

The Moral Economy of Infrastru...verest Tourism_Jolynna Sinanan

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SPEAKERS

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Peyton Cherry 00:00

Hello, you are listening to the Oxford Anthropology Podcast. My name is Peyton Cherry, a DPhil student at the School of Anthropology and Museum Ethnography. This is the podcast episode of a University of Oxford departmental seminar. The title of the seminar is 'The Moral Economy of Infrastructures and Everest Tourism' given by Jolynna Sinanan. Jolynna is Lecturer in Social and Digital Anthropology at the University of Manchester. Her current research is on mobile media and mobile livelihoods in the Everest tourism industry. Please enjoy the seminar.

Jolynna Sinanan 00:34

Thank you so much, Matthew and Antonio for organizing today and for inviting me. And thank you all for coming along. I'm trying not to do the math of just how many people are in the room. It's just better that way. I have moved here from Melbourne, at the start of last year here to the UK. And this is my first anthropology departments seminar invitation since arriving, so please forgive this Frankenstein's monster of a talk. There are going to be some pretty pictures and some pretty horrific pictures but not the kind of horrific that you would think. So I am going to read it because it will stop my nerves from going do I choose to say whether it's do I choose to say something clever or do I choose to say something funny? So I will just read and try to stick to the material that I have as best as I can. It has been almost 70 years since the first successful expedition to Mount Everest. Within hours of Sir Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay's tremendous feat of reaching the summit. They became national and international celebrities. That moment ushered in a new consciousness for thinking about the world's 8000 meter peaks. Despite the ascent coinciding with the Queen's coronation in 1953, Hillary and Norgay is infamous ascent in many ways marked the end of the age of nationalistic achievement, and the beginning of the age of individual achievement. Both became instant celebrities through iconic images of global media in global media, while squabbles of their nationality continued. Hillary is a New Zealander on a British expedition, and Norgate is claimed as a Tibetan Sherpa and Nepali and an Indian.

Since 1966, when the first commercial trek to the Everest region was organized. The Khumbu Valley has witnessed an exponential growth in tourism from around 20 visitors in the 60s to 18,200 during the 1997 and 1998 seasons, you will all know the 1997 season even if you don't know it. And at the start of the 21st century, the escalating civil unrest throughout the country caused a major decline in tourism during 2001 and 2002. But after 2003, the number of visitors rebounded and has continued to increase at a steady pace. In 2013. Around 37,000 foreign trekkers visited the region and in 2017 45,000 trekkers and we are currently waiting for the numbers from last year's and this year season's young Moo and Sanjay Nepal argue that the increase in the numbers of Mountaineers and trekkers in high mountain destinations like Mount Everest is symptomatic of our contemporary societies fixation with personal glory and ambition. Scholars On Nepal and Everest tourism agree that the mediatization of Everest plays a significant role in drawing visitors to the region a significant role in drawing visitors to the region, where visitors think of the constructions of Everest as the commercialization of risk selling adventure, and made for Hollywood disaster. mountaineering and adventure tourism have their roots in 19th century modernist narratives with the growth of the European middle class and the increase in commercial expeditions as a leisure activity. In her 2015 volume the Everest effect, Elizabeth Meza Leaney argues that Mount Everest provides a narrative that is strongly influenced Western people's sense of what it means to be human in the 20th century. She takes a cultural rhetorical approach to science studies, to examine how material assemblages have produced seemingly immaterial values related to Mount Everest, and how those immaterial values have had an intensely material consequences. Iconic mythologies of Everest as a colonial pursuit, mountaineering, adventure, nature environmentalism, commercial climbing and capitalism are solidified in global imagination through popular media artifacts, films, National Geographic Magazine, fiction and nonfiction books and the mediatization of Everest plays a significant role in drawing visitors to the region.

