

“Helping Them Help Themselves”:
Where Development Meets Tourism in Bali

by

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We flew to Bali.

David Attenborough has said that Bali is the most beautiful place in the world, but he must have been there longer than we were, and seen different bits, because most of what we saw in the couple of days we were there sorting out our travel arrangements was awful. It was just the tourist area, i.e., that part of Bali which has been made almost exactly the same as everywhere else in the world for the sake of people who have come all this way to see Bali. [...] Somewhere not too far from here, towards the middle of the island, there may have been heaven on earth, but hell had certainly set up business on its front porch.

-- Douglas Adams, *Last Chance to See*¹

¹ Douglas Adams and Mark Carwardine, *Last Chance to See* (London: Ballantine, 1992), 16.

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Introduction

Bali That Is and Was

Indonesian society began its transition towards democracy and decentralization following the fall of the authoritarian Suharto regime in 1998 (Erawan 2007). In the same year, the non-governmental organization East Bali Poverty Project (EBPP) was established in Bali, an island east of Java. EBPP is a non-profit non-governmental organization (NGO)¹ that works, in its own words, “to reduce poverty and promote culturally sensitive, sustainable development within impoverished rural communities that have little or no choice to alleviate their own plight.”² Like many NGOs in Indonesia, EBPP was founded at the beginning of the Reformasi era, which sparked a substantial increase in the number of NGOs whose newfound role was to be active participants within the democratized civil society sector³ (Antlov et al. 2005). Development NGOs in Indonesia have provided economic and social programs to low-income Indonesians since the early 1970s,

¹ Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) refer to legal entities that are created and operate independently from any form of government administration although they may carry ties with government agencies for funding. Non-profit organizations (NPOs) are those entities that do not distribute its surplus revenue to owners, staff members, or shareholders and instead reinvest it in the organization to further their goals. Confusion between NGOs and NPOs occurs often because common usage of the terms varies between countries. In addition, an organization can fall under the umbrella definition of both NGOs and NPOs, as in the case of EBPP, since the former mainly describes the lack of government oversight and council while the latter characterizes the distribution of funds for the organization’s needs.

² From the EBPP mission statement <http://eastbalipovertyproject.org/who-we-are/meet-ebpp-staff/>.

³ Civil society describes the entirety of voluntary social and civic organizations and institutions that form the basis of a society, which includes the majority of NGOs and NPOs by definition. Many NGOs choose to refer to themselves as civil society organizations (CSOs), amongst other titles, because the name engenders a better idea of what these organizations do as opposed to what they are not (Drayton 2007). For purposes of clarity and fluidity, I will be referring to such organizations as non-governmental organizations (NGOs) from this point forward.

when the Suharto government began administering widespread development programs (Hadiwinata 2005). However, it was clear that their accountability downwards was lacking, and their ties to the government made their autonomy and status as NGOs questionable.

As the authoritarian rule of the Suharto regime began to wane, international interest in Indonesia began to grow, which created more opportunities for advocacy and support in the country (Uhlin 1997). With the collapse of Suharto's government and the spread of democratic rule in Indonesia, domestic and international organizations that specialize in development work became active in social and geographical areas previously inaccessible. The non-profit, non-governmental sector expanded very rapidly with new and old organizations gaining new ground in an environment unprecedentedly liberal and encouraging. Currently, there are tens of thousands of organizations in Indonesia—nongovernmental, community, religious, political, etc.—which make up the country's civil society sector. The exact number of NGOs is difficult to estimate since only those that have the status of legal entities need to file documents and report their establishment to local and state authorities.⁴ Many other organizations have the same functions of an NGO but have none of the same legal bearings (Antlov et al. 2005).

Bali, however, was exceptional within Indonesia because even before the boom in international interest following the democratization of the country, the small island had already been the center of attraction for international investors and visitors.

⁴ Although no exact translation for NGO exists in Bahasa Indonesian, most NGOs are known as foundations (*yayasan*) or associations (*perkumpulan*), with the former encompassing most of the development NGOs that are the subject of this thesis.

The peculiar circumstances in Bali were not due to the fact that there was a greater appeal for development or human rights on the island but due to its ever-expanding tourism industry. With mass tourism in full bloom by the early 1970s, the international presence in Bali was like no other witnessed across Indonesia (Howe 2005). Consequently, when international development interest in Indonesia grew after 1998, there was no significant increase in Bali, in contrast to the rest of the country. Because of the existing thriving tourism industry, which had already been fueling investment and international traffic to the island, the growth in development work there did not seem at first evidently drastic. I believe that the unique circumstances generated by Bali's tourism industry made the increase in international development and NGO presence difficult to distinguish from, or appear to be only an outgrowth of, the presence of tourism in Bali.

Landing in Bali

The East Bali Poverty Project (EBPP) is an NGO and part of the constituency that I call the 'development NGO presence' in Bali. I began working for EBPP on the morning of June 7, 2010, approximately seven hours after my flight had arrived on the island. For the next ten weeks, my work for EBPP consisted of doing research for and overseeing several different projects. EBPP's mission is to provide development assistance to the many villages that make up the region of Desa Ban in the regency of Karangasem in eastern Bali. However, I spent the majority of my time in Denpasar, the capital of Bali, near the south of the island where the organization's main office is located. From there, I conducted the majority of my work, making day trips to Desa

Ban at least once a week to collaborate with the EBPP field staff stationed there as well as with the inhabitants of Desa Ban.

As part of my work I also wrote grant proposals to fund bamboo and vetiver nurseries for sustainable living and reforestation programs. Bamboo and vetiver are two plants that are believed to be beneficial both for economic and environmental reasons as well as for reforesting the slopes of Mount Agung, which were ravaged by the volcano eruption of 1963 that left them barren. Both bamboo and vetiver can be planted and harvested for various commercial purposes that can generate revenue for the communities as well as put to use in practical ways such as in construction and in projects of environmental protection. Another project I worked on while I was in Bali involved the construction of a 'living pharmacy' or 'medicinal garden' where medicinal plants could be used as an alternative to pharmaceutical drugs where access and availability to those drugs was difficult. Finally, the last project I was involved in was the piloting of a new maternal health questionnaire. I helped design the questionnaire that examined the health needs of mothers and mothers-to-be and helped assess and evaluate the trajectories of existing projects dealing with this target population.

My Experiences, My Insights

The East Bali Poverty Project has been doing development work of this sort for well over ten years now. They started with basic healthcare, educational, and agricultural initiatives and have more recently developed extensive sustainable development and qualitative projects such as after-school programs for the schools EBPP administers. I got involved with EBPP and their programs through

correspondence with David, the founder and CEO of the organization. I was interested in getting experience in the fields of development and public health and found EBPP through networking and research on the Internet. Admittedly, I did not know a whole lot about Bali at the time, beyond what I read in the few pages of *Lonely Planet*. Without much forethought, I traveled to Bali as an unpaid intern, or volunteer worker, hoping to gain hands-on experience in development work. It was only after I arrived in Bali and began living and working there that I realized the magnitude of the complexity of the problems on the ground and their relationship to the development industry, which I hoped could become material for this research. But as a temporary visitor and worker in Bali, one of my first realizations was the extent to which the sphere of economic development—the NGOs, the individuals who staff these organizations, and the spaces they occupy on the island—was enmeshed with the tourism industry. Tourism in Bali is pervasive, and upon being there, I quickly came to recognize the scale of its presence and connectedness with the networks and the work of NGOs in Bali. NGO directors and workers, for example, are often residents, and therefore consumers, in the same spaces designed for tourist consumption; they often first visit the island as tourists and, after deciding to settling down on it, often become owners of businesses catering to tourists, which help support their development work. A question that haunted me while I was living and working in Bali, then, was: What were the historical circumstances that allowed for this unlikely overlap between the development and tourism sectors?

In addition to the curious relationship between the NGO community and the tourism industry in Bali, during my time working with EBPP, I noticed that the

organization had a large and significant presence in the villages of Desa Ban. There were EBPP logos on many buildings, water tanks, and other surfaces, for instance, and I was constantly taken aback by how many people knew David personally. These observations and reflections made me want to also examine this dynamic between EBPP as an organization and the community it intended to help. How can we characterize the relationship between EBPP and the recipients of its aid? And what do we learn about the power and limitations of development work and theory from a close analysis of this relationship?

A Note on Methodology

During my time in Bali, then, I developed an interest in understanding what comprised development NGO work, what the relationship between this sector and the tourism industry was, and how its unique circumstances in Bali impacted its role and relationships with different accountable actors. In my research and writing I have used my experiences working there during the summer of 2010 as sources of insight and ethnographic detail. My approach to understanding development in Desa Ban and EBPP also relied on interviews, informal conversations, and library research. In other words, this project also draws from my retrospective look at my experiences at EBPP and from research I conducted after getting back in the US.

I believe it is important to state that I am not attempting or willing to represent EBPP, NGO work, or Bali in their totality since my knowledge was limited by the scope of my experiences as an intern/volunteer worker with the organization. In addition, my analysis and experiences are mediated by critical development theory through which I interpret events, my interaction with individuals, and my knowledge

of the organizations. I emphasize my own on-the-ground observations and insights because they allow for a rich, personal, and contextual account that does not lose sight of the subjectivity and potential (social and political) sensitivity of the subject, which ground this narrative. .

I want to emphasize my subjectivity and position in each and every situation I describe in this thesis, then, because it is through the frame and scope of my experiences that I write and interpret them. I was an intern, and the observations and insights in this thesis were made possible by having this position within the organization; I had, in other words, an insider's perspective. On the other hand, the perspective of an unpaid intern is fairly limited: I wasn't allowed in many meetings and, in this sense, I was also an outsider to many of the events that took place while I was in the office. This is to say that, as an intern, I was in a unique position: I saw things from a very particular, sometimes advantageous point of view, and at the same time my perspective was limited if not completely blocked by my place within this very position. The structure of this thesis, in a way, responds to my perspective from this ambiguous position, so in the narrative I hop between episodes and locations, aiming to call attention to this unique positionality. In what follows I outline the chapters that make up the body of this thesis.

Structuring the project

The first chapter in this thesis provides a brief overview of the history of non-governmental organizations in Bali. As a parallel development, I also discuss the emergence of the tourism industry on the island and the process by which tourism came to be a legitimate field of study of anthropology. Having laid out these two

distinct processes, I then go on to examine the fluid intersection of the two, and for this I rely as much on existing literature as on my own experiences living among the ‘expat community’ in Bali. Examining different individual histories, institutions, and interactions, I describe how there is not a clear boundary between those that work in development NGOs and international tourists. The expat community created and constituted a unique presence in Bali, and it is made of individuals who are neither tourists nor development workers, but who have adopted a new role that takes from both roles.

After describing the interchange within the expat community, I will dedicate the second chapter more specifically to EBPP and my experiences working with the organization. Using empirical descriptions, I examine the relationship between EBPP and those different actors to which the NGO is accountable. My narrative relies on interviews I conducted with David as well as on a series of events that took place while I was at EBPP. From these a picture arises of EBPP’s achievements as well as of the potential barriers and limitations of development NGOs, including their lack of accountability towards donors and the communities they hope to serve.

The third chapter concentrates on the individuals that constitute the workforce of NGOs such as EBPP, including myself. After explaining the conditions of the workforce of many non-governmental organizations, I will introduce the concept of ‘voluntourism’ as a central component of the workforce of non-profit organizations such as EBPP. These organizations draw from a pool of individuals who choose to travel outside of their countries of origin to have experiences that include short-term work or volunteer placements usually in countries of the global south; these

individuals are a crucial source of labor for organizations with constrained budgets. But the more pertinent issue of this labor force is that individuals' decision to travel to and work in countries that are targets of development work makes them a great example of how the boundary between tourism and NGO work is heavily blurred. Through self-reflexive writing about my own role and motivations while in Bali, as well as informal interviews with and accounts from other members of the EBPP staff, I attempt to examine from up close the particular structure and labor circumstances of a development NGO in Bali.

After this representation of EBPP, its environment in Bali, and my experiences there, in the fourth and final chapter I suggest several practical initiatives that EBPP can take to better understand its presence as well as its relationships with other relevant actors. By still reflecting on my own presence in EBPP, I hope to provide practical recommendations for how EBPP can approach challenges and barriers to their goals while preserving the communities as the principal actors in change. Through critical reflection of my experiences and of EBPP, I will examine the complexity of development and what I believe is the role of the NGO in development's goals.

Ideas from Experience to Practice

This project was driven by my interest in the apparent alignment of goals between the two large sectors of tourism and development in Indonesian society but also in the tensions that arose because of the radical discrepancies in the industries' dominant modes of representation of the people of Desa Ban. As a result, this project also developed from a desire to find out the ways in which the Balinese are

represented for tourist consumption and how this problematic form of representation poses serious problems for the NGO's development agenda. This important critique is woven throughout the thesis as I analyze the very unique way in which development work and NGOs came to existence in an environment such as Bali, which is saturated by the tourism industry. In turn, I argue in this thesis that such conditions for development NGOs have generated a complex mode of development that necessitates evaluation and discussion about critical issues of framing and accountability in development.

