a practical method for subjects with virtually no statistical material available. The use of extensive interviews allows the gathering of qualified opinions reflecting sentiments and values of certain aspects of the work and lives of women that is fundamental for this type of study. A short questionnaire relating to some concrete subjects (the source of the study's percentages) was used to place the subject in context. Interviews were recorded and lasted one hour and 15 minutes on average. One woman completed the questionnaire and was also interviewed in each sample household. The majority of the interviews were conducted at the end of 1992, although some were done during 1993.

The number of interviews in Galicia and Catalonia were 14 in each region. Ample territorial coverage was sought in both regions to capture maximum diversity. An attempt was made to select sample households that fulfilled a series of requirements favoring the active participation of women: that there be a woman engaged in rural tourism activity, that there be agricultural activity, even if supplemental; that the lodging site be the permanent home of the family, and that rented rooms be within the family home. In only a few cases these requirements were not fully met. Some of the sample households in Galicia were not engaged in any type of agriculture and some rented rooms in buildings were not attached to the family home.

The Main Results of the Fieldwork

In Catalonia the households sampled were fairly diverse. A preliminary division can be made between those that offer room rental within the household, those that offer rental of a whole house, and those that offer a mixture of both rooms and separate apartments. A further division can be made of those households that offer meals: some offer all meals, others only breakfast, and yet others only kitchen privileges. Two groups of proprietors are clearly differentiated: those who have always practiced agriculture and are supplementing their income (ever diminishing) with rural tourism, and the so called "neo-rurales," urbanites who prefer to live in the country and have taken up rural tourism services for their principal livelihood. The latter, however, has a small vegetable garden and a small animal herd (often to produce cheeses and/or as a tourism attraction). In both cases, the size of the agricultural plot is medium (on average some 55 hectares), and the harvest is either taken to market or used for subsistence by the household. More than half of those interviewed said their husband's principal economic activity was agriculture.

All the dwellings were originally farm houses that have been remodeled to some extent. The average number of rooms rented is four. In general, special care is taken with the interior decoration to maintain a traditional rustic ambiance (antique furniture and rustic details), which is precisely what the clientele expects. Almost all the visitors come from the large urban areas nearby (between 50–75 Km away). This is especially true of Barcelona Metropolitan Area with its 3 million inhabitants (of 6 million total for Catalonia). They are often families with children, couples, or groups of couples and belong to the

middle or upper socioeconomic classes. Foreign visitors are rare at only 5% of the total. Most of the lodgings (76%) are open year around. The average stay is 4.5 days, which reveals the importance of weekend or holiday trips (which also relates to the proximity of large urban centers).

The average age for proprietors is 44 (almost the same for the husband or wife), although there are some strong exceptions (for example, there are two widows who are much older). This implies that the women interviewed are relatively young if one keeps in mind that the rural population is quite old. The educational level of these women is high. More than half continued their studies beyond the required level. Almost all are married or widowed (75% and 16.7% respectively). The number of children per household is low (1.7), and their average age (18.5 for girls and 18.5 for boys) suggest they still live at home. A significant proportion of the women also perform outside salaried work (38.5%).

In Galicia, there exist two lodging types according to their origin. The first appeared in the 60s with the intention of promoting economical vacations in rural areas of the coast. Financial help was offered to help rehabilitate the houses and to install indoor bathroom facilities. The second type is more recent and developed as a result of regulations enacted in 1992 for the rehabilitation of rural housing (or of their outlying buildings) of at least 50 years of age. The restoration project also had to adhere to certain guidelines designed to preserve traditional rustic architecture. Comfort and traditional atmosphere (using rustic interiors) are of great concern in these homes. The interviews corresponded to both types, seven of each. The average number of rooms per household was greater for Catalonia, 5.6 rooms per house (the maximum allowed by law is 10).

Close to 70% of the houses are open year around. However, tourism in the area tends to be strongly seasonal. The visits are concentrated in the summer months and have an average length of 11.4 days. This seems to point to the relative insignificance of weekend only visits. Stays at houses of the first type of lodging tend to be longer (15 days) than for the second type (8 days). This may be due to the difference in price and of clientele. In the first type, the inclusion of meals is much more common as full or partial board. Galician cuisine has a more renowned reputation than its Catalan counterpart (possibly due to the reputation of Galician food products, such as its seafood). This also implies a greater participation of women in the "agrotourism" enterprises of Galicia, where cooking is viewed as a traditional gender role for women.