Everest history is perhaps better known in global consciousness than more recent historical events, such as the massacre of the royal family in 2001, which instigated the country's transition into democracy ethnographies of infrastructure ng provides provides fine grained detail as to transformations in moral economies over time, in the aftermath of crises and in contending with processes of Global Capitalism. As I illustrate briefly, very briefly, ethnographies of infrastructure reveal provocations of moral reasoning, what Karen Sykes captures, as how do people consider what is good when values are not shared. This paper presents short illustrations and explorations of themes that have emerged from my most recent fieldwork in Nepal. From 2017 to 2019. I conducted short periods of fieldwork in Katmandu, and in the town of Nam chi, which is what you're looking at here. The first climatization point on the Everest base camp trek. Throughout these visits, I focused on mobile media and mobile livelihoods, the impacts of newly developed infants digital infrastructure in the solar combo region, and the practices of workers, guides and porters in the Everest trucking industry. The main cohort of participants at that during that phase of the research were was under the age of 25, with a few being over the age of 30. This was mostly due to constraints and opportunities of the research being supported by the media and communications department Studies Department I was situated in for my third postdoctoral fellowship, the department is Participant the department as well as participants were excited about the opportunity for investigating emergent digital practices in the first five years of the implementation of digital infrastructures in the Everest region. But of course, media studies departments do not tend to fund 12 months or even three months of ethnographically based research. So we all settled for one month of interviews in my third year of visiting the region in 2019. After laying

the groundwork, in 2017, and 2018, my main group of now friends guides, my main group of men who are now friends, but research participants as well. The guides I worked with, with a generation for whom the fathers and uncles, they're my main group of friends, the guides, who I worked with, were of the next generation up. So the main participants for the interviews were their sons. They're sort of 25 under 25 years old, but their fathers and uncles are my main group of participants. So they're between the ages of 45 and 55. So that was the first phase of the study the digital media aspect of the study. That group of guides referred their sons and nephews, to me because they didn't see themselves as having particularly interesting digital practices. Of course they do, they just didn't see themselves as being of the kind of younger generation who were using digital technologies and kind of, you know, more innovative and, and interesting kind of ways. So that was the focus of the research at that time. However, as fortune would have it, I ended up with a permanent position in an anthropology department that wholeheartedly supported an ongoing ethnographic study of the wider transformations in the region, which has now become a long term study of the Everest economy, and tourism in its first 50 years, where I'm now working across three generations.

The core group of participants refer to themselves as antique guides. They are the middle generation of commercial trekking and mountaineering guides, where their fathers and uncles became a began working in the industry in the late 1990s. At the time of one of the key points in Everest history and in global imagination with the 1996 disaster. At the time, the sentiment in the alpine mountaineering community was Everest was no longer a desired destination, because it had become overrun with commercial client expeditions. It was this context that provided the fathers and uncles of my core group of participants, their entry point into the industry. Once my research was suspended due to the pandemic, and restrictions on travel over the last three years, I did not want to become a digital pest or asked my participants to be part of a pivoted or poorly thought through digital ethnography project, which is the focus of a whole other paper. So I only maintained irregular contact through messages and phone calls in the way one would organically with their participants, rather than making it an entirely digital project. Until returning to Nepal in April this year. My primary participants from fieldwork this year were across two generations of guides and porters. My research assistant is also a trick can guide and for the first three weeks, and my visit for three weeks resumed the tracking patron client relationships. return visits are usually a negotiation of time and itinerary between guide and client for a customized trip. The familiar routine of tracking to Namche allowed for walking and talking reflecting on the last couple of years and on continuity and change in the infrastructure ng of destinations along the Everest base camp trek, I'm trying to develop a theoretical approach based on the moral economy of infrastructure ng to reveals the to reveal the ways in which infrastructure ng becomes a symbolic, symbolic reflection of anxieties of the cultural order, and consequently, the sense of right and wrong, appropriate and inappropriate that people adhere to.

Although I'm starting to realize this may be just another ethnography about capitalism. So I refer to infrastructure in for a couple of reasons, I have to just acknowledge my colleagues Heather Horst, and romantische, can't we develop this idea for the book chapter that you see on the screen, although the now the three of us have kind of taken infrastructure in for different directions, so that that chapter, that chapter is infrastructure bring in the global south ethnographic perspectives on tourism, media and development? There are so many caveats that I that I know you've picked up and I have explanations for, I'm using Everest and not chum along with for deliberate reasons. And I'm using global south and