Chapter One: Tourism as Development, Interchangeably

Non-governmental Organizations

International non-governmental organizations have existed in the United States and in Europe since the early nineteenth century and have had many different functions and forms, as the rationale for their existence is generally loosely defined and supports many possible purposes. In recent decades, however, there has been a great increase in the number of international NGOs involved in humanitarian issues, development aid, and sustainable development (Davies 2008; Evers and Laville 1988). Although it is difficult to pinpoint an exact turning point when these organizations with such specific focus started emerging, the number of humanitarian and development NGOs rose in the 1960s after criticism of established international treaties and international organizations such as the World Trade Organization and the World Bank gained traction, with claims that they were too centered on the interests of capitalist enterprises (Horton and Roche 2010). Humanitarian emergencies of the 1980s and 90s also spurred the growth of the number, size, and influence of humanitarian and human rights NGOs around the world, which have evolved into crucial players in international politics. Development NGOs, although not an entirely distinctive type, have simultaneously grown in number from non-emergency situations with the goal of securing the social and economic needs and interests of vulnerable peoples (Donaghue 2010). As a result of this, NGOs have for some

decades been prominent agents of the development process in many so-called developing nations and regions around the world.

Non-governmental organizations in Bali, however, are comparatively a recent phenomenon. Historically, there had not been much of a need for development aid work thanks to a relatively prosperous agricultural economy and a fairly stable local government system. It wasn't until the Dutch colonial rule created a new 'ethical policy' to govern the Indies in 1901 that political and economic control in Bali became contested, leaving many Balinese in plight (Howe 2005). The most turbulent of times came about during the Indonesian military coup in October of 1965, when the island of Bali erupted in violence, leaving the Balinese in ruins with an estimated 5 percent of the population dead (Banks 1976). Nonetheless, these difficult times, which were a consequence of colonial rule, and the subsequent post-colonial conflicts in Bali did not draw international attention to the island, which witnessed more violence than possibly any other island during and after the coup (Robinson 1995). Far from provoking a reconsideration of the widespread images of Bali as an exotic paradise or a thorough review of its vulnerability, political turbulence in Bali was seen by the state and international authorities as an unpleasant anomaly that was better forgotten. It was not until recently (the majority within the last twenty years) that organizations dedicated to development work started appearing in Bali, committing themselves to social and economic development on the island (Bali Spirit 2010). What was the initial incentive and interest in Bali that stimulated a growth of development work NGOs? To answer this question, I want to argue that we must look to explanations based on the unrelated circumstances that drew the individuals

responsible for that NGO explosion to Bali in the first place. In other words, we must look to the advent of tourism and the tourism industry in Bali as the gateway for growth of the nonprofit, nongovernmental sector on the island.

The Anthropology of Tourism

For a long time since the beginning of anthropology as a discipline, tourism was considered anathema to the main concern of anthropologists, who looked to conduct fieldwork in sites far away from the areas of tourist concentration in hopes of finding uncontaminated, “authentic” locations (Howe 2005). The first academic symposium on anthropology and tourism was held in 1974, in conjunction with the annual meeting of the American Anthropological Association (Smith 1977). As Shinji Yamashita (2003) describes, up until then, there had been a few pioneering efforts of the anthropological study of tourism but none that were widely circulated and influential enough to gain momentum as a legitimate topic of study for anthropologists. In fact, tourism was largely seen as a nuisance and something to be avoided rather than to be studied. Even when tourists were present in large numbers and tourism became a subject of inquiry, it was conceptualized as an exceptional phenomenon, secondary to the more established, recognized study of indigenous cultures (Howe 2005). Tourism was a modern phenomenon, and because anthropologists normally focused on ‘traditional’ cultures, tourism had minimal appeal as something to be researched. Tourism was seen as a temporary and synthetic interaction between different groups of people that could only produce artificial outcomes and bastardized, commodified cultures (Wood 1997:2). As a result, it was

difficult to study tourism other than in terms of cost-benefit: analyzing whether tourism was good or bad for the host tourist site.

However, more recently, as tourism has become the largest service sector industry in the world (Robinson 2001), the anthropology of tourism has taken a turn. As Denison Nash (1995) notes “tourism has become an obviously important social fact in today’s world” (179). Michel Picard (1996) writes that the conceptualization of tourism as an external force penetrating the host site is misconceived; instead, he argues that it should be regarded as an integral component of that host society. Instead of seeing a host society as a permanent fixture and tourism as a passing phenomenon, Picard states that tourism must be conceptualized as something actively affecting large-scale social change and influencing day-to-day life in places like Bali.

People have traveled since ancient times, but the phenomenon that we now call and understand as tourism is a new kind of travel born out of modernity (Yamashita 2003). What made this rather new experience of travel for leisure possible were the new technologies which started appearing in Europe in the nineteenth century, most notably the development of an extensive railway system. In Europe, the railway was the technology that supported the industrial revolution, which in turn enabled it to develop further, with the railway spreading throughout the world during the rest of the nineteenth century. What was notable about the advent of the railway system was not only that it allowed people to travel faster and farther, but also that it changed the way that travelers viewed the world. With the shrinking of both space and time by the railway, Wolfgang Schivelbusch (1979) considers how this new technology developed a new perception of landscape: “The views [...] have

entirely lost their dimension of depth and have become mere particles of one and the same panoramic world that stretches all around and is, at each and every point, merely a painted surface” (64). The introduction of other forms of long-distance travel, most notably commercial airplanes, have done similar work on the landscape that it crosses, both condensing the time and distance traveled and providing the traveler with a new eye to the world they roam. This new perception no longer places the observer in the same space as the perceived objects, allowing the traveler to escape the environment they are observing and morphing the environment into a ‘tableau’ that the traveler is distinctly separated from. Thus, the scenery that the tourist traverses becomes more and more objectified, emphasized and processed by photographers, guidebooks, literature, film and other media. The landscape then becomes a series of famous places, and the tourism industry emerges and develops to meet the desire to visit these sites.

And so, the tourist gaze, as John Urry (1990) called it, comes into being along with a distinct way of describing and dividing the world. By applying the Foucauldian concept of the ‘gaze’ to the activities of the tourist, Urry argues that the tourist experience is about “gaz[ing] upon or view a set of different scenes, of landscapes or townscapes which are out of the ordinary” (1990:1). So even though it may seem to be a benign viewpoint, the tourist gaze can have profound effects. Tourism cannot be regarded as the collective sum of the commercial activities that engage the tourist in the host society. It is also an “ideological framing of history, nature and tradition” (MacCannell 1992:1), a framing that has the power to reshape culture and nature to

its own needs. In this way, with the power of the gaze, tourism becomes a way of looking, dividing, framing, representing, and reshaping the world in a particular way.

Strategies of Containment and Growth

Tourism today is a major component in the development strategies of governments in nations around the world. Regardless of their economic situations, many countries are pouring resources into their tourism industry, which they see as a possible engine for economic development. In Indonesia, for example, the state has fostered the emergence of a cultural marketplace for tourist attraction by building museums and cultural ‘theme parks,’ by designating specific cultural practices from different regions of Indonesia as cultural ‘peaks,’ and by encouraging the modification of cultural practices and performances to cater to tourist desires (Adams 1997). At the same time, the state appropriates these diverse cultural attractions and deploys them as proof of a national culture. Tourism cannot be seen as having a mere tangential influence on the host society. State and governmental authorities, tourist officials and agencies, and the peoples of the host society themselves change, conform, and adapt local cultural supplies to accommodate the needs and desires of the tourists. Tourists may not know a lot about the tourist site but the hosts must inform themselves about the tourists in order to present themselves and their society as attractive, consumable objects.

In Bali, this is producing an anguished concern that the booming tourism industry is causing the destruction of Balinese culture; this concern coexists uneasily with the inconsistent notion that more optimistically vouches for the resiliency and adaptability of the culture. Observers of this process in Bali have raised concerns,

with an output of very different predictions (Howe 2005). Though the forecasts about what will happen to Balinese culture differ significantly, the main question has been consistent from the beginnings of mass tourism in Bali: Can Balinese society withstand the impact of tourism? What this question reveals is that the discussion on the matter has invariably been one of weighing costs and benefits, not unlike the terms used by the anthropology of tourism of the past, when it was still a fringe topic of study. In a nutshell, the concern behind this question is that while tourism entails an economic benefit, this comes at a social and cultural cost. These costs are linked to the cultural change brought about by people's efforts to meet the needs and desires of the tourists rather than by forces within the host society. By the 1970s, a version of this question shifted the concerns about mass tourism toward sustainable development: How can the benefits be sustained or increased while keeping the costs at a minimum? In other words, how can economic revenue be maximized while preserving socio-cultural integrity? By this time, tourism had grown into such a dominant part of Bali's economy that it comprised 80 percent of the island's revenue (Elegant 2002). Thus, reducing the economic input of tourism was not a question; it was one of maintaining and maximizing the economic benefits while curtailing the negative socio-cultural consequences. While the focus had changed to one of sustainable development, the terms on which the concerns were cast remained determinedly constant.

One of the 'strategies' to contain the socio-cultural costs while still letting tourism roam free was to decide how much of Bali culture tourists should be able to access. Tourism agencies and officials sought to organize mass tourism activities in a

manner that would minimize the impact on local culture and society by maintaining a convenient distance between the tourists and the local peoples. The thought was that if interactions and interchange between them were reduced, the destabilizing effects of tourism could be controlled. It was this early formulation that drove much of the development of tourist destinations in the form of self-enclosed resorts and hotels, many of which still remain an important part of the industry today. The building of hotel complexes and high-end resorts was done in sparsely populated areas where local development was minimal. These resorts such as those in Nusa Dua and Jimbaran still remain major tourist destinations to this day. In fact, most of tourism activity in Bali is limited to the southern coasts of Bali, geographically only a fraction of the island itself. By distancing the activities of tourism from the host society, interchange could be more manageable, allowing tourists into the cultural core of central Bali for brief and controlled trips. However, structuring the tourism industry in this way lent itself to creating spaces of non-cultural tourist consumption and activity, such as beaches, surfing, scuba diving, restaurants, bars and night clubs. As a result, Bali has been made into a hub of impersonal tourist consumption, leaving the host society to be passive bystanders watching the industry grow as it generated little economic revenue for the local people. As a result, what started as a possible solution has suddenly transformed into a new problem. Since it was always agreed upon by the tourist operators that the culture of Bali was the main attraction, being what they were most proud of and what would generate the greatest return to the Balinese people for the cultural attractions and services they provided, how was it possible to

extend the benefits of tourism to local people without letting it impact local culture negatively?

In an attempt to resolve this dilemma in tourism practices emerging around the world, a new formula of tourism came into being, called ‘cultural tourism,’ supported by the World Tourism Organization⁵ in the early 1980s (Picard 1996). Its main argument was that cultural tourism was both beneficial to the tourists and the hosts, and it put forth the notion that tourists should have greater freedom and opportunities for contact with the local people and culture; the tourists’ interest in the local culture would stimulate pride among the host people in their cultural offerings, activities, and performances and allow for the people to affirm their identity (OECD 2009). Cultural tourism argued the opposite of what was generally seen as a socio-cultural cost: that interchange between tourists and hosts would boost the host peoples pride in themselves, and this was considered to be a socio-cultural benefit.

As introduced in Bali, cultural tourism would stimulate Balinese pride through cultural displays such as crafts and performances, while the revenue generated by tourist money would be spent to sustain these cultural artifacts. This view was advanced as a win-win situation by Philip McKean (1973) who argued that tourists could be enlightened by the authentic cultural experience while the Balinese could sustain and invigorate their cultural pride and economy. The doctrine of cultural tourism was energetically sold to and embraced by the Balinese government and the greater tourism industry alike (Picard 1996). The Balinese could continue to do what

⁵ The World Tourism Organization is a United Nations agency currently regarded as a major global body concerned with international tourism and representing public sector tourism bodies in most countries around the world (Brohman 1996).

they do, only now they would do it for the tourists as well. Since the Balinese shouldn't have to significantly alter their production and lifestyles, it was argued that the risk of cultural disintegration was low. This argument implicitly suggested that the Balinese would differentiate what performances and activities were for their own cultural and religious purposes while understanding the differences between these and what was produced specifically for tourists, knowing the risk of commercial exploitation of their culture (Picard 1996).

While many local authorities and foreign investors believed that this kind of symbiotic relationship in cultural tourism should be cultivated, many Balinese commentators, journalists and academics were much more wary. They acknowledged the importance of the revenue that tourism brought but were worried that tourist dollars would cripple Balinese culture, likening it to an infectious disease (Picard 1995). And in reality, although cultural tourism continues to be promoted to this day as the crux of tourism to Bali, boundaries between the tourists and the local Balinese remain (perhaps inevitably) salient, with the great majority of tourist activity and revenue concentrated in southern Bali. Nonetheless, government authorities issued advice and directives on how to make cultural tourism a mutually beneficial, functional operation, arguing that if the Balinese people could discriminate between the two different spheres of tourism and culture, then the latter would not be swallowed under the tidal wave of the former. In the eyes of the government authorities, if the revenue generated by tourism was pumped back into sustaining these very arts and cultures, this should not be an agonizing concern (Howe 2005).