Clients come primarily from Spain. However, unlike to Catalonia, most tourists visit Galician come from outside, from provinces that are more urban and have a greater per capita income (Madrid, Valencia, and Catalonia, for example). Another 20% of the visitors come from outside Spain most commonly from France, the Netherlands, and Belgium. This is a larger segment than from Catalonia, possibly due to Galicia's image as profoundly rustic country (both in its landscape and people). There is a great variation in the socioeconomic status of visitors between the two types of lodging houses.

In general, the lodging houses are involved in some type of agricultural activities—all of the first lodging type (although some have only small plots), and for all but one of the second. However, a much greater proportion of production was consumed within the household in Galicia than in Catalonia (64% vs. 18%). The average size of land exploited was smaller for Galicia (2.6 hectares).

The average age of the Galician proprietors was greater than for Catalonia (59 for men and 58 for women), and their educational level was also very different: only 10% of the women studied beyond the government required minimum. Few women have jobs outside the household. This reflects the general lack of employment alternatives of the Galician countryside. The number of Galician offspring is greater than for Catalonia (2.2 vs. 1.7), but they are older (on average, 26 for sons, 23 for daughters) and tend to live outside the household. The proportion of husbands whose primary activity is agriculture is relatively lower (33% vs. 56%), possibly due to their smaller land parcels.

Women's Role and Work in the Rural Households

Frequently it has been women who have initiated the agrotourism enterprises. Women have carried the burden of organizing and performing most of the chores involved. They dedicate an average of 8.5 hours a day on most days of the week (6 in Galicia and >5 in Catalonia) to these responsibilities. This is a greater workload than with agricultural activities alone, especially during weekends when there are more visitors.

Women also take responsibility for cleaning the house and washing clothes. However, some have hired help for these chores or take the clothes to a laundry service. In Galicia, the households of the first type of lodging do not have the resources to hire help but often count on the contribution of other women in the family (such as daughters or mothers-in-law). In Catalonia, daughters, mothers, or mothers-in-law who cohabit in the household tend to help with these chores during weekends. Cooking is the responsibility that women delegate least. In the case of Galician women, this implies a significant amount of the work since 5 of the lodging plans include all meals. Shopping is also considered a traditional gender role for women in Galicia. However, many of the products needed are produced by the household and others are purchased from street vendors. In contrast, Catalan men systematically assist their wives in the procurement of supplies needed for the agrotourism enterprise.

The women in the study did not differentiate between the work done for the agro-tourism business and the domestic chores. When preparing food, they cooked for the family as well as for the visitors. Cleaning and washing clothes were also combined. In effect, they perceive the work related to agrotourism to be an amplification or extension of domestic duties.

The paperwork to obtain the subsidies is normally done by the husband. He also supervises the restoration work and later helps maintain it with "bricolage" work. It is also common for the husband to

help serve meals and assist visitors with information or in organizing excursions to the immediate vicinity. In Catalonia, the woman in most cases does the accounting for the agrotourism business. This is less frequent in Galicia, possibly due to the level of education among these women. The time dedicated by women to agrotourism has resulted in a corresponding reduction in the time spent on agricultural activities. Overall, the total number of work hours for women has increased, although these hours are less physically demanding. More importantly, as the women expressed it, it is much cleaner work.

In Catalonia, the husband continues to perform the bulk of the agricultural work (Canoves 1989), traditionally his role. However, women commonly take care of small plots as well as minor livestock. Both are traditionally considered her responsibilities. At the same time, it is the woman who takes care of the garden (if there is one) and the immediate surroundings, elements much valued by the visitors. One notable change is that in none of these cases did women take care of the larger livestock. Indeed, few households have large livestock (which requires extensive care), and many have given them up altogether. It is clear they understand that on adopting the agrotourism enterprise they will not be able to maintain the previous level of agricultural activity. In fact, often the decision to start the enterprise has been motivated by the perception that agriculture is not sufficiently profitable.

In Galicia, it was not uncommon that women were left with the responsibility for agricultural production when their husbands emigrated or were working in other sectors (García Ramon, Villarino, Baylina and Canoves 1993). Curiously, this was not found in the sample. Either the responsibility was shared or it was the husband who performed the bulk of agricultural labor. Land parcels are small and few households gain their entire livelihood from agriculture. Most commonly it is done for consumption by the household. This is indicative of the current situation in Galicia in which most of the rural families must engage in a number of economic activities in order, (such as agriculture, salaried work, retirement benefits, income sent home by emigrated family members, agrotourism, etc., in order to subsist (Villarino, 1993).