deliberate reasons but for the interest of time, my bad going to move on. So, yeah, that book chapter is infrastructure in the global south ethnographic perspectives on tourism, media and development. In the sage Handbook of the digital media economy, edited by Terry Flew, Jennifer Holt and Julian Thomas, and that's from Sage. What year is that? I think that's last year 2022. So I refer to infrastructure ring for a couple of reasons. Firstly, during monsoon season, in July, and August, accommodation and amenities in Namche, and other villages undergo an overhaul in improvements for the following peak tourist season. However, in the largely remote Solukhumbu region, where lock downs and stay at home orders were more challenging to have to enforce construction for tourist infrastructure improvements continued, with interruptions drawn out over two years, largely due to canceled tourist seasons. Secondly, in several countries in the Global South, and this part was written for a media audience. Hence Global South. Infrastructures do not emerge through linear processes. They are subjected to stop and start processes due to changes in government and funding agenda agendas and disruptions to the allocation of resources. As a result, infrastructures in such regions take on a layered quality as second order systems, they are built on top of prior or established infrastructures. The way that infrastructures visualized continuity and change, combined social memory and future imaginations that impact on everyday practices and relationships. So that's textbook 101. Penny Harvey and had an ox Lisa parks and Nicole stare sterile. Celski draws attention to how media infrastructures historically have been used to claim and reorganize territories and temporal relations. Media infrastructures retain a material dependence on land, raw materials and energy withdraws in financial and regulatory cooperation. They further argue for more attention to the processes of distribution. ethnographic exam ethnographic approaches examining the interplay between stakeholders in conceptualizing, managing and maintaining infrastructures examines the form of human aid the forms of human agency beyond experiences of infrastructures.

And considering the temporality of infrastructures Shannon Mattern presents an archaeological and architectural historical perspective, to consider the deep time of media infrastructures by locating their role in the shaping of cities. While these authors draw attention to the stability of infrastructures and their emergence as a continuing process of design, negotiation and management, anthropological approaches to media and other infrastructures reveals the repeated stop and start processes where geopolitics and regional politics are influential factors in infrastructural development. Brian Larkin, for example, argues that government centers are often situated quite far from the end from infrastructural developments such as roads, such as roads. Indeed, many representatives of the Ministry of Tourism based in Katmandu, have never been to the solar kumbu nor have they experienced the temporal rhythms of human activity between the peak and off peak seasons, decisions and by politicians, technocrats and economists can impinge upon domains of social life of people who depend on infrastructures. attention to these dynamics reveals the productive instability of infrastructures, and of infrastructures and their contingent and their contingencies. And the processes that underpin what post Kant and I have described as infrastructure during Akhil Gupta, for example, argues that infrastructures can be understood can be understood temporarily. His concept of an infrastructure o'clock acknowledges the ways in which infrastructure enables cities, regions, nations and even continents to be organized into backward ahead and behind and developed an underdeveloped and underdeveloped Anacin contends that infrastructure projects are also subject to what she termed as ideal as ideologies of scale. Were in what is big, important or scalable, is imagined and made meaningful. Infrastructures materialize institutional relations, based on relationships between centers and peripheries. They

standardize reflect and embody historical trajectories that can perpetuate colonial and Imperial relations. Further they shape individual actions and experiences of these institutional relations. And a Christina Pertti era summarizes our relationship with media, as media as material objects and non material images and ideas, media used in mundane and practical ways as well as for imaginative possibilities.

Further, she poses the following framing question for anthropologists and media ethnographers engaging in research with digital and media practices. How do people integrate different media into other parts of their lives into their sense of self and into their emotional and intellectual experiences, regional and contextual history's thus become inseparable from understanding media practices, and the infrastructures that have shaped them. Since the Mount Everest avalanches of 2014, and again in 2015, due to the Nepal earthquake, the government of Nepal has made a committed effort to increase telephone connectivity in the region. Alongside these efforts, private telecommunications corporations have also tapped into these under resourced and underserved areas in the Himalaya by providing digital connectivity through Wi Fi accessible on mobile phones. To mobile providers in cell and Everest link. Now service or region were until 2000 the only form of communication was through letter writing. Locals can recharge through Pay As You Go Cards, and tourists can purchase a SIM card data for a month as soon as they land in the airport in Katmandu, lucrative tourism has accelerated the demand for telecommunications. But tourists are now changing the imagination of the Everest region through these telecommunications. The growth of mobile phone infrastructure provide the provides some of the background of a genre of image that has become familiar on news and social media over the last three years of Summit seasons, or three years, and then a two year break. And then now two years, queues of people along the narrow corridor of the Hillary step waiting in turn to reach the summit.