Amongst the Balinese there was confusion and disagreement as to how to separate their cultural practices from the desires of the tourist. Balinese dance and theatre are extremely lengthy and complicated performances, often accompanying a ceremony and held in a temple. Because of this, many dances performed for tourists, for example, had to be removed from their original contexts. The famous *legong keraton* dance, a dance traditionally in homage of the gods, was heavily modified and is now a favorite amongst many tourists. I remember numerous restaurants advertising special shows where the diners could watch ‘authentic’ dances such as *legong keraton* with their meals. Since the full-length performance of *legong keraton* would extend well beyond the standard length of time of a meal, the dance was shortened and tweaked to fit within dinnertime. In order to make such cultural traditions even slightly accessible to the tourists needs, it was imperative that they be modified, which led to a divergent, and arguably degraded, form of the more traditional performances.

Such was the gargantuan challenge that tourism introduced to the island of Bali. The people on the island were forced to dissect their very culture, drawing foreign, unfamiliar boundaries based on others’ expectations and desires. It was a significant disturbance to the way of life they lived and a forced proposition to which they had no alternative. Through time, tourism became an essential part of the island’s economy, and the Balinese had to rearrange their organization of life to create room for the tourist gaze. But, as I will make clear later, this should not lead us to assume that the Balinese were passive and helpless before the changes occurring around them. As with the previous wave of cultural invasion during Dutch

colonialism, which also forced the Balinese to change their day-to-day lives, they have been resilient and actively involved in managing the impact brought about by tourism.

The beginnings of European travel to Bali, and perhaps the origins of tourism, can be traced back to the Dutch colonists' arrival in the mid-nineteenth century. Colonial knowledge about the Balinese, constructed for specific strategic and economic purposes, created an image of Bali as a harmonious and anachronistic paradise, and it is this image which has since then dominated among expatriates and travelers in Bali (Nordholt 1996). The Dutch empire imposed a new colonial order on Balinese culture and traditions and brought a new framework and perspective by which expatriates and even anthropologists would come to understand Bali. Although the Dutch used colonial rule to deliberately enforce change, which contrasts with the less direct (yet equally inevitable) change sparked by modern tourism, some of the outcomes that resulted from either mode of imposition are noticeably similar in nature. Strategies to first contain and then actively incorporate tourists into Balinese culture forced, in both cases, the radical rearrangement of how Balinese operate in their quotidian lives. This forced restructuring of local life in Bali has generated the same colonial interests in the consumption of Balinese culture (Nagafuchi 1994). Whereas cultural tourism was intended to create a harmonious interchange between the tourists and the local Balinese, it has reproduced a stereotyped image based on the projections of tourists upon the Balinese.

So within a society where tourism has come to be the single most important source of income, the culture has turned into one defined by mass tourism (Yamashita

2003). Picard (1995) argues that, today, rather than speaking about ‘cultural tourism,’ one should speak about a ‘touristic culture’. ‘Cultural tourism’ places the main attractions of Balinese culture on display, which is another way of saying that tourism functions as an agent of cultural production. There is a situation today in Bali in which culture, rather than a form of heritage to be protected, functions as a form of capital, which must yield a profit (Picard 1995:55).

One important ramification of this is that a touristic culture is invested in the idea that the culture that is being staged is the authentic culture, is ‘traditional’ and timeless. In order to establish tourism as a profitable industry, an appealing image of the target region had to be systematically produced and disseminated (Yamanaka 1992). While the original formulation of cultural tourism intended to exploit tourism for the development of Bali, it was now the case that Bali had to be exploited in order to develop tourism. In other words, the pressure to develop the tourism industry has led to the reformulation of culture based on the desires of the tourists. The promise that cultural tourism would preserve, while utilizing, Bali’s authentic culture and unchanging tradition was never to be. The irony is perhaps that the strategies and efforts to maintain an authentic culture itself generated change by forcing lifestyles in Bali to merely rehearse stereotypical culture, which went against any initiative for innovation and made the formula of cultural tourism faulty to begin with. And it was perhaps even more ironic that the depictions of Bali as an exotic and fertile paradise were being generated in the period spanning the late 1910s and 1930s, which was the height of the period of growing poverty and colonial oppression (Howe 2005).

Cultural tourism may be the search for authenticity within the host society, but the truth is that this authenticity could only be staged.

The image of Bali that is today disseminated and systemically reproduced through the media and through consumption by the constant influx of tourists attracted to the island is critical in the creation of Bali's centers of tourist activity and the most popular tourist attractions. *The Lonely Planet* guidebook's most recent edition on Bali dedicates a whole chapter (and the largest) to three tourist towns along the southern coast and all the eating, drinking, shopping, and entertainment they offer. Southern Bali has long been the most heavily concentrated area of tourism and the point of origin for cultural tours that bring tourist activity to central Bali. Tourism has meant a literal transformation of beachside villages and towns into upscale resorts and tourist towns where the revenue is completely dictated by the success of tourism. In evidence, the sudden drop in tourism for months following the 2002 Bali bombings slowed down all activities in southern Bali where the touristic culture was staged in full amplitude. However, the speed of recovery of Bali's tourism industry is evidence to its global importance. As *Lonely Planet* states in a historic narrative about Bali, by 2008, "a decade's troubles [are] forgotten, with Bali coasting to a record 2 million visitors for the year. The old formula proves as popular as ever: fun in the sun followed by a cold beer" (Lonely Planet 2009:45).

This concentration in tourism in the south left certain areas on the fringes of the culture that was now being produced for tourist consumption. It is in these peripheral areas—neglected by the local authorities because of their lack of contribution to the touristic culture—where the majority of development and NGO

work takes place. Therefore, the sites of international development work are most heavily concentrated where tourism is not. However, development work did not simply fill in the gaps where tourism was not present. Much like during the Dutch colonial era, when forced cultural policy brought with it a host of administrators and entrepreneurs to Bali, so, too, have contemporary tourism and development organizations engendered a fairly stable expatriate community on the island.

Tourism, in other words, paved the way for the arrival of individual NGO workers in Bali, who often arrive to this exotic, alluring destination for cultural tourism. Simultaneously, the touristic culture, promising authentic cultural experience, has resulted in the territorialization of space for both locals and tourists, leaving some areas on the island in an increasing state of isolation. What was once never seen as a society in need of development came to be because of tourism. Tourism led to the increase of foreign interest in Bali, creating opportunities for individual expatriates to remain on the island, including the establishment of organizations designed to help those areas neglected by a touristic culture.

Where Tourism Meets Development

Through the development of a touristic culture exploitative of Balinese culture, many tourists became enthralled with Bali, choosing to stay for an extended period of time beyond the three-month period allowed on their tourist visa. Many of these expatriates in Bali have chosen a line of work that is overtly tied to tourism – owning and running hostels, restaurants, bars, and other services that cater directly at the tourists (Daldeniz and Hampton 2010). However, there are also cultural tourists that decide to stay and contribute in different ways to Balinese society. Many

foreigners that stay in Bali for an extended period of time, which I am calling here ‘expatriates,’ can afford to do so by working in organizations dedicated to sustainable development and development assistance capacities. Although there are some domestic Balinese organizations, the majority of these non-governmental organizations are founded and run by expatriates themselves (*see Lonely Planet 2009:346*). These are often entrepreneurs who may have opened businesses and, at the same time, established non-governmental organizations. Certainly not all of the individual entrepreneurs who own businesses on the island came originally as tourists and there is not yet a body of literature dedicated to examining the links between business, tourism, foreign ownership, and NGO work, but I did come across individuals who had followed this model of tourist-to-expatriate-to-NGO worker fairly often during my time in Bali, hinting at the possibility that it is not an uncommon way for people to become involved in NGO work in Bali. Besides the touristic culture that provided a gateway to foreign interest not related to tourism in Bali, during my stay on the island, I noticed a number of ways in which the two camps, tourist business owners and development workers overlapped. Although, they were seemingly separate groups of people dedicated to vastly different activities, tourism and non-governmental work in Bali operated within and out of the same spaces and relying on the same resources, which created a fluid boundary between the two.

First and foremost, the route by which many involved in development work end up in this line of work shows the porosity of and the flexibility between the two sectors. Interacting and conversing with many foreign development workers in Bali, I

noticed that many of the foreign staff members of the organizations involved in NGOs came originally to Bali as tourists with no intentions of staying for an extended period of time. This was also true for many entrepreneurs who have chosen to stay in Bali and who now run and oversee development projects through their NGOs as a way of making a living. Given that these entrepreneurs are the ones who employ tourists interested in medium-term stays on the island, they are catalysts in the consolidation of an international development aid presence in Bali. The foreign people that constitute what can be called the international development aid sector or the NGO work sector in Bali are known as the (self-titled) ‘expatriate (expat for short) community’ in Bali. The two following chapters will delve with greater detail into an examination of the expat community in Bali. In the remainder of this chapter, I want to discuss the supposed boundary, or lack thereof, between the expat community and the tourists.

A Year or However Many

‘Expatriate’ is a loosely defined term that refers to an individual temporarily or permanently residing in a country other than that of the individual’s legal residence. In Bali, I noticed that expatriates tended to disassociate themselves with tourists predominantly on the basis of the length of their stay. Nonetheless, the similarities in the activities and experiences of tourists and expatriates alike suggest that, in fact, there is a fluidity that blurs the distinction between the two groups. Based on my experiences and observations of international workers in NGOs and long-term tourists in Bali, I want to argue that there is a single expat community in Bali that consists of medium-term tourists, NGO workers, and other foreigners who, like

myself engaged in activities and interchanges that do not clearly fall into any specific category.

Perhaps the most telling and suggestive observation of the fluidity between the tourists' and expats' worlds would be the fact that, for the most part, they share the same living space, engaging in the same activities and with the same groups of people, namely other expats. I noticed very soon after arriving in Bali that tourist towns and beachside resorts were almost completely inhabited by tourists and by Balinese who catered services to the tourists. What I did not immediately realize was that, within these tourist towns, there was also a large contingent of expats who would not identify as tourists. By inhabiting the same spaces, expats I knew frequented the same locations and consumed the same services and amenities as tourists. While they might eventually make the transition to an extended stay and choose to engage in NGO work, they choose to stay in the same tourist hotbeds, where convenience and comforts stay constant. Likewise, many of the international NGO offices are physically located in popular tourist areas and towns, as opposed to local cities or the direct sites of development. It is difficult to say whether the site of the NGO offices encouraged expats to stay in areas of high tourist concentration or if the inverse was true, where the high tourist concentration was a factor in NGOs establishing their offices in these areas. What is safe to say is that the NGO offices and the individual workers benefit from and commonly partake of the same services and activities catered to tourists.

That the expat community engages in many of the same events and activities that have been designed to cater to cultural tourists in Bali is evident from the

information provided by local magazines and publications that target the expat community, such as *Kabar Indonesia*, which advertises the same events and attractions as Lonely Planet does, but which contains sections focused on themes such as real estate, distinguishing it from media exclusively for tourists. The expat community does not discriminate between the type of tourist leisure activities and the leisure activities that it engaged in, be it the restaurants and bars, the museums and art galleries, or the beaches and water sport activities. From working, playing, and traveling in Bali—my own situation as a summer NGO intern allowing me to straddle both worlds—I noticed how those who work in the NGOs continued to take part in the activities that originally attracted them to Bali, such as surfing or frequenting the many bars that made up the established nightlife scene on the island. What unified the expat community was not only the fact that these activities and services were only consumed by the foreigners, tourists and NGO workers but also the noticeably sparse number of Balinese people that took part in similar activities or that visited these spaces. Although there are by no means restrictions for Balinese to eat in restaurants, enter bars, and frequent beaches and museums, I often stopped and noticed that the demographic of people was overwhelmingly that of the European or Australian tourist. With these establishments and activities located in centers of high tourist concentration, there is the issue of accessibility to these areas. Also, often the prices of many of the leisure opportunities are scaled to the wallets of the Western tourist and are too high for many local Balinese. There is also the fractions dictated by taste, whereby these activities are catered to the tastes and interests of the Western tourists with their very specific combination of social, economic and cultural capital

(Bourdieu 1984). The development of these dispositions are largely dictated by social origins rather than accumulation, with these activities correlating with the ideal of leisure of the primarily European or Australian middle class, which is the cultural point of origin for many in Bali's expat community. These dispositions make these activities appeal to the expat community, while Balinese may have no interest in whitewater surfing or rave discos.