It is difficult to judge clearly the benefits of agrotourism for a number of reasons. First, agrotourism is a recent development in many cases (especially the case of Galicia) and, second, because the income generated is reinvested in the refurbishment of the house (in all the cases studied interest was being paid on credit obtained). An approximate calculation based on the information obtained shows that the income earned through the enterprise comprised at most a third of the total family income. Therefore, agrotourism is not an alternative economic activity with the potential to replace agriculture. However, in most cases it is a supplemental activity that results in a rise in their living standards and the rehabilitation of their homes.

The future for farm or agrotourism looks very promising. The interviews revealed optimism and great interest in continuing the venture and even expanding the services offered (the sale of handicrafts, organizing recreational activities, etc.). These women are also aware of the

importance of promoting nonseasonal visitation. In fact, some segments of the rural tourists would make this possible, and in the case of Catalonia the proximity of large urban areas would facilitate these modes of visitation. In Galicia, promotion of year-around visitation may be more difficult due to the region's climate and isolation. Nevertheless, this could be viewed as an advantage since Galicia can offer a more exotic image (profoundly rural) which can appeal to a more exclusive taste. This same visitor segment may be more flexible and could afford to come by air, even on long weekends. The women believe that advertisement is fundamental to their success, and that advertising the role of local administrations is crucial.

In both Galicia and Catalonia, the women are satisfied with their work, they like what they do and like to have guests to socialize with. Very few complain about a loss of privacy (although other family members did emphatically mention it). Women who dedicated themselves mostly to agriculture were often alone and isolated, especially in sparsely populated countryside such as in Galicia. While with the opening of a lodging house, they feel more integrated into the outside world. Women focused more on this aspect of the venture than men, possibly because men (even in a rural setting) have always participated in the local public sphere. It is sometimes very difficult for these women to open themselves to new habits; however, all those interviewed are very satisfied they did so. In Catalonia, for example, in two different cases two elderly widows gave similar explanations: in the beginning they had to get over the fear of having strangers in their homes, but later they were delighted by the extra income they generated and by feeling less lonely.

The women also value the opportunity to work and contribute to the economic well-being of the family without leaving home. Rural tourism is viewed as a good strategy for continuing their normal economic activity and helping maintain their property. It is also noteworthy that the rest of the family seems to value more the work performed by the women in the household, resulting in the women feeling more proud of themselves. The fact that her responsibilities translate into extra income make her contribution more visible. In the past, her contribution in agricultural activities were eclipsed by that of her husband, and domestic work has never been visible or much valued.

However, the women articulated the difference between generating "disposable" income (as from rural tourism) and having a job with a salary, which is what is truly valued by society (and possibly the family). Rural tourism has not promoted the professionalization of women. Several of the women interviewed said that the work of rural tourism was similar to that of homemaker but expanded. Therefore, since no special preparation is necessary and a full livelihood can not be obtained from it, rural tourism is not seen by these women as a true profession. Those women interviewed are not conscious of a shift in their activities and consider tourism a supplement that generates extra income. The seasonal nature of rural tourism reinforces this view since this highlights its supplemental nature (as opposed to an image of a full time profession).

Women's Environmental Perceptions

Rural tourism clientele prefer lodging distinct from conventional hotels, but more than anything they value tranquillity and scenery. Being in an environment free of disruptions, anxieties, cars, hurries, schedules, and to have the possibility of walks, bicycle or horseback rides are all important features of rural tourism. To stay in a house surrounded by green space is much valued by tourists because of the contrast to their own homes, often urban apartments. Tourists are often looking to immerse themselves in a different way of life. Therefore, it is important to them that the household still engages in some agricultural activity, so that their children can see the farm animals or they can harvest what they consume. The cuisine should also not be forgotten, especially in the case of Galicia, a region with a reputation for high quality farm products. These tourists value fresh, natural products which reinforces the importance of maintaining some form of agricultural production.