The Washington Post's coverage of the deaths from 29 teens summit attempts on May 24, quoted Eric Simonson director at international mountain guides, who commented that since commercial expeditions became more popular, and Mount Everest appeared more in the media from recounts of the 1996 disaster to travel blogging, it misses his quote, crossed over from just climbers being interested to everybody being interested. Today, images and videos from the Everest summit expeditions and tricks to Everest base camp can be posted to social media platforms from 5000 meters in very close to real time. While the tourist imaginary of Everest is generally accessible on social media platforms, digital and visual practices of those who work in the region, are less so. porters, for example, are often from lower income families from other rural areas of Nepal. Yet significant numbers are increasingly from Katmandu. Those who reside in or come from Katmandu are required to fly to look like the gateway to Everest, and from their villages along the main Everest base camp trek are only accessible by road path and sometimes not even really path. porters who live in the Khumbu Valley surrounding Everest typically walk between two and four days to meet their guides and to meet their guide and clients in Lukla, tracking porters can carry up to 40 kilograms throughout the day, to meet their groups at their accommodation at the end of the day's itinerary. Depending on the trucking company they work for some porters stay in Sept. Some porters stay in separate quarters in the same accommodation as their group. These generally have better facilities than Porter houses on the outskirts of towns and villages, usually small, and they house up to 50 porters per night. These lodges cater to porters carrying supplies and goods who are not affiliated with trucking companies. Many Porter spend their free time

visiting one of the many snooker houses in Namche, returning in the evening to spend time on their phones in the Porterhouse, or in the Porterhouse accommodation, which typically have subset which, which typically has substantial Wi Fi connection. Wi Fi connection is a more valuable amenity to Porter houses than an extensive menu alcohol or cigarettes. Wi Fi on phones is a priority for porters after hours for entertainment, killing time chatting with friends, and exchanging images, videos and music.

For porters Wi Fi might be associated with leisure and entertainment activities independent from work. Robin, for example, who is in the who is second in the photo on the right now please third, he's sitting down in the photo on the right hand side. Robins experience of working with other men in other young men in the kombu resonates with xingyuan Huang's ethnography of rural to urban migrants in China that was the ethnography from 2016. In relation to factory workers in industrial towns, she knew on one argues that for the generation of rural migrants who were younger than 25, the trajectory of rural to urban migration has shifted from the push factor of economic necessity, to the full to the pull factor of aspiring for experiences associated with modernity. For young migrant workers migration means to see the outside world and to gain autonomy from one's family, country to much of the transnational families and migration scholarship. In this context, digital media is less of a bridge that connects individuals with the family and friends they have left behind in villages, and is more of a projector illuminating an ideal modern life to which they aspire. For example, in industrial China, posts of future aspirations around consumption, a prominent on social media platforms, one argue argues that this is hardly surprising, given a population of migrant factory workers who see their work as a stage towards obtaining wealth, creating fantasies of consumption, young men post images of it post images of cars, beautiful women and branded clothing, while young women post images of Princess style bedrooms.

For youth in particular, posting these images shows a Technicolor world that contrasts with lives spent mostly in factory work. The images posted by young men working as porters was similar to those posted by factory workers one describes to the extent that they portray lifestyle aspirations, through images of cars and motorcycles, which friends like and comment upon. other genres of images represent trekking the Himalayas and Mount Everest, which were more reflective of the tourist imaginary of Nepal. A mythologized space of exploration, adventure, adventure and remoteness. These images posted during treks with groups of clients became advertisement of sorts, and legitimize the identities of young men as being upwardly mobile through tourism industry work. So I have been referring to Everest this entire time, as the project is kind of linking trying to pull together the global imaginary of Everest lets the imaginary and the economy associated with that magic imaginary. That which is why I've been using Everest. But I also work with populations who are indigenous to the region and for whom Everest is obviously not the correct or acceptable power lead and term to associate with the with the mountain. And then there's also a lot of lovely but heated arguments of whether Everest refers to the mountain and Qomolangma refers to the Goddess but not the mountain. But the mountain is also the Goddess. So these are the things that I'm also trying to sort of pick apart in terms of the the discourses and mythologies and cosmologies through in my upcoming fieldwork Mount Everest has been known as Qomolangma to Sherpa and Tibetans for centuries, and the Nepali government named the mountain Sagarmatha in the Sagarmatha National Park in 1976. Indeed, the exercise of measuring and naming Everest is is one of climbing the mountain into the Imperial and geopolitical order of colonial control. In 1847, the Surveyor General of India Colonel Andrew was reported to the Royal Geographical Society in London that his team had discovered the highest mountain in the world,

without any local name. He proposed naming the mountain Everest after his chief and predecessor George cola Colonel George Everest. However, a political officer in Darjeeling, BH Hodgson, diplomatically supported the legacy of Everest, as fitting for name, but corrected the kernel by saying that the mountain did have a name according to Himalayan populations. Hodgson's interjection was overruled in favor of the geographer who implemented the operation, solidifying the achievement of the discovery to British imperial science and knowledge. So, in a lot of British mountaineering and colonial history, it was mountain did not have a name and now it's named Everest.