Many of the expats in the development work sector, particularly those that have founded organizations or oversee projects, require a capital and financial investment in order to do so. In addition to providing the resources to start up organizations, many of these entrepreneurs also own and operate different sources of income, such as lodges and restaurants, in popular tourist destinations. These are operations that serve both as a source of personal income and as a source of funding for various development projects. Looking at the tourist guidebooks, it is evident that many restaurants and hotels in the major tourist areas are owned and operated by foreigners. I remember a particular place in Ubud run by a Belgian woman called the Casa Luna which served as a hotel, restaurant, cooking school, crafts store, and also gave a portion of their profits to various charitable organizations. Reflecting back on my experience, I often witnessed that the food and lodging frequented by the cultural tourists of Bali were catered by the expats that ran the various facilities. These 'mid-range' and 'top-end' restaurants and hotels provided Western-style cuisine and facilities complete with different luxurious services such as massages, shows, and transport services. Nonetheless, these facilities also provided opportunities for the tourists to conveniently engage with Balinese culture, as in the carefully managed and

packaged Legong dinner dance show mentioned above. Ubud is a popular tourist location in central Bali, a collection of villages heavily frequented by tourists for its display of culture through performance arts, art galleries and museums, temples and palaces, and spas and beauty salons; “Ubud is culture,” states one of the most popular tourist guides (Lonely Planet 2009). Ubud was particularly dense with restaurants and hotels that were run by expats and that proudly advertised their contributions and affiliations to various development NGOs.

Besides the directly affiliated establishments that funded organizations run by the same individuals, many of the donors and sponsors of the organizations that financially support the NGOs around Bali are hotels, restaurants and other businesses in the tourism industry. These relationships may be most indicative of where large amounts of money lie in Bali; NGOs must look for funding and in Bali, where the economy is decidedly driven by tourism, establishments that cater to tourists control a lot of money. Subsequently, organizations target these establishments for donations and support, and in turn many of these restaurants and hotels display this gesture of charity in their buildings, websites and various media.

In addition to the activities of leisure that expats engage in, I observed what may be called exclusive friendships or relationships that were formed amongst various people within the expat community. The exclusive friendships were most visible in hobbies and activities that were confined to expats such as book clubs, group cooking lessons, and casual get-togethers. As opposed to the more public leisure attractions, these were activities that were spread via word-of-mouth and exclusive contact and were not openly publicized. Get-togethers such as these

indicated a conscious choice amongst the expats to interact amongst themselves and spend their time together, further creating a culture of expats and distinguishing them from those that are excluded of these invitations. This community of expats has started and is continually supported by the many sources of media – TV, newspapers, radio– that cater to the foreign (largely English-speaking) community in Bali. These media sources are the main sources of information and entertainment for both tourists and expats alike.

Although the expats had many resources and opportunities to come together and share ideas, there wasn't a venue or situation where the whole community interacted. In this way, I found it hard to explain how a community was created, when the aid workers would oppose grouping tourists and aid workers together because at a theoretical level, NGO workers see themselves as providing the opposite of what the tourists do, the consumption of the culture. I recall that David would frequently express his dislike of tourists and cite reasons for why he was 'more Indonesian' than any Westerner he knew.

The community was in fact built on imagined notions of the expat community and did not speak of an actual, well-defined grouping of individual expats. Much in the same way that Benedict Anderson (1983) describes the fundamental features of nations as imagined communities, as imagining themselves as a unity, so does the expat community in Bali, though at a different scale. Modern nations are vast and the members will not and don't expect to have face to face encounters; but different types of rites come into play: everyone reading the same newspaper; listening (in their separate homes) to national media; saluting symbols like the flag, and critically,

singing the same anthem. Although the expat community is a much smaller one than any nation, they are unified by diffuse rites or rituals (mostly of play and consumption) that can be said to involve all the expats within Bali. They are tied together as a community by their similar interests, rites, and rituals such as the book clubs and nightclubs that both the development worker and the tourist frequent. I would argue that the common interests such as the common leisure activities and their common interest in the culture of Bali binds them in this imaginary way; it is an interest in the culture and people of Bali that typifies the expat community – for example, the way in which many expats expressed enjoyment in Balinese dances and songs as entertainment without serving further symbolic value.

I particularly like Anderson's arguments concerning print capitalism, where the spread of media and books in the vernacular, and not in exclusive script languages such as Latin, opened up circulation to the masses and resulted in the emergence of a common discourse amongst a wider population. There are many media outlets catering to the expat community. All of the radio stations, television channels, newsletters, newspapers, and magazines I have encountered deliver their information in English. This is somewhat self-explanatory since the community is largely British and Australian. The choice of English as the vernacular is a boundary-creating process. "Print-capitalism created languages-of-power of a kind different from the older administrative vernaculars" (Anderson 1983:45). Language binds the English-speaking expat community together but is also part of an exclusion process where the non-English speakers are separated. And in Bali, most Balinese who do not work in the tourism sector understand minimal English.

Kabar Indonesia is a magazine I came across many times in Bali, and it is an interesting example of a media source that embodies the imagined community. It is a magazine that showcases photographs and features articles on places and people, often profiling expats who have chosen to stay in Bali and Indonesia. It also offers advice, ‘lifestyle privileges,’ and information for expats.

By inhabiting the same spaces, engaging in the same activities, and interacting amongst themselves, there is a common identity that is enacted by the expat community making it truly difficult, for someone like me, to separate the tourist from the NGO worker. Even though official titles and job descriptions might differ and demonstrate the contrary, the roles and actions they perform signify a blurred boundary between what might be theoretically two dissimilar groups of people. Taking from a passage from Judith Butler’s (2004) seminal work on gender studies and applying it to the expat community in Bali, I am inclined to say that if identity is performative “in the sense that it constitutes as an effect the very subject it appears to express” (130), the same can be affirmed of expats in Bali. Their actions do not represent their identity but creates it. Through my experiences and observations, I witnessed how on a day-to-day basis, the expats performed similar roles and demonstrated a commonality that could not be overlooked. In effect, the true boundary was not between the tourist and the NGO worker, but one that marked the expat as separate from the local Balinese: a metaphorical, cultural and geographically salient boundary. The horizontal bonds between the tourist and the NGO worker function to create one expat community.

Chapter Two: The Organization of Development

Be Our Guest

It was Friday evening and the beginning of my first weekend in Bali. I was looking forward to settling into my *kost* (homestay apartment) and exploring the neighborhood, but all my plans were shot down by David's parting words that evening. "You can sleep in tomorrow, Tsuyoshi," he said. "I'll see you around 8:30." Before I fully grasped that he expected me to come into work on a Saturday, he had left the building and was driving away. It was only later that I learned that Balinese typically observe a six-day workweek, and it took me a while to grow accustomed to working on Saturdays.

I set my alarm for eight o'clock that morning but was wakened at seven by the crowing of the gamecocks that my host family kept in the courtyard. It was already hot and humid outside, and I was wearing a black shirt, not a well thought-out decision. I made my way through the narrow streets in the outskirts of Denpasar to the office of the East Bali Poverty Project (EBPP) where I would be spending most of the summer. The building itself, originally intended as a residence, had been recently renovated to accommodate an office space. But there were clear remnants of the residence in the design: a kitchen, a dining room, a master bedroom on the bottom floor, and a few more bedrooms upstairs. David had told me earlier in the week that he had been able to purchase the building at a bargain from a friend of his, who no longer needed "another house in Bali". Because it was a vacation house, David

explained, it was in a prime location right next to the bypass road that connected Denpasar with Kuta to the west, Sanur to the east, and Ubud to the north.

As it turned out, this Saturday the office was having guests, very important guests. I took a moment to breathe and wipe the sweat off my forehead before entering the office. By the time I came in, the accountants, or the accountant boys, as everyone referred to them, were all busy performing various duties. They were three young men in their early- to mid-twenties – Nengah, Wayan, and Nyoman. David hired all three of them from the villages in eastern Bali where the organization focused its development projects. Although they were ‘the accountants’, their role in the office was not limited to accounting; ‘accountant/secretary’ would be a more suitable title for what they did on a day-to-day basis. The small room in which they worked was adjacent to David’s office, and they were on call and responded immediately whenever David needed one or all of them. In addition to their job in accounting, they were the ones who made coffee for David in the morning, chauffeured him when his car broke down, and went to the corner store to buy his cigarettes. Also, once every week, one of them would go to David’s house at the crack of dawn to help out with his household chores, including cooking and cleaning.

“Yoshi!” Nengah greeted me with a smile. Nengah and Wayan, the two younger accountant boys, spent a great deal of time in the Denpasar office. Being a two-hour drive away from the villages in East Bali, the office was equipped with a radio transmitter that connected it with the biggest office in the villages. Nengah explained that someone had to stay in the Denpasar office at all times in case of emergency or if David had to be contacted for any reason. Nengah and Wayan shared

an apartment not too far away from the office and traded shifts sleeping on a mattress in the office every night.

Nengah pointed upstairs to where David was, signaling me to go see him. I walked up the stairs to his office whereupon he greeted me and handed me a rag. There wasn't any time to waste. The guests would be coming soon and the office had to be spotless. Nengah and Nyoman were downstairs scrubbing the floors, so I decided to help Wayan wipe the windows. David patrolled the office, moving from room to room, making sure everything looked presentable. Everyone was busy cleaning and the silence was only broken when David would occasionally call out for one of the accountant boys. Once everything was in order around the office, David called all of us into the biggest room in the building. This was the room upstairs which the interns, including myself, had set up as our work space. Although interns and volunteers generally stayed somewhere between two weeks and six months, there were always some temporary workers occupying this room. At the time of my arrival, there were two other interns, both of them in their mid- to late-twenties who were there for periods of five to six months. Just as the last person, Nyoman, came into the room, David asked him to close the door. After a brief pause, he said that this room was in no shape to host a meeting. By the look on the boys' faces, it seemed that, like me, they hadn't been given advance notice of this meeting. At David's instructions, the boys and I moved the desks against the sides of the room and brought in a round table from downstairs, which we placed in the center of the room. We then went around the building and collected chairs to line the table, enough to seat our guests. After scanning the room, David concluded: "It's these cupboards, they're a mess."

Something had to be done about the cupboards: rusty metal cabinets stuffed with archived papers that lined two sides of the room. David picked up a stack of what turned out to be drawings made by children from the schools that EBPP created and sponsored. He handed small stacks to each of us and told us to use them to cover over the cupboards. So we did, and by the time we finished, the room was filled with children's paintings of scenery and landscapes, strategically placed to conceal the cupboards. The room was ready.

David kept looking at his watch. The guests were coming soon. He stood next to the window overlooking the entrance gate while the rest of us did a final sweep of the office.

They were here. David hurried down the stairs and told the accountant boys to close all the doors. We were asked to stay in the lobby area while David went outside to welcome the guests. I peered out the window to see a white charter minibus pull up next to the entranceway. From inside, I saw five big men step out; David gave each of them a greeting and a handshake. It was not until they were inside that I was able to inspect the guests more closely and discern their nationality. The five were all middle-aged men and, judging by their accents, Australian. They were all dressed similarly in Hawaiian shirts and khaki shorts and wore straw hats and loafers. One of them, Mark, was a wealthy Australian broker and the founder of the Annika Linden Foundation (hereon referred as ALF). ALF is a foundation that financially supports community-based projects in select developing areas around the world and happens to be one of EBPP's largest donors. It was the time of the year to review progress for the past six months and begin negotiations about extending the partnership between ALF

and EBPP. Mark was visiting Bali along with four of his friends, two of whom were board members of ALF; this meeting was one of the primary reasons for his weeklong stay in Bali.

As a major international tourist destination, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in Bali must operate within a social and economic environment that inevitably intersects with that of tourists and tourism. At the organizational level, this means that individuals – donors, entrepreneurs, workers, and volunteers – engage in development work on an island where tourism is ever-present. During my time in Bali, I was able to experience an interesting example of this within the organizational structure of the NGO. Many NGOs in Bali are started by individuals who originally arrive as cultural tourists or are otherwise heavily involved in tourism. This includes expatriates like David that have chosen Bali as their new home and have decided to become involved in development work by starting non-governmental organizations.

Oftentimes NGOs are regarded as constituted organizations, as single entities, and not a lot of attention is placed on the individuals that make the organization. Through email correspondence, a couple of interviews, and a few casual conversations, I have been able to obtain the details of the story of how David came to be involved in non-governmental work and become the CEO and founder of a development aid organization in Bali. By tracing his personal story, where he came from, and what motivated him to start up an NGO in Bali, I hope to contribute to a deeper understanding of the workings of a particular type of NGO model that is common in Bali.

Development with a Mission

David always liked to tell me that he came to Indonesia and Bali with a mission. A civil engineer by trade, he had lived in many developing nations around the world, “some of the worst, most difficult in the world,” working on different engineering and development projects. David grew up in a very low-income household in northern England. He often expressed dislike of his life in England where his experiences growing up were marked by the effects of poverty. He claims that despair about his life at home and his desire to escape poverty were his initial motivations to do something better with his life, and in his words, to “make a value of [his] life, [otherwise] what’s the purpose of life?” This ambition, he states, is what drove him to achieve top honors in university and become a successful civil engineer and manager. After the experience of working in developing countries around the world and his own familiarity with poverty back home, he decided that sometime in the future, he wanted to help “the poorest of the poor” in whatever country he ended up settling. It was in his heart to dedicate his life to help the poorest of the poor, “prioritizing the health, nutrition, and education of children for sustainable development” and thus “be a model for everybody in the future.”

