



# Weaving a Future: Tourism, Cloth, and Culture on an Andean Island

*Elayne Zorn*

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The people of Taquile Island on the Peruvian side of beautiful Lake Titicaca, the highest navigable lake in the Americas, are renowned for the hand-woven textiles that they both wear and sell to outsiders. One thousand seven hundred Quechua-speaking peasant farmers, who depend on potatoes and the fish from the lake, host the forty thousand tourists who visit their island each year. Yet only twenty-five years ago, few tourists had even heard of Taquile. In *Weaving a Future: Tourism, Cloth, and Culture on an Andean Island*, Elayne Zorn documents the remarkable transformation of the isolated rocky island into a community-controlled enterprise that now provides a model for indigenous communities worldwide. Over the course of three decades and nearly two years living on Taquile Island, Zorn, who is trained in both the arts and anthropology, learned to weave from Taquilean women. She also learned how gender structures both the traditional lifestyles and the changes that tourism and transnationalism have brought. In her comprehensive and accessible study, she reveals how Taquileans used their isolation, landownership, and communal organizations to negotiate the pitfalls of globalization and modernization and even to benefit from tourism. This multi-sited ethnography set in Peru, Washington, D.C., and New York City shows why and how cloth remains central to Andean society and how the marketing of textiles provided the experience and money for Taquilean initiatives in controlling tourism. The first book about tourism in South America that centers on traditional arts as well as community control, *Weaving a Future* will be of great interest to anthropologists and scholars and practitioners of tourism, grassroots development, and the fiber arts.

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