A heightened sensitivity to the environment was observed among the women interviewed after the beginning of their involvement in rural tourism. They are eager to take care of the nearby environment to the point that women are obsessed with the cleanliness of the immediate surroundings. In fact, this is one of the most cited advantages of the enterprise: that it is much cleaner work than agriculture, apart from being less physically demanding. Also cited a number of times in the study's interviews is the incompatibility between providing tourism services and the care of livestock (livestock in the home create many inconveniences apart from lack of cleanliness). In the few cases where both activities are maintained, they are clearly separated.

Not only is this heightened sensibility observed but also a greater concern for the environment in general is noted: the necessity of cleaning the rivers, beaches, the forests, and avoiding the accumulation of roadside trash was mentioned frequently in the interviews. They are aware of tourists' interest and its potential, in terms of both scenery and the cultural landscape. They articulate the necessity for action by regional administrations, but are aware that they must play their own part in the conservation of scenery and the quality of the environment. The women's involvement in rural tourism makes them active agents in the conservation of the traditional, agricultural, and scenic landscapes.

In Catalonia, the abandonment of agricultural lands and the corresponding encroachment of scrub forest was one of the most cited concerns of the women interviewed. They insist that the preservation of agriculture is essential to maintaining the landscape they have always known and now believe endangered. They understand that hand in hand with the efforts to develop rural tourism there must develop a political agenda for the preservation of traditional agriculture in these regions. The women fear that a disappearance of these traditions will bring about serious problems in the preservation of scenery and the environment. They are well aware that its deterioration might mean the end of rural tourism.

CONCLUSIONS

The recent process of restructuring of the world economy has had profound repercussions for rural areas in European countries. Even though much has been said about this, few studies have been done on it and the corresponding social restructuring (Bagguley et al 1990). Different aspects of the labor force must be considered, not just socio-economic class, but also gender. In fact, the notion of flexibility in the work force, central to the focus of restructuring, has much to do with the increasing proportion of women in the workforce, especially in relation to the enterprises that have been suggested. Family based rural agriculture in many regions of Europe lacks the competitive edge required by new politics of a unified European market and of GATT. Therefore, rural tourism enterprises in Spain can be seen as an economic adaptation of the family farm unit to a specific manifestation of global economic restructuring.

The policies of different administrations have played an important part in initiating rural tourism enterprises. In this sense, the central government in Spain has not been an important factor in implementing European Community initiatives. It has been the regional agencies that have had a direct impact in the quality and type of enterprise initiative. This may explain some of the regional differences observed.

The work of women is key in the development of rural tourism. The tasks required are very similar to those traditionally performed in the home, that is, domestic work. Without women's participation, the typical rural agricultural families could not readily take on this new enterprise, they could not afford to hire someone to run it. It seems clear from the interviews that women view this work as an extension of their domestic work, that it is equivalent to taking care of her "extended" family. It is somewhat ironic that it is her traditional gender role which has in large part enabled women to participate in rural tourism enterprises. This may be viewed positively, although it implies some problematic aspects.

On the one hand, this new enterprise reinforces the traditional separation of work by gender on the domestic sphere (including most of the work generated by rural tourism) as well as in agriculture. The husband tends to be responsible for the major agricultural activities and the woman is responsible for the day to day operation of the rural tourism enterprise. These she integrates into her traditional domestic work. It is curious that not one case in Galicia significantly differed from Catalonia with respect to the division of labor along gender lines, even when other studies had noted that Galicia was the only Spanish region in which women performed "men's" work. This corroborates the observation that the introduction of rural tourism enterprises may have reinforced traditional gender work roles. Furthermore, it may be stated that in the case of Galicia (where most establishments offer all meals with lodging) the division of labor is even greater due to the amount of kitchen work, a task that is never delegated to other family members.

The fact that this new activity is integrated by women into their already "invisible" domestic work has contributed to its invisibility in-

stead of professionalizing it. The women confirmed that the family seemed to appreciate more her contribution to the family's economic well-being after the starting the enterprise. However, since this is not considered a profession (there is no specific formal preparation and it is difficult to live off of it alone), both the family and the women tended to undervalue her work. The seasonal nature of the enterprise contributes to this as well since it does not permit a continuous dedication to it, something that characterizes a "true" profession.

The women greatly value their work in rural tourism, which permits them to earn some income without leaving the home (while continuing her traditional responsibilities). Furthermore, the income she may generate in this way gives her the opportunity to raise her family's standard of living. This may also directly result in the restoration of farmhouses and the preservation of rural heritage (this is especially true in the case of Galicia). These enterprises have not allowed women to achieve financial independence, but they have made them more proud of their work, something that can not be said of their traditional contribution in agriculture. It is clear, however, that rural tourism can not entirely replace agriculture as the main economic activity in these regions. In fact, neither the European Community nor the regional administrations has viewed it as anything but a supplemental activity to help slow rural exodus and the degradation of the environment.