That was in 1973. That year, the Indonesian embassy in London approached David to manage a construction project for them in England, and he instantly “fell in love with the Indonesian people through the Indonesian embassy in London.” By 1988, he states, he “couldn’t stand England anymore” and decided to visit Indonesia on a non-business trip for a month where he fell in love with the country whose embassy personnel he had previously fallen for. The following year he moved to

Jakarta where he lived the “four happiest years of [his] life.” At the time Bali was not in the picture, never having visited the island. By this time, however, he had already settled himself into Indonesia comfortably, citing that this was now his new home. It was while living in Jakarta that he claims he began looking for the poorest village in Indonesia, determined to fulfill his dream of creating a sustainable livelihood and eliminating poverty for the poorest people in his new home country of Indonesia. And after several years of search and research, he found the poorest village in Indonesia in Bali: Desa Ban, a village so remote and overlooked that he could not find it on any map, or in any book or newspaper.

David immediately went to visit Desa Ban, a small mountainside village in the regency of Karangasem in eastern Bali, located on a volcanic slope between Mount Agung and Mount Abang. What he found was a community of people spread through the nineteen subvillages that make up the village of Desa Ban living “in abject poverty with very little choice or chance to change.” David tells me that in 1998 he founded the East Bali Poverty Project immediately after the people of Desa Ban asked for his help. At the time of David’s discovery, Desa Ban had very poor living conditions and quality of life. As David says, because there was no access to education, nutrition, or basic healthcare, “life was survival.” So EBPP, which at the time constituted David and a handful of workers, began work on different poverty alleviation and sustainable development projects, starting with basic education programs. Today, the organization serves approximately nineteen villages in eastern Bali with education, healthcare, agriculture and sustainable development programs.

Working for EBPP I did witness what EBPP had accomplished. I was able to visit the villages in eastern Bali on numerous occasions and observe the many schools and nurseries that were proudly erect and fully functional, the sanitary water reservoirs to which fresh spring water was being pumped, and the midwives and public health workers providing vaccinations and medications to those in need. It was clear that in measurable terms, EBPP was having an impact on the lives of the people. During my time with the EBPP, I was involved in piloting and writing proposals for new projects and programs including the bamboo nursery and afforestation project, and the medicinal plant nursery. EBPP was definitely a huge presence in the villages in eastern Bali, to the point that David was known by almost everyone we encountered. At the time, EBPP was developing many different new projects delving into realms of life that went further beyond their initial mission statement. For example, there was a music school that EBPP was organizing where children could take extracurricular music lessons. EBPP was an expanding presence and organization in Desa Ban, and what the organization, the brainchild of David, had accomplished was proudly on display everywhere in the village.

Without taking away from the merit of his work, however, I believe it is important to remark on David's position and feeling of entitlement on which is based his decision to find the 'poorest of the poor'. David's belief that he is necessary in the betterment of the peoples lives strikes me as part of the cultural legacy of colonialism. To begin with, reflecting back on his original incentive to Bali, it was derived from his dislike of England and his desire to find a new place to call home. He did cite his yearning for a better life away from poverty and his dream of helping others, but the

initial impetus for coming to Bali was his search of a new home. David chose Desa Ban as his primary site of focus for the organization only after the decision to call Indonesia his new home: a personal reason fuelled by his distaste of England. Hearing about his past growing up in England and the lack of passion with which he spoke about his earlier years, I felt that he had mentally displaced England for Bali as his new home. This is somewhat reminiscent of an interesting story of Hernan Cortes, the Spanish conquistador, who essentially came to the New World after having fallen out of favor with his family and life in Spain. It was a case of ‘from nobody to somebody’, where Cortes relished in his new life as a conquistador in Mexico because he felt himself needed there. I see this as a similarity to the situation of David, where the founding of the organization and the culture of patronage in Indonesia has given him the attention and appreciation that he felt absent previously.

Despite David’s own brushes with poverty in England, he decided to do antipoverty work not in England but in Bali. Although his distaste of life in England might explain this decision to a certain extent, this choice seems to have a colonialist undertone. His success with EBPP might stem from the reality that it was easier for him to find funding for development work in Bali than for work in England due to Indonesia being an underdeveloped, newly democratized country that is still dealing with the legacy of colonialism. As such, local authorities welcomed development work in Bali, and domestic and foreign investors generated interest and resources to make it possible (Antlov et al. 2005). It was David’s choice to travel to Bali and a choice to settle in Bali as a new home, however, there were perhaps greater, structural influences that facilitated this process. Whereas David’s role in development work in

England would have been challenging considering his lack of experience in the field and the resources and organizations already present in England, his aspiration to start a development NGO in Bali benefited from an interest from entrepreneurs, funders, and local authorities in development work in Bali.

Now, this should by no means discredit what work David or the organization has accomplished but perhaps sheds light on certain aspects about the motivations of David. His sense of patronage and acceptance in Bali, in contrast to the lack thereof in England, charged his interest in development work. I remember going into an elementary school with him where the students, having been told of his visit, were making “I love David” cards. He would always mention how everyone loved him and how this appreciation for his efforts made it all worthwhile. And because he loved doing what he did, in the name of the organization, he had to seek the financial support and resources necessary for the survival of his organization.

A Courtship Meeting

We stood around the lobby area and exchanged greetings with the five men from the Annika Linden Foundation, while David took their orders for coffee and tea. Wayan scurried to the kitchen to prepare the drinks while David and the five guests went upstairs. David led them into the room decorated with the children’s paintings, turned back to me and asked me to wait until they were done. I sat on the bench in the hallway, looking through magazines and pamphlets strewn on the counter table. Every once in a while I paused to try and listen in on the conversation that was taking place in the room next to me, but the murmur of the voices besides the intermittent laughter was incomprehensible. Although I was a good ten feet away from the closed

door behind which the donor-donee discussion was taking place, I could smell the smoke of cigarettes wafting through the cracks around the door and into the hallway. Each time one of them would leave the room for a phone call or a bathroom break, I would lean over to peer inside the room, which became smokier and increasingly less visible. Wayan was the only other person who entered the room, and he was admitted only when David summoned him. And so, every fifteen minutes or so, Wayan would knock and enter the room with refilled cups of fresh coffee and tea. The discussion carried on for well over two hours. I was stretched out on the bench, half-asleep, when I heard the door open and laughter carry into the hallway. I stood up and saw the five guests file out and down the stairs one by one. David tailed the single-file line, signaling me with his eyes to follow him downstairs. Again we stood in the lobby area while the five men exchanged their contact information with David. They each gave a firm handshake to David, the accountant boys and me, said their goodbyes, and left in the same minibus that had brought them.

I spent my first Saturday in Bali cleaning the office for very important guests indeed: donors. Throughout the summer, the office would periodically receive individuals or a group of guests, mostly philanthropists or representatives from different foundations. Since the organization relied on this funding for its existence, treating the guests well and ‘selling’ the organization was crucial. The need for the NGO to perform its efficiency and effectiveness in the presence of donors speaks to its dependency on their continued generosity.

The preparation of the office for the donors was a very deliberate process. For David and EBPP as an organization this was an important meeting, as a significant

amount of funding, and potentially the trajectory of the organization, was at stake. According to David, everything needed to go smoothly. The meeting between the donors and EBPP could have been held anywhere; the discussions that took place that afternoon in the smoky office we had transformed into an ad hoc conference room could have been transplanted to a café or restaurant and, if anything, such a move would have made the meeting more pleasant. But hosting the meeting in the NGO's central office made possible an important *performative* presentation of the organization and its development work. The representatives of ALF came to the office in Denpasar as judges, to evaluate the work accomplished and assess the proper usage of the funds they had provided. For this weeklong visit to Bali, the donors from ALF came to the site of the administrative operations, the central office in Denpasar, and not the villages, where the various projects were implemented and where the donors could observe and assess how their funds were being used.

The physical separation between the material site of planning (the central office in Denpasar) and the sites of implementation (the villages of Desa Ban) make the performative aspect of the meeting especially clear. The meeting in Denpasar demonstrated the different levels of development work and the different levels of the organization which was very distinct because of its physical distance. Whereas the meeting (and the work of EBPP) is meant to influence the decisions that would affect the beneficiaries of development, the people of Desa Ban, the staging of the meetings in the office in Denpasar indicated that the beneficiaries are not best represented and the meeting is perhaps straying from the intended goal of delivering development to one that places greater focus on EBPP's performance. The meeting at the site of

project planning illustrates how development functions as a ‘regime of representation’ (Escobar 1995) whereby the meeting systematically shapes and reproduces the identities of the people of Desa Ban without giving them the alternative organizing principles for autonomous attainment of development.

‘Regime of representation’ describes how the development discourse makes subjects out of Third World citizens by the First World organizers of development, naturalizing their differences, ‘Otherness’, in the process (Escobar 1996).

Development, or the planning of development as manifested in the meeting, invokes a similar hegemonic form of representation where the beneficiaries of development become usurped of their voice by the actors that have the influence and power of representing them. In other words, the regime of representation distorts the political realities of the development project, and creates an enterprise of representation instead of development as a self-determined principle. The organizers who received the donors performed a claim that development was taking place. The donors, in turn, were assessing with their eyes, the performance of development as staged by the organizers, not the actual implementation of development in the villages.

The goal of the donors, experts and other visitors that came throughout the summer was to monitor and evaluate how the various projects and funds were being managed. Program monitoring and evaluation are two very common practices in development work (Sharma 2008). Their intended goal is to allow planners, staff, and funders to observe the practice of the organization’s work, ensure the proper usage of funds and resources, and measure the performance against the stated goals. Aradhana Sharma (2008) goes on to explain that these practices are considered indispensable by

development experts because they presumably facilitate program success and, ultimately, real development (94). Most of the visits I observed, however, were brief visits to the central office in Denpasar. In the three months that I worked with EBPP, only four visits were made to the villages themselves, the actual site of the projects. Visits to the villages are at least a full-day commitment, including travel to and from southern Bali. In contrast, meetings in the central office are only ten or twenty minutes from the coastal resorts and tourist towns that surround Denpasar and make it a more manageable journey. Traveling to Desa Ban required a dedication by the donors and EBPP's staff to organize as well as commit the time and resources of traveling far from the tourist locales in the south of Bali. Although I never heard any visitor explicitly proclaim that the journey would have been a nuisance, the trend of visitors to the central office and only a few to the villages in Desa Ban indicates that the former had a better cost-benefit appeal as a meeting location. The act of having the meeting at the physical site of the organization's operations often suffices as a statement of commitment and accountability by donor organizations, which use the visit as a means to affirm their interest in the organization and the projects they are sponsoring through the gesture of experiencing 'firsthand' the work of the NGO. However, because in these offices they can only see the *performance* of development, these visits raise the question of the kind of commitment they have to the recipients of their aid and to Bali itself. Now, it is important to raise the point I have elucidated in the introduction about my position and what I was able to witness. As the office's summer intern, I was there temporarily and wasn't privy to the content of the meetings, but the visits made me wonder what their commitment really was when the

donors' visit was for one Saturday afternoon to the central office in Denpasar as part of a weeklong holiday to Bali.

Donors do not judge program performance based solely on the meetings with staff and organizers of the NGO, and assess the organization through independent research and press reports (Isbister 2010). Nonetheless, holding a meeting in the material site of operations contributed to the donors' sense of 'hands on' oversight. As donors, they are under no obligation to continue giving; it is in this staging of development that the recipient seeks to persuade them of their moral obligation to renew their contractual obligations to give by emphasizing results. As a staging of development, the organization is persuading (and the donor potentially persuaded) through the *representation* of real development that although may reflect what is happening on the ground, may conflate the realities in order to appease the expectations of donors (Riddell 2007).

The performance is important because it is a public act of persuasion, which in its strictest sense, is a negotiation of the contract between the donor and recipient. Through performative, persuasive techniques, the recipient seeks to persuade the donor that this contractual transaction is worth their contribution and that the funding has been and will continue to be implemented for effective development. The absence of the people of Desa Ban in deciding issues of funding and the future of development in their communities, and the role of David in allegedly voicing their needs for development, is a manner in which I believe the people of Desa Ban are being represented. In planning development in Desa Ban, the subjects (the people of Desa Ban) become defined and managed through the practices of development. Thus,

the performance becomes the process of representation that excludes the real autonomous subjects and replaces it with actors that construct the subject's realities. A performance of development becomes the manifestation of the regime of representation. The representation between donor and recipient makes performativity so important. In effect, the recipients of philanthropic funds seek to assure the givers that their effectiveness, combined with the generosity of the givers are making development happen through a performative act of representation.