However, it has been shown along with for centuries, process of naming Everest reduced and effective spiritual material body to a topographical description in geographical and scientific terms. Consequently, it also reduced the meaning of the mountain within the context of the Himalaya, where it was understood to be a sentient being, and home to an embodied and in place deity. The Goddess Mia Leung Sangha, that in Tibetan Buddhism, who lives at the top of Qomolangma pasa on young G's Sherpa emphasizes the need to include perspectives from more stakeholders in the region, such as perspectives from all ethnic groups, considering the historical and migratory context. She further emphasizes that incorporating the views of residents will contribute a better understanding to the short and long, long term effects of climate change and their impacts. The solid Khumba region has already experienced the consequences of increased human activity through tourism as seen on roots of Everest base camp tracks, and most obviously, through the visibility of infrastructure and commercial activity between enroute and off Route villages. Sherpa notes that all households located on Route are involved with tourism commercial activities were some complement this income with subsistence farming households off Route A less reliant on commercial activities related to tourism. However, several have family members who work in EnRoute villages or have migrated out of the region to Katmandu, or abroad. Sherpa diaspora have been recognized to continue to engage with Everest through various cultural, spiritual and affective expressions. My fieldwork since 2017 is consistent with Sherpas earlier findings, that intergenerationally younger members of the Sherpa population aged in their 20s and 30s have migrated for study or work, resulting in an increase of workers from other parts of Nepal for farming and commercial tourist activities, such as guides, porters, cooks, and managers of accommodation lodges. In Nepal, the majority of the research conducted with populations in the Himalaya has been with has been with the Sherpa as the original inhabitants of the Solukhumbu region.

The cosmological and cultural meaning making of climate is relatively well documented, well documented. For Ellison, for example, describes the Sherpa beliefs of deities inhabiting mountains and the negotiations that results from the pocket from the economic opportunities of commercial climbing tourism. Further sharing on his long term ethnography of ethnographic study of Sherpa captures the simultaneous, mutually dependent and culturally conflicting relationship between Mountaineers and Sherpa in the late 20th century. However, within the last decade, although Sherpa populations continue to inhabit the solo Khumbu, as farmers, owners of guest lodges, mountaineering guides, porters and other occupations related to the tourist industry, a significant number of workers are to Hmong and right from the hillside regions lower in altitude to the salt solar combo, who have been drawn to working seasonally in the region for the opportunity for a more for more lucrative livelihoods as they have been considered migrant workers who are not indigenous to the region, the experiences and subjectivities of this workforce, including perspectives of what work and the and environmentalism means within An entire worldview and social relations is as yet under investigated. Workers who see themselves as

workers who themselves, negotiate livelihoods, cosmological concerns, and the place of the environment within their worldviews results in a compounded challenge, resulting in a geographic double bind. Tourism contributes to a situation of current when, or the incompatibility of economic growth and environmentally and environmental sustainability. And as I'm kind of uncovering digital media is playing a key role in that incompatibility. So this is all No, this is almost the last section.

So this is some more ethnographic ethnographic illustrations from fieldwork this year. With some reflections and initial insights.