One of the aspects of this new activity that women value most is the possibility for interactions with the outside world and becoming involved in the public realm (Ireland 1993). Seldom did the women complain about the loss of privacy and they emphasized (much more than the men) the positive aspects of these external interactions. It is clear from the interviews that men value this interaction much less, as it was never forbidden to men, due to their traditional involvement in the local public sphere. In contrast, women have traditionally remained within the private sphere of the family and, therefore, tend to value these new public interactions much more. This aspect is critical for understanding women's interest in this new activity, and was very evident in the interviews.

The women interviewed see the future of rural tourism with optimism. This is especially true in areas with large urban centers nearby providing a large potential clientele, as in the case of Catalonia. In Galicia it may be necessary to promote the region as an exotic tourism destination alluding to its profound rural character. This may attract a middle- and upper-class clientele with a greater sensibility to nature. This probably implies a greater participation by women in Galicia, in offering a more traditional rural image, for example using lodging plans that include all meals, using household produced foods prepared traditionally, a task for which the women are singularly qualified.

This new activity has influenced women's attitudes concerning both their immediate surroundings and the environment in general. Frequently, they expressed the need to promote initiatives to learn about and preserve the physical and cultural landscape. Their exposure to this type of tourism, which is concerned with the environment (ecotourism as some women defined it) has made an impact on their appreciation of their surroundings. It has contributed to their transforma-

tion into defenders and preservationists of the landscape and the quality of the environment.

The development of farm tourism appears, therefore, as a means to adapt to the restructuring requirements of the European Union in order to curtail agricultural production in some key areas such as vineyard and dairy farming. In this sense, farm tourism exemplifies the new directions of rural policies in the European Union, which emphasized the social functions of nonproductive farming, in what has been referred to as the "post-production paradigm."

Finally, this study suggests the role of the regional context (the notion of place) in the development of rural tourism, and the social constructs of gender that are associated with this activity. The results make clear that the local specificity and the regional context (the type of agriculture practiced, proportion of the population that is urban, regional policies, etc.) are important in the formation of gender relationships and roles. This extends to the different regional models for rural tourism, for which characterization and comparison are essential in the formulation of appropriate and effective policies. □ □

Acknowledgments—This article is part of a wider study financed by the Ministry of Education and Science (DGICYT PB90/0769 and PB93/0846) and by the Ministry of Social Affairs (Women's Institute 1992–93). In addition to the coauthors of this article, participants include A. Caballé, M. Baylina, J. Cruz, C. Domingo, M. Pujades, I. Salamaña, M. Solsona, A. Tulla, M. Vilarino, and R. Viruela. The authors of this article would especially like to thank M. Vilarino and M. Pujades for performing most of the fieldwork and for compiling some preliminary information on this subject. This article was translated from Spanish to English by **Francisco Hernandez**, Department of Geography, University of California, Davis, USA.

REFERENCES

- Alonso Pérez I. Miguel
1991 El agroturismo: una alternativa para las áreas rurales valencianas, *Noticias de la Economía Publica Social y Cooperativa* 9:21–26.
- Barthez, Alice
1984 Femmes dans l'agriculture et travail familial. *Sociologie du Travail* 3:46–72.
- Bagguley, Paul, Jane Mark-Lawson, Dan Shapiro, John Urry, Sylvia Walby, and Alan Warde
1990 *Restructuring: Place, Class and Gender*. London: Sage.
- Bouquet, Mary, and Paul Winter
1987 *Who From their Labour Rest? Conflict and Practice in Rural Tourism*. Aldershot: Avebury Press.
- Bryan, Bill
1991 Ecotourism on Family Farms and Ranches in the American West. In *Nature Tourism: Managing for the Environment*, Tensie Whelan, ed. pp. 75–85, Washington: Island Press.
- Canoves, Gemma
1989 La actividad de la mujer en la explotación agraria familiar. *Documents d'Anàlisi Geografica* 14:73–88.
- Canoves, Gemma; Garcia-Ramon, Maria-Dolors; Solsona, Montserrat
1989 Mujeres agricultoras, esposa agricultoras: un trabajo invisible en la explotación familiar, *Revista de Estudios Agrosociales* 147:45–70.
- Commins, Patrick
1990 Restructuring Agriculture in Advanced Societies: Transformations, Crisis and Responses. In *Rural Restructuring: Global Processes and Their Responses*,