For David, the meeting was a test of his abilities to persuade the donor that his organization was worth funding. The office needed to look presentable, for the aesthetic performance of a tidy, even if modest, space could be seen as one way of performing an efficient organization. Material neatness in the site of the program planning was a way of convincing the donor of the organizational efficiency. The tidiness was especially important because the meeting was held at the level of planning, in the Denpasar office away from the real development. Because the donors would need to be persuaded of the importance of their funding in development without assessing the actual site of development, the site of the performance would be offered as a genuine representation of the actual site of development. Therefore, David had the accountant boys and me clean the office for several hours before the donors arrived, to show a neat office that presented itself as an efficient workspace, which in turn symbolically indexed efficient development. A clean office might be aesthetically pleasing in itself, but I would argue that this aesthetic presentation was part of a persuasive representation of development as the production of order. The office hadn't struck me as being particularly untidy or in need of cleaning, but for the

sake of setting the stage, we cleaned floor, windows, bathrooms and countertops of rooms the visiting donors never entered. Why was this detail to the physical cleanliness of the space so important to David that he needed four of us to clean for several hours? Although I was not witness to the discussions during the actual meeting between David and the donors from ALF, I can only imagine that David's insistence to the details of presenting the office as clean was directly prompted by the donors' impending visit. The preparation of the office as a clean and functioning space was a portrayal of the real development the ALF donors would never see.

Raison d'être

Looking beyond David's reason of helping "the poorest of the poor", I think it is important to reflect on the motivations and perhaps justifications the organizers of NGOs, namely the professionals and officials that initiate and lead these organizations, to do what they do. Because discussion about the moral reasons for aid and foreign assistance in terms of government, international and third party assistance is such an important part of the debate in development theory, this topic warrants discussion. In illustrating the rich context of the 'moral basis of development', I will be providing a parallel to the ways in which David talked of EBPP and his reasons for doing development.

Most informed scholars, professionals and observers concerned with aid and development are aware that the call to morality as a justification of foreign assistance in the form of NGO work and even governmental assistance is contentious (Riddell 1987). While laws and institutional regulations of many economically developed countries implicitly acknowledge the moral obligation between citizens, evidenced

for instance by internal redistribution of wealth through taxation systems and social welfare, this model has not traditionally been imposed on states or their citizens for others living outside their state boundaries (Horton and Roche 2010).

The moral principle for aid had not always been the sole criterion for US foreign aid policy for example, but in the midst of the Cold War, Lloyd Black in *The Strategy of Foreign Aid* (1968) argues that it was a prominent statement that steered much of the West's policy on aid away from an anti-communist one towards an underlying moral criterion that remains long after the end of the Cold War (18). Roger Riddell (1987) contends that morality as a reason for NGO programs began appearing regularly as early as the late 1950s, with morality justification stated boldly, emphasized without elaboration (2). It appears that there has arisen fairly quickly an unquestioned consensus that there was a moral obligation between the haves and the have-nots. The proposition of a moral obligation continues to this day. Peter Singer (2010) argues that the rich have a moral obligation to assist the world's poor and should allocate a reasonable proportion of their resources to alleviating poverty. Perhaps one very prominent instance in United States history that alludes to this responsibility based on an underlying morality comes from President John F. Kennedy's inauguration speech in 1960: "To those people in huts and villages of half the globe struggling to break the bonds of mass misery, we pledge our best efforts to help them to help themselves [...] If a free society cannot help the many who are poor, it cannot save the few who are rich." Although anticommunist efforts were veiled in moral justifications to bolster US presence in the underdeveloped Third

World, through time and after the end of the Cold War, the same moral justifications remain strong in guiding foreign policy (Riddell 2007).

From the interview and conversations with David, it was easy to see that he was dedicated and invested in the organization and its work. David mentioned numerous times that “work was his life”, and he would often describe how he went sleepless because of the sheer amount of paperwork he needed to finish. As the founder and CEO of EBPP, he took it upon himself to oversee all of the projects and ensure that everything was going according to his vision; in his own words, “I began with a mission, I chose Indonesia as my life.” He stressed several times during the interview that he did not offer his help but only gave his services to those who reached out to him for assistance. EBPP was a venture and an organization that was built on this principle where the organization was meant to help create a sustainable model for development and livelihood. David often recited EBPP’s motto, “help us to help them help themselves” as their dogmatic catchphrase. However, the very nature of how David originally went about in actively seeking out the poorest village in Indonesia contradicts his claims to the village coming to seek him for help. Reflecting back on the motto, it is clear that the organization relies on the assumption that there is a vertical relationship between the organization and the poorest village in Indonesia whereby it is the organization that is capable of helping the villagers help themselves. Following this logic, if the organization’s assistance is severed, then the poor are left helpless. As one of the EBPP’s promotional videos narrate, “they are ready to help themselves” but are unable to.

It is noteworthy that although the underlying morality of development aid was never specifically mentioned by David, it is echoed in EBPP's motto which is eerily similar to President Kennedy's famous statement during his inauguration speech in 1960. A motto of "helping us help them" acknowledges that *they* are not capable of helping themselves unless the *us* is present – a choice and a duty of those who have to help those who can't come out of poverty by themselves.

The belief that the rich have a duty to help the poor has been a dominant theme in development literature that addresses meeting the basic needs of the poor as a priority. For example, in *Employment, Growth and Basic Needs, A One-World Problem* by the International Labor Organization, it states: "In order to assist in the provision of basic needs, official development assistance would have to be directed to the poorest countries and to poverty groups in other developing countries" (1976:107). In the United Kingdom and in several other countries this focus on the basic needs of the poor was polished and crystallized in the slogan of "aiding the poorest", institutionalized in the British case in the 1975 White Paper *The Changing Emphasis in British Aid Policies, More Help for the Poorest* (Hewitt 2001). Dame Judith Hart, Minister of Overseas Development in the mid 1970s was a key player in shifting the emphasis in the concept of British aid and overseas assistance. She was instrumental in expounding on the specific nature of the moral obligation to provide aid. Dame Hart expanded the moral argument by elaborating, similar to President Kennedy's remarks, that it was a duty to help the poor: a duty not only based on the compulsion to meet the needs of the poor but also the fulfillment of the needs themselves respond to a basic human right that demands action by those capable.

“When the peoples of the Third World can meet their basic needs then they will have the opportunity for full participation within their own societies” (Hart 1975:12).

These statements started emerging in official government statements in the late 1950s and early 1960s, a time where colonialism was dissolving after the end of the Second World War and an increasing global consciousness growing amongst world powers (Riddell 1987). In 1962, the United Nations set up a Special Committee on Decolonization to encourage this process and the arguments used to justify colonialism shifted to ones that justified promoting aid and intervening in development to former colonies (Kay 1967). In the United Kingdom, this principle for aid was encouraged to the fullest by funneling much of the resources established in former British colonies to development projects. A moral case for development and the projects that ensued marked the start of neocolonialism, and as Kwame Nkrumah (1965) continues, the result of which saw foreign capital being pumped into developing areas of the world for development and exploitation, increasing disparity and the gap between rich and poor in the world (pg. x).

David’s actions and his motivations for starting an NGO in Bali is reminiscent of the conceptualization of aid giving that the First World institutionalized to justify their aid to developing countries. In the United Kingdom, *Aid to Developing Countries* by Her Majesty’s Stationery Office in 1963 explained that “over a large part of the world poverty and malnutrition still persist; disease and illiteracy are still widespread; and the increase in population exerts a remorseless pressure on resources” (as cited in Riddell 1987:7), moral grounds to rationalize the United Kingdom’s neocolonial presence in developing countries all over the world. In

comparison, David's guideline for finding the poorest of the poor, he says, was that "they didn't have access to roads, education, healthcare, water, electricity, nothing." Otherwise, they wouldn't need him, and "it was up to them to develop." And so with this justification, he arrived to Desa Ban and established EBPP.

Keith Horton and Chris Roche (2010) argue that since *at least* the end of the Age of Imperialism (circa 1914), the West has developed a strong tendency towards an unquestioned consensus that there is an underlying moral reason for aid assistance, and strong suggestions that the appeal to morality is still made officially as a basis for providing aid. Cosmopolitan thinkers such as David Held (2002) impose a positive, moral responsibility to meet the basic subsistence and security needs of all people. I would not go ahead and conclude that the justification for morality was the sole criterion for David in motivating the founding of his organization EBPP (disregarding his search for a new place to call home). However there are many interesting comparisons that can be made to how David has delineated EBPP's mission and goals. His dream of helping the poorest of the poor is directly correspondent with how Britain has institutionalized their conceptualization of aid giving and the motivators of doing so. His desire to help the poorest of the poor indicate that he sees a duty of helping the poor meet their basic needs, an assertion of the unquestioning morals that characterize the language and rhetoric historically used in aid assistance. The contentious and controversial moral pronouncements of aid are sharply contrasted with the hard-hitting criticism of such a justification that will be discussed in a later chapter.

Although there are no explicit claims, the mission statement of EBPP insinuates a moral stance for their existence, echoing what Dame Hart has dubbed the “essential morality of political philosophies in Britain” (1975:2). Increasing globalization and interdependence is leading to a growing cosmopolitan awareness, although this may still remain morally contentious. However, what is known is that what may have seemed implausible half a century ago now seems an unquestioned choice. Riddell explains that what was once a new concept and a contentious one, aid and development today and its moral basis have become general conventional wisdom in the age of neocolonialism (1987:7). A popularized image of the Samaritan helping those in need has been pushed forth as a moral basis for action. This is one explanation that seems to be indicative of David and EBPP’s criterion for seeking out the “poorest village in all of Indonesia” and “helping them help themselves.”

Another aspect of justification or motivation that goes concordantly with the unquestioned morality seems to be the issue of impact. Organizations tend to justify their presence through the positive impact that their presence and contribution offers. Aid effectiveness is an epistemic challenge due to several reasons, most notably the lack of reliable data and expert guidance. It is easy for organizations to prove the positive impact of their work through quantitative and qualitative data, using tangible measures such as how many people have been able to gain access to basic health care or the number of vaccinations administered. However, the contrary is rather difficult because it is impossible to know what it may have been like without the presence of the NGO. Furthermore, negative impacts of the NGO such as proper accountability and follow through are very difficult to quantify and thus easier to conceal.

When impact is being discussed, accountability must be presented in conjunction. Accountability, much like impact, for NGOs and development work is a self-evident principle, implying accountability towards the parties that the NGO feels the acknowledgement and assumptions of responsibility and liability. If the NGO is not accountable to their donors, they will leave and discontinue their relationship. If the NGO is not accountable to the intended communities and beneficiaries, they will be contradicting their very mission statement and goal of the NGO, whatever that may be. Accountability is not usually a simple process and often involves multiple actors and accountabilities that NGOs must have: to donors, media, staff, government, and intended beneficiaries to name a few. The mechanisms that influence accountability to one actor over another in conflicting situations are often skewed to favor those who have more resources, money and power. The danger is that NGOs, without clear and resolute values, will deliver more of what the donors and actors in positions of power want rather than what those who should supposedly be benefiting want (Eyben 2005). And because donors provide a significant influence on the survival and continuation of the NGO, it is almost necessary for NGOs to hold their accountability to donors with high regard. For these reasons, NGOs must demonstrate a positive impact, a performance of actual development to the donors.

NGOs have an easier time advertising a positive impact without leaving room for much easy criticism. “It is very difficult for those of us who are not experts on international aid to arrive at a judgment about the effects of the work aid agencies do that we have good reason to believe correct” (Horton 2010:96). In this bind that a non-expert is placed in, NGOs have the leverage of stating their positive impact to

demonstrate the importance of their contribution. Nonetheless, the danger in placing such a heavy emphasis on the demonstration of an NGO's impact is in how it shapes the thinking and approach in designing and implementing programs. Design can potentially be overly concerned with outcomes or issues that can be most easily measured or can be most convincing for donors and the public. Excessive concern about demonstrating the impact of a certain project or program from beforehand can result in NGOs moving away from the more participatory and inclusive values that should have shaped their work.

The potential disjuncture between the planned impact and what the actual impact that occurs in reality illustrates the difficulty in defining impact, especially in relation to social programs. And as such, development programs by NGOs are constrained at numerous levels that highlight the disjuncture or separation, both geographically and bureaucratically between the planned impact and the actual delivery of development. Firstly, the impact is being measured, assessed and defined in isolation from the communities affected by the programs. Secondly, the impact is being identified in a way that is most easy for the organizers and donors to control and measure. In these ways, justifications of impact create for an organization of development that does not include the voices or concerns of the intended beneficiaries of development. The interactions of EBPP and ALF in the office in Denpasar that Saturday afternoon and the performative representation of development exemplified this disjuncture in defining impact and a potential crippling factor in effective and accountable delivery by the organization.