I put my pack down on a ledge seat and tried to open my water bottle. It was stuck. I swore under my breath several times. Dad was sat on his cigarette, took the bottle from me, unscrewed it and passed it back to me. I was tired and miserable, my hair and my socks and my hiking boots and my socks and my hiking boots were wet. It had poured continuously for the first four hours of our day, and we had another four to go at least, descending 800 meters is not usually physically or mentally exhausting. But it had been an unusually wet season so far. It was like monsoon season had begun early. This had been the main point of commentary in Namche. Speculation if this was normal, erratic may summit season weather or a visible effect of climate change to you years of suspended tourist seasons absorbed by 24 hour news on mobile phones of sorry, two years of suspended tourist seasons absorbed by 24 hour news on mobile phones of Alinea. Floods and bushfires made it difficult to tell the difference of what this weather means in this region. Another point was much easier to decide upon to the small business owners guides and accommodation managers who lived in the town or work seasonally for over 20 years. It was clear that the solar Khumbu glaciers were melting. I passed the bottle to Dawa, he tilted his head back and poured a few sips down his throat, not touching the bottle with his lips. This was how guides were taught to share drinks with their foreign clients. In some cultures, people do not like sharing things that another person's mouth has touched. He put the bottle in the in the side pocket of my pack, and held it up to my wet shoulders. I carried my pack. But Darwin had attached my camera bag to his own and was carrying both on his back. There was no arguing about who was carrying what today. You don't trek downhill in the rain. Wearing a pack on your back end on your front, you need twice as much concentration as now as now more of the trail had has been paved with smooth stone and in some sections carved into steps. Stone Pope paved trails are better for donkeys and Yaks carrying everything from boxes to two minute noodles to gas cylinders to Nam che. For humans trekking in the rain, not so much slush from the mix of water with mud, donkey and Yak dung on stone at paved trails becomes particularly slippery. Dollar had walked two steps behind me the entire time. As tight as tired as I was, he was more so he had been watching where he was stepping, as well as where I was stepping as he had been trained to experience experienced guides or custodian, eyes, ears and feet for clients. They should be watching all the time, and they certainly should not be indulging in distractions, such as listening to music over air pods.

This had been the second point of commentary and Namche the new culture of guides had a business mentality. They looked slick. They had all the best gear. They took photos of their clients for them to post on social media, but they didn't invest in upskilling or further training for guiding in high altitude trekking beyond improving their English. The goal was to get clients to Everest base camp back and back quickly. There was no tracking downhill for an estimated 60 to 70% of trackers that season. Helicopters wants to use for emergencies. Once use for emergencies only have become Everest taxis

from Namco back to Katmandu. Pemba Sherpa picked up another French fry. His restaurant has been open for seven years. And he has and he had prided himself on serving the most authentic European dishes alongside the most authentic Sherpa Seeing on the menu. He sources vegetables from local farmers as much as he can. And when he orders imported goods that arrive in Katmandu, and onto look LA, he hires porters to carry them to Namche rather than hiring a helicopter, because if you give the porter some work, the money will go to his family. I've tried to tell my but my brothers and sisters, the villages just below and just above Namche don't need hotels, they don't need luxury accommodation. Everything that tourists want is here and they stay for days. They only pass through those villages. They said then that they will raise money to build a better road and the people will stay longer. I said don't put your money into the road. The regional cooperation will build a road. Use your money for what you can do best. You have very good soil. The region is known for its potatoes, use your money and build a greenhouse, grow potatoes, sell your potatoes to every lodging Namche and they will charge 600 rupees around three pounds for a plate of French fries. Instead of buying frozen shit from Katmandu and flying it here. Indeed the afternoon before we had run into a master student on his way down from trekking to Gokyo, who was carrying eight kilograms of potatoes he had picked up from a farmer income John for his own family in Katmandu, Pemba continued, but potatoes don't look as good as a hotel. You don't look like a businessman, if you're a potato farmer. So many of us have relatives and friends who have become rich from tourism. They own hotels, they and then they move away to the US and Canada. They don't want to stay and make things better for the next generation here.

Last weekend, there was a puja before the Buddha's birthday. Everyone from the villages went, they pray, they make their offerings. And then when they come back, if they see a poor person asking for a donation, they look away. They pray for money, but they don't want to put the money into what is here. It's all for business now. Build a luxury hotel and move to Canada. And then everybody will ask you for your advice. Because you have very good karma. You have made some very wise decisions, and you were very lucky with business in tourism. You want to see something crazy, unmasked. He spoke with a slight American International School accent and was a guide for one of the most reputable Indian trucking companies who were sitting around the boiler in the common room of the hotel around us guides and trackers alike. Were enjoying hot drinks and scrolling through phones. Of course I do, I replied. And he handed me his phone to me and on my hand and his phone to me. International mountaineering agencies have been keeping very busy in the lead up to the 2023 summit season, where more permits were granted than in 2019, the year of the infamous Everest queue image on the Hillary step, which was taken by NIMS NIMS de Peruggia and went viral. On my head, the Facebook page claiming the Seven Summits open which he had liked, and he had followed, according to their website CTSS is a US based mountaineering expedition Company, founded by six time Everest summit to Michael Hamel. CTSS offers the gold standard in Everest expeditions because as mountaineers ourselves, we understand that it's the little things that can make the difference. Comfortable, well rested climbers are successful climbers. The post from the day before April 28, introduced the residence 88488848 being the height of Everest. The residents 8848 described as beyond a tent, it's a powered heated home, featuring the world's highest Spa at Everest base camp. The residence dome tents are equipped with an electric blanket, stove heating, satellite TV, a private ensuite with a hot shower, a personal humidifier and morning beverage service, including a special espresso cup espresso coffee from a machine among several amenities. But aren't the glaciers melting? I ask. Yes, on my replied. But