- Terry Marsden, Phillip Lowe, and Sarah Whatmore, eds., pp.45-76. London: David Fulton Publishers.
- Clark, Gordon
1991 People Working in Farming: The Changing Nature of Farmwork. *In* People in the Countryside, T. Champion and Charles Watkins, eds., pp., 67-83. London: Paul Chapman.
- Cruz, Josefina
1991 Nueva dinámica de los espacios rurales, *In* Asociación de Geógrafos Españoles, XII Congreso de Geografía "Sociedad y Territorio." C. Domingo, ed., pp., 257-267. Valencia: Universidad de Valencia.
- Dernoi, L. A.
1991 Canadian Country Vacations: The Farm and Rural Tourism in Canada. *Tourism Recreation Research* 16:15-20.
- García Bartolomé, Juan Manuel
1994 Mujeres, agricultoras o mujeres de agricultores. *El Boletín*, M.A.P.A. January:14-22.
- Garcia-Ramon, Maria-Dolors, and Gemma Canoves
1988 The Role of Women on the Family Farm: The Case of Catalonia. *Sociologia Ruralis* 17:263-270.
- Garcia-Ramon, Maria-Dolors, Montserrat Villarino, Mireia Baylina, and Gemma Canoves
1993 Farm Women, Gender Relations and Household Strategies on the Coast of Galicia. *Geoforum* 24:5-17.
- Garcia-Ramon, Maria-Dolors, Josefina Cruz, Isabel Salamaña, Montserrat Villarino
1995 Mujer y agricultura en España. Género, trabajo y contexto regional. Vilassar de Mar (Barcelona): Oikos-Tau.
- Gomez Gil, Jose Luis
1992 Medas comunitarias para el fomento del turismo rural. *In* El turismo rural en el desarrollo local. Salvador Reyna, ed. pp. 39-50. Madrid: Ministerio de Agricultura.
- Goodman, David, and Michael Redclift
1991 Refashioning Nature: Food, Ecology and Culture. London: Routledge.
- Guia de alojamientos en casa rurales
1994 Guia de alojamientos en casa rurales. Madrid: El Pais-Aguilar.
- Ireland, Michael
1993 Gender and Class Relations in Tourism Employment. *Annals of Tourism Research* 20:666-684.
- Kowalczyk, Andrzej
1994 The Role of Tourism in Local Development. Paper presented at the session E.3.5 on Recreation and Tourism. International Geographical Union Regional Conference at Prague, August.
- Momsen, Janet
1986 Linkages between Tourism and Agriculture: Problems for the Smaller Caribbean Economies. Seminar Paper 45. Newcastle-Upon-Tyne: University of Newcastle, Department of Geography.
- Pevetz, W.
1991 Agriculture and Tourism in Austria, *Tourism Recreation Research* 16:57-60.
- Sabaté, Ana
1992 La participación de las mujeres en la dinámica social de zonas rurales desfavorecidas. *In* Desarrollo local y medio ambiente en zonas desfavorecidas, pp. 123-138. Madrid: Ministerio de Obras Públicas y Transportes.
- Stratigaki, Maria and Vaiou, Dina
1994 Women's Work and Informal Activities in Southern Europe. *Environment and Planning A* 26:1221-1234.
- Vaqué, Empar
1994 Agroturisme i turisme rural. *Revista de Girona* 165:67-68.
- Villarino, Montserrat
1993 La mujer rural gallega: protagonismo permanente. *El Campo* 127:241-251.
- Whatmore, Sarah, Phillip Lowe, and Terry Marsden
1991 Artisan or Entrepreneur? Refashioning Rural Production. *In* Rural Enterprise: Shifting perspectives on Small Scale Production. Sarah Whatmore, Phillip Lowe and Terry Marsden, eds., pp. 1-11. London: Davis Fulton.

Whatmore, Sarah

1994 Global Agro-Food Complexes and the Refashioning of Rural Europe. *In* Holding Down the Global. Nigel Thrift and Ash Amin, eds. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Submitted 28 February 1994

Resubmitted 25 September 1994

Accepted 1 October 1994

Refereed anonymously