David and I

As David had told me numerous times in many different ways, in his relationship with the representatives from ALF, his focus was on the impacts and accomplishments of EBPP as the main leverage in the interaction. In writing proposals and grants, this was also the main point of emphasis: figures and quantities that could be demonstrated to show the potential impact of the new project. In an NGO model that needs to coax donors for their very livelihood, it is necessary for them to be able to justify their impact and the importance of their contributions. As NGOs such as EBPP are challenged to prove their impact they have begun to frame their methods and approaches in designs that will allow greater control and ultimately a greater assurance of what can be measured as an impact. Although this may secure what is necessary in the short term for the survival of the organization itself, more funding, it does less to concentrate on the development needs of the true intended beneficiaries of the people of the villages in eastern Bali.

After the guests had left, David called me into his office. He asked me about my impressions of EBPP and how I was settling in so far. Right before I left, he told me that I could take the day off Sunday and to come in Monday prepared to work hard. It wasn't until later that I realized that ALF was a very important donor to EBPP and learned that the particular meeting that I had 'witnessed' had successfully secured a donation from ALF for the next two fiscal quarters. I realized that my first Saturday in Bali was more valuable than I had recognized at the time.

The smell of cigarettes stayed in that room for another two weeks.

Chapter Three: The Twin Objective of Volunteer Tourism

The Transient Workforce

The non-profit organization is in perpetual employment crisis. Workforce recruitment and retention issues have recently triggered considerable managerial concern within the non-profit sector, to which the majority of NGOs belong. The biggest challenge in finding a stable workforce is recruiting employees with the commitment, the qualifications and the willingness to work within the non-profit environment. In brief, the major challenge that non-profits identify with respect to expanding or maintaining their workforce is the “inability to offer competitive salaries” (Salamon and Geller 2007). The very nature of the non-profit means that the organization does not distribute its surplus funds to its owners and shareholders. They do not have private owners, and while workers may be able to produce a surplus, any such profits from their labor are required to be retained by the organization for its self-preservation, expansion and future plans. With a strict financial situation and the inability to redistribute taxable money to its employees, non-profit organizations do not share the same flexibility in resources that for-profit organization do.

David had mentioned this financial challenge many times during my stay, repeatedly telling me that I was lucky to be part of the EBPP team because usually they would not be able to afford it. My compensation was very modest, and I used it all to cover daily expenses such as food, transport and housing, so I didn't leave Bali with a net income. I was essentially a volunteer worker. Nevertheless, I was being

compensated for my work, which was coming from the finances on EBPP. The Denpasar office itself consisted only of David and the three accountant young men, Wayan, Nengah, and Nyoman. Although I was never inquisitive about the private matters of income and pay, there were many indications that neither the accountants, nor David for that matter, were being handsomely rewarded. Wayan and Nengah would regularly stay in the office late into the evening and cook meals in the office kitchen with friends. The accountants frequently stayed after hours to enjoy a match of soccer on TV or an evening of chatting and cigarettes on the back porch. The vast majority of my interactions with them were in the office, but my observations of the amount of time they spent in the office and the kinds of typical non-work activities in which they partook suggested that their living situations were quite modest.

Near the end of my stay in Bali I witnessed David scrambling to expand the organization's spending budget for the possibility of hiring a new employee, the first since Wayan, the youngest of the three accountants, who had joined several years back. David had been searching for a permanent PR staff member to oversee maintenance of the organization's public image, in hopes of expanding their profile and recognizability to more donors and other interested parties. He had just returned from a business meeting in Surabaya where he had interviewed an Indonesian filmmaker who was the ideal candidate. This man is presently a full-time staff member in the Denpasar office, which suggests that David had somehow managed to find the necessary funds to hire him at a proper pay-grade. But David's worry in securing a committed employee was indicative of the financial struggle for a non-profit organization such as EBPP.

Nevertheless, the assumption that nonprofits are losing out in the competitive market for personnel does not seem to be borne out by the actual experience of non-profit organizations. For while non-profit organizations lack the ability to secure competitive pay for retaining or expanding their workforce, they are organized along different motivating and operational principles. The difference between nonprofit and for-profit organizations corresponds (to an extent) to their organization goals, purpose served, and reasons for existence. Development aid non-governmental organizations work on the principles to support economic, environmental, social and political development of developing regions. Under these conditions, the organizational goals of non-profits are often best achieved by intrinsically motivated employees who identify closely with the goals of development work and/or with the goals of the organization. From this perspective, the relatively low level of compensation offered acts as a screening device that attracts workers to the non-profit organizations who are not motivated by economic gain. They will instead promote the non-economic satisfactions of the work to prospective employees. Non-profit organizations have perhaps used this as a 'selling point' for attracting potential employees; because they cannot afford to pay salaries competitive with those of for-profit organizations, they draw workers with the motivations of the 'good altruist' that attract donors and funders as well. Nevertheless, funding is a difficult and ubiquitous issue that non-profit organizations must deal with on a day-to-day basis.

In the face of limited resources, non-profit organizations have capitalized on the rising trends of volunteering among middle-class youth of industrialized nations. For international aid organizations with offices in developing countries around the

world, the advent of alternative leisure travel experiences and the increasing popularity of volunteering have given birth to a new form of tourism, volunteer tourism. A volunteer, temporary workforce has provided non-profit organizations with a new resource to survive and function given their capacities and purpose.

Grounds for Traipsing

Students, NEETs⁶, and early-career professionals from developed countries travel to destination countries in the developing world for short-term work on volunteer placements with non-profit organizations that work on humanitarian, environmental, and various other social projects. This phenomenon is a recent form of tourism, branching out of more traditional forms associated with leisure and recreation. Initially termed ‘volunteer tourism’ and subsequently shortened to ‘voluntourism’, this emerging mode of tourism has been defined as “those tourists who, for various reasons, volunteer in an organized way to undertake holidays that may involve the aiding or alleviating of the material poverty of some groups in society, the restoration of certain environments, or research into aspects of society or environment” (Wearing 2002:240). Although this definition condenses different aspects of volunteer tourism, which may be more or less pronounced in actual cases, it distinguishes this form of tourism from the purely leisure-oriented consumption of a place or culture.

Tourism represents 80 percent of the economy of Bali (Elegant 2002). This lucrative industry has multiple intersections with the humanitarian work sector,

⁶ NEET – not in education, employment, or training

including an active presence of voluntourism, making Bali an interesting site to study the relations between leisure tourists and volunteer tourists. As many volunteer tourists do not initially intend to do volunteer work and pick it up serendipitously, the divide between leisure and volunteer tourism in Bali is ambiguous. The general definition provides a good starting point for an analysis of voluntourism that considers both the personal motivations of participants and potential impacts of the emerging niche industry.

The principles and ideologies of volunteering abroad go back to the activities of the International Voluntary Service and the Peace Corps in the United States after the Second World War (Brown 2003) and before that to programs set up by organizations such as the Service Civil International in the 1920s (Tomazos and Butler 2008). However, it wasn't until the early 1990s that volunteering abroad began to take the form of a popular consumer practice. The increasing popularity of voluntourism was concurrent with the increasing popularity of student gap years taken during high school or between high school and university; the extended transitions from school to work that more and more young middle-class people undergo both reflected and contributed to the growth of organizations offering activities and placements for gap year students (Daldeniz and Hampton 2010). In the United States, the early 1990s was also when 'alternative spring breaks' started becoming popular as a different, socially responsible way to spend a typically leisure-emphasized holiday.

The precise current numbers and demographics of volunteer tourism are somewhat difficult to trace (Tomazos and Butler 2008). The majority of volunteers

will declare tourism as the primary reason for entering their destination country, mainly to avoid work permit issues. Nonetheless, case studies suggest that volunteer tourists are not isolated incidences, but part of an emergent social phenomenon in which growing number of young travelers seek purpose or meaning beyond leisure (McGehee and Santos 2005; Hampton 2003; Callanan and Thomas 2005).

Although literature on conventional international tourism to less developed countries is increasing, volunteer tourism is currently under-researched (Daldeniz and Hampton 2010). Accordingly, the impact of the voluntourists is difficult to determine. Nancy McGehee and Carla Santos (2005) argue that voluntourists work on projects for development and as a result, their efforts contribute to better living conditions or improved health impacts. In addition to being an agent of local development, volunteer tourism may also be a consciousness-raising experience and encourage a volunteer ethic in the individuals. However, these claims that volunteer activities contribute to improving people's lives and contributing to development goals are yet to be assessed in the vast majority of cases (Daldeniz and Hampton 2010). Mark Hampton (1998) contends that there is a possibility that volunteer tourism might exacerbate existing problems rather than improve them. Others such as Joanne Ingram (2008) have suggested that the model of volunteer tourism operators as well as the actions of individual voluntourists cater to the needs of the voluntourist rather than the volunteer project, exploiting the beneficiaries the projects are intended to help.

One Amongst Many

In analyzing volunteer tourism and the significant temporary workforce that comprises non-governmental organizations, I must also reflect on how I landed in Bali as an intern for the East Bali Poverty Project. It was during winter break that I first started looking into opportunities for summer internships. Part of the American college experience, it has become assumed that students partake in summer internships or work experience during the long summer break. University is an institutionalized space and time where students gain educational experience and credentials. It is a structured, productive zone where postsecondary education becomes an investment into the later life, in a society where education has become a potent source of social stratification. The summer then becomes the intermittent periods between the academic college experience where the student is temporarily in an unstructured zone. However, whether for self-fulfillment, work experience, credentials, or for financial reasons, the majority of American college students will spend vacation time in more established, productive zones. This has typically included summer jobs and classes, but volunteer work and internships have become increasingly more and more popular. The internship, which developed from its predecessor, the placement year, is an opportunity for the student to gain work experience, credentials, and possibly make some money during the holiday (Yamada 2002). It has become a very widespread activity amongst college students, with increasing interest and participation, and the reciprocal supply of more opportunities by many companies and organizations. Devoting one's summer holiday entirely to leisure has become unacceptable, an unproductive use of time that is more attuned

with the childhood that transitional youth or ‘emergent adults’ are supposed to leave behind. Still, sandwiched in a neutral space between compulsory education and probable full-time employment as well as between two academic years, students, such as myself, are unwilling to stray out of the transitional zone of youth. The summer internship is the ideal middle ground between the necessity of preparing for post-education while remaining in a non-fully committal role of a work-for-pay situation.

So by the time winter break came along, I decided to start looking for opportunities. I knew I was interested in doing some form of work that was related to my academic interests: medical anthropology and public health. I knew that NGOs were big players in public health and development aid, and that there were plenty that advertised volunteer and internship opportunities. I thought that this would be a good opportunity to test out a possible career path, and gain valuable experience from work exposure. I started looking at opportunities online during the summer and into the beginning stages of my semester abroad in the spring. The thought of being abroad became increasingly alluring as I continued looking for opportunities. I am not sure whether being abroad made me want to travel for longer to different places or I was attracted to the field of international aid work, but I began looking for opportunities for work at sites of international aid work, typically being in the less economically developed areas of the world. I knew the type of work and internship I was interested in but not the location. Part of the luxury of the college summer internship I believe is the freedom to choose specificities since the work is catering to the student and their experience more so than anyone else. There was an overabundance of opportunities to work in the field of development aid for the summer, so I needed to narrow my

interest in some way. Southeast Asia as a region came to mind, not because I had a long-standing fascination with or interest in the area but more because it was a region I did not know much about. I was interested by the nation's histories and their relationships with other regional powers, and the growing recognition of the region as a nexus for development as well as a global economic and cultural power. Indonesia then, and Bali even more so, were afterthoughts to my desire to be abroad and be involved in international aid work.

I had been sending many, many emails to organizations that I found via the Internet through search engines and websites such as Idealist.org. I wanted a more 'authentic' experience than those advertised as internship opportunities, and so I deliberately avoided those, and instead contacted organizations with a lengthy email and my resume asking if they had any need for a college student (with little to no experience for a ten-week period). Most of the responses came back with brief apologies and a denial of my request. But I persisted and sent back further emails to most of these respondents asking for other referrals. Somewhere along the way, I was referred to David and the East Bali Poverty Project. He showed an unprecedented interest in me and we exchanged several emails back and forth before agreeing to have an online phone interview. It was during this online conversation that I was able to secure a position as a research intern at the EBPP, a position that David had more or less formulated during our conversation. The summer was an important period when grants were expiring and needed to be renewed. In addition, several new projects needed to be researched, planned and proposed to new donors. He said that my inquiry for an internship came at the perfect time, when he needed someone to

oversee these tasks. Over the next few months leading up to the summer, we exchanged emails coordinating my visit and logistics such as transportation and housing.

My primary reasons for traveling to Bali and becoming involved in development aid work was simple: I was interested in getting exposure and experience in a field of work that I was interested in, in a part of the world that promised to be a pleasant place to spend the summer. The summer internship, its form and opportune zone as a temporary, somewhat non-committal engagement seemed like the perfect opportunity. Even though David needed an extra worker in the office, the internship opportunity was definitely catered to my convenience and needs rather than the organization or the local communities and beneficiaries in east Bali. It was summer and I was seeking an opportunity to travel, gain work experience, and a way for personal fulfillment. During the summer and my time in Bali, I was a voluntourist, using my holiday time as an intern in development aid work.