aren't mountaineering companies leading cleanups and discussing climate change and things like that? It's all big talk. He paused. One of my client one of my clients called it Everest. Everest Base glamp. That's clever.

I handed on my his phone. After a few minutes a tracker into the common room wearing pajamas, socks and sandals and the fleece blanket provided in the bedrooms. And the looked up. That looks a bit disrespectful. He said, I don't think when trekkers do things like that. They are setting an example for everybody else. Like What he's okay to wear in the dining room and what he's not. It's the same with photos and advertising. He said, holding up his phone again. When people post photos or advertise like this, it creates expectations of what trekking, trekking, or climbing Everest is supposed to look like before. If there was no electricity or Wi Fi, that was it, nobody had it, it was equal. Now if you can pay for it, you can have it. Everybody is trying to offer luxury tricks or luxury accommodation. There is no doubt in three years, every hotel in Namche will have an attached bathroom with hot water because they won't be able to compete without it. Unless thoughts resonated with conversations I've had with other guides over those past few weeks. Most of my close is a bit of a recap to the start. Most of my close informants are between the ages of 35 and 45. They are predominantly from the tang ethnic group from the lower foothills of the soul kombu and although they are not as well known in the Everest tourism industry as Sherpa, the indigenous inhabitants of the region Tamangs have been active in the industry since it would Edmund Hillary embarked on the first ascent from Jerry in 1953. Prior to the first ascent, Swiss mountaineering efforts have invested widely in the foothills, building schools, hospitals, and mountaineering training hubs, which led to many young men working on expeditions as cooks and porters in from the late 1980s onwards.

My research participants are the sons and nephews of these first generation Everest tourism workers. Many were trained by international organizations and after gaining experience, opened small trucking companies of their own. Today, some of their sons have ended, some of their sons have entered the industry. They reflect that their sons are very good at speaking English. They had much much more opportunity to learn formally in the early 2000s During the TESOL, teaching English as a Second Language boom, which saw temporary migration by degree holders predominantly from the US, UK, Canada and Australia, teaching English in countries in the Global South. However, they also lament that with the increase of opportunity and economic and economic mobility, there is a decrease in pride and identity of being a guide that is reflective of representing one's homeland when working in a global industry. The rapid introduction and uptake of mobile internet on affordable smartphones has also inspired embarking on lucrative work and global lifestyles, we're working in tourism is a fast ticket to working abroad. Through tourism as part of global mobilities Naomi Lecia is concerned with how collective imaginaries become personal imaginings and vice versa.

More specifically, what imaginaries of ownership belonging and exclusion might be involved and for whom, how does the international circulation of discourses and images of heritage, whether material or immaterial, give rise to particular tourist experiences and local attitudes? And what experiences and attitudes does it foreclose? In a much earlier ethnography of development in Nepal, Stacy Pigg argue explains the notion of because a Nepali idiom through which Nepalese understand their relationship to other parts of the world, it connotes progress, outside influence in the form of resources and commodities. Development crudely and its relationship to the village joined to the nation where for the

majority of Nepali the village represents the circumstances of daily life, because this therefore becomes a scale for social differentiation. While intergenerational anxieties are not new, what is perhaps unique to the context of Nepal is that modernization has occurred across two generations in the second half of the 20th century, and has been characterized by rapid economic and social change. In the Solukhumbu similar to other rural parts of the country. The majority of the adult adult population was illiterate until the 1980s. And in 2015, digital media infrastructure was implemented were until the year 2000. The main source of long distance communication was letter writing. In this presentation, I've emphasized that infrastructure ng reveals contradictions and moral ambiguities that are driven by rapid change infrastructure and compels open contestation of value and values in globalized processes. Everest tourism is dependent on the cooperation of international and local institutions, each with their own agendas, and the ambiguities and anxieties that these processes entail. play out through engagements with infrastructuring, thank you so much.