Travel as Transition

The youth of the participants is a key element of the phenomenon of voluntourism. As noted, voluntourism is part of the prolonged transition from youth to adulthood that has become more and more common among middle-class youth who seek to accumulate credentials and experiences. Jeffrey Arnett (1997) describes these young people as ‘emergent adults’. What he argues is that the extended transition has become a stage in itself, that ‘emergent adulthood’ represents a new developmental stage, similar to the more conventional stages of childhood and adulthood. However, this ‘stage argument’ has been criticized by anthropologists

such as Jennifer Tilton (2010) who argue that it ignores the considerable class variations in youth transitions, which are arguably growing shorter for poor minority youth, even as they are growing longer for some middle class youth.

Definitions of youth, child and adult are made up of clusters of socially constructed meanings. Finishing school, securing full-time employment and marriage are built on a 1950s cultural narrative of maturation and are becoming increasingly less central to young people's notions of adulthood. The linear sequence of school, work, family and home owning has broken down and is no longer conceived of as a linear sequence (Tilton 2010). The boundaries of the youth stage are even less well developed. Youth, the transitional stage that sits somewhere in between childhood and adulthood, is socially understood to be marked by "a progression from dependence on parents to independence, self-reliance with respect to daily living requirements, and eventually living with people other than parents" (White 2002:216). However, the youth transition to adulthood has been sharply revised recently in the United States as well more broadly throughout the industrialized world.

Today, some young people are taking longer to reach adulthood, and the economic and social maturity that it connotes, than their contemporaries several decades ago. However, others find themselves interpellated as adults by the criminal justice system at an ever younger age; as Tilton (2010) argues, while middle-class children extend their youth, poor youth of color are being deprived of childhood. For the middle-class youth, an increasing sense of competition in the labor market for diminishing opportunities, as well as the expansion of higher education as an

increasingly powerful source of cultural capital are some of the reasons that the youth transition has been prolonged. In addition, the expansion of an urban-based singles culture and the legitimation of cohabitation, as well as the middle-class preoccupation with careers for both women and men contribute to the deferral of marriage, which has lost its status as a rite of passage into adulthood.

A prolonged transition appeals to a middle class, youth generation as both a necessity and a privilege. This is the class-generation that has found in voluntourism one kind of rite of passage, combining the appeal of removing oneself from the structural space of the 'real world' while building experience and credentials for when the transitional period comes to an end. There are those who have recently completed university studies, uncertain about their futures and careers, while others may already be in full-time employment and feel dissatisfaction with their jobs. There may be others who feel a desire to escape routine or defer other life decisions such as employment or marriage.

The most common reason for volunteering is self-enhancement: enhancement of an individual's curriculum vitae, gaining new skills and experience, and networking in order to find employment (especially for recent college graduates) or make themselves more 'employable' within their given sectors (Daldeniz and Hampton 2010). These work-related motivations are high among voluntourists. Many voluntourists also see volunteer tourism as an affordable way of traveling in a foreign country for a long period of time. For example, volunteering is often considered a way of extending a backpacking trip. Other individuals noted that they did not know what else to do with their lives; such comments as, "I am taking this year to find what

I want to do with my life” are not uncommon. This idea of ‘finding oneself’ is a middle-class ideal of self-development that is a romantic concept that has figured in middle-class individualism and self-fashioning since at least the 19th century, when it was associated with the Grand Tour and other such modes of elite leisure travel that were seen as ‘self-improving’. These practices and modes of leisure travel have more recently been popularized with backpacking and travels to the hippy overland trail of the 1960s and 70s and more recent flows of young backpacker tourists on the banana pancake trail of Southeast Asia.

The mode of travel of voluntourism is linked to earlier modes of ‘alternative’ leisure travel such as backpacking, long construed as a mode of self-development for young, primarily middle-class people, a way of finding oneself through adventurous experience, contributing to the increasingly unequal childhoods in contemporary capitalist societies (*as cited in* Tilton 2010). Middle-class parents reacted to the withdrawal of state support via intensified strategies of ‘concerted cultivation’ that they engaged in, whereby parents saw themselves as developing their children to cultivate their talents in a concerted fashion. In simultaneous comparison, the defunding of public services has disenfranchised the minority poor and as Tilton (2010) argues, excluded them from the protections of childhood. From the experiences of concerted cultivation, middle-class children acquired the credentials that could be valuable in the future when they enter the world of work, and lending them the class privilege of ‘finding themselves’ through modes of exploration such as backpacking.

Often, many of the young adults I spoke with in Bali said that they had found themselves at an impasse, and voluntourism was a manner of dealing with this uncertainty, frustration, or a general sense of arrested transition. Some of them had originally come to Bali as alternative leisure tourists in search of experience, primarily as backpackers and surfers, but become voluntourists and remain in Bali over the long-haul. For others, volunteering in Bali is a way of extending their trip and so extending the time to figure out what they want to do with their life.

The volunteer activities are marketed as an authentic experience whereby the voluntourists are given a purpose and meaning to their travel; the tourists are not simple consumers of the destination country but offer something through their charitable actions. The growing trend draws on beliefs that leisure no longer justifies an individual's desire to travel (Tomazos and Butler 2008). Voluntourism is a branch of tourism that caters to a market that seeks a 'productive' manner of spending a holiday – conventionally, a 'leisure time'. The motivations of individuals to embark on voluntourist activities have been of some interest to researchers. Wearing (2004:215) argues that by understanding the motivations and attitudes of the volunteer tourists, "we may be able to address the managerial implications for organizations operating in the realm of volunteer tourism."

Volunteer motivations demonstrate that the main drivers in voluntourist activities speak to the demographic (middle-class youth and young adults with generally liberal values) that make up the majority of voluntourists (Callanan and Thomas 2005). In middle-class culture, self-development traditionally requires hard work and achievement as well as the more leisured pursuit of the 'authentic self'

through consumption (Ehrenreich 1990). While the latter has been increasingly emphasized (and commodified), people often feel guilty about extended breaks. Thus, the idea of ‘useful labor’, being an activity in the form of work, allows people to experience themselves as still performing the class values of discipline and productivity. In other words, if ‘doing nothing’ became a positive value for youth, ‘self-exploring’ middle-class people, it still remains anathema from the perspective of older class values. Being able to ‘do something useful’ and morally valuable while also in a sense ‘doing nothing’, to directly advance one’s career, is really a condensation of the two sets of values the class has long tried to hold together: self-control and self-expression, production and consumption, work and relaxation.

The prolonged transition appears to a class generation as both a necessity in order to prepare oneself to compete and a class-generation privilege of ‘finding’ oneself outside of the structured spaces of home and school. Volunteerism seems to be a perfect compromise, offering both, something that is not contingent that it appeals solely to youth and young (or emergent) adults. It is the compromise, or condensation, that can also be seen in relation to the class’s twin sets of values, the traditional work ethic and the romantic values of creativity and expressivity.

Searching Fulfillment

Motivations for volunteering were especially difficult to discern in a place such as Bali, being such a popular tourist destination. In a place that offers an abundance of leisure activities and tourist attractions, how is the ‘good’ or ‘altruistic’ voluntourist measured? Everyone who worked in the Denpasar office, interns and full-time workers, engaged in some form of recreational activity during their free

time. And being in Bali, all forms of leisure and recreation in proximity to Denpasar and its neighboring beachside towns were geared to accommodate tourists. From restaurants to internet cafes, to more evident choices such as scuba-diving and yoga classes, tourism was fueling the sheer number and variety of leisure activities in Bali. So even if the alleged principal motivator is one of volunteering, it is difficult to say that Bali's reputation as a tourist destination did not influence the decision to travel to Bali in the first place.

Being amongst a community of expats with all varying experiences of development work and tourism, it was often difficult to place myself within the crowd. I often found myself convinced that I was less of the tourist and more of the volunteer than other voluntourists who came to work for EBPP for several days. The duration of volunteering became coded with the importance and intent of the individual's stay. Clearly, this was my mechanism for claiming validity to my stay in Bali.

Because of the establishment of a mass tourism industry and the large presence of development work, volunteer tourists came in many different forms. Bali has recently witnessed a very unique form of volunteer tourism, colloquially called "the EPL phenomenon". Readers of *Eat, Pray, Love*, the best-selling memoir (and more recently movie adaptation) by Elizabeth Gilbert that chronicles the author's search for 'fulfillment', have turned up in masses to Bali. Inspired by the memoir, many tourists have come in search for a similar experience of personal growth through travel (Larasati 2010). Similar to the influence of Peter Mayle's *A Year in Provence* on tourism in the southeastern region of France, *Eat, Pray, Love* has

brought a new tide of tourists who have come in search of an authentic purpose beyond leisure and recreation.

Near the beginning of August, a couple of weeks before I was set to leave Bali, David came into the office one morning with a middle-aged British woman. He was enthusiastically showing her the office and introducing her to the office staff and the interns. David informed us that she would be volunteering with EBPP for the weekend. David was always happy to have more people working at the office, in any shape or form. One of the other interns was put in charge of supervising the weekend volunteer. I remember when the intern came back to the office room after settling her supervisee with work to do for the day. The intern explained in a whisper that she was surprised when she found out that the older woman was traveling in Bali alone – something that had increased recently but was still quite an uncommon sight. The intern leaned over and whispered to me that the older volunteer revealed to her that she was “influenced by [*signing out with her hands*] E-P-L.”

‘EPL fever’ as David noted, has attracted many tourists to Bali in search of a certain self-fulfillment that Gilbert achieves in the book through interaction with local Balinese and a long-term stay. The book, and now film, has brought a wave of tourists to Bali, some of whom volunteer to extend their stay or to “do something useful” during their stay. The influence of the book demonstrates how an accessible tourist location such as Bali can be a host to travelers and volunteer tourists who are not the class-generation of young, middle-class, liberal voluntourists. Diyah Larasati (2010) explains how the phenomenon of older, single women travelers has seen an unprecedented rise in recent years, something that was unheard of several decades

ago and something she largely credits to Gilbert's book. I would not imagine that this book is the sole influencing factor of this phenomenon, with other likely factors such as the increased popularity, safety, and accessibility of Bali overall, but the demographic of volunteering and travel in Bali is continually expanding. New influences such as *Eat, Pray, Love* are popularizing the form of voluntourism to newer audiences.

The East Bali Poverty Project's Voluntourists

There were two other interns, or volunteer tourists, who were working with EBPP for the period that I was there; to say that they were both at 'life junctures' is a pretty apt and accurate description. One was an Israeli man in his late twenties who had gone through a few odd jobs and completed a masters program prior to embarking on his indefinite trip to Southeast Asia. He had already traveled in Thailand for several months before arriving to Bali, whereupon he discovered EBPP and started volunteering. He had received a masters in film studies from a university in Tel-Aviv but was uncertain whether he wanted to pursue a career in the film industry. After a short stint in a security company, he decided to embark on a trip to Southeast Asia with a friend from home. He told me in conversation that his family questioned his desire to travel, but he told me that he was not regretting his decision. Although he never mentioned anything to the extent of 'accruing experience' or using his time in Bali as a means of 'prolonging his entry to adulthood', he seemed to fit the bill of the voluntourist. He was unsatisfied with the few jobs that he had, and was unsure about what to do next. Travel and volunteering was a perfect compromise. It is interesting to note that there is a trend among Israeli youth to travel abroad for a

period of time after completion of the mandatory military service, which puts a series of special demands on young men and women, where travel is meant to be transformative and an important component in the transition to adulthood in Israel (Lieblich 1989). My conversation with him did not go into discussion about this component of his travels, however, the cultural demands of travel could perhaps be a context in which he chose volunteer tourism. He had been in Bali for five months by the time I arrived and had no intentions of leaving any time soon.

The other intern at the office, a recent college graduate from Australia, did not hide her intentions for coming to Bali, claiming regularly that she was “running away from home”⁷. An avid surfer, she spent a few days a week at the office in Denpasar working on different media projects and PR work, while spending the remainder of her weeks surfing the famous waves of Bali. I cannot say for sure which came first with regards to her motivations for traveling to Bali, volunteer work or surfing, but regardless, her volunteering activities as well as conversations indicated her stay in Bali was a transitional stage after college. She had recently graduated and volunteering was a way of honing her skills to become a more marketable candidate for future career options, while surfing was a leisure activity that denoted the combination of voluntourism with hedonistic tourism.

For some young people, including the two interns and me, long-term travel and volunteering can be an escape from routine, a path to personal growth, or space for reflection (Muller and O’Cass 2001). The experience of transition can be described as the “occupation of a neutral space sandwiched between a voluntary or

⁷ verbatim

imposed ending and a new beginning” (Bridges 1980). In this transitional zone, significant social demarcations are vague and alternative or new institutional supports for a new sense of identity have not yet been identified. The idea of the transitional zone derives from the notion of liminality, betwixt and between condition, between two statuses – the old and the new (Van Gennep 2004). These transitions are marked by three phases: separation, margin or *limen*, and reintegration. According to Victor Turner (1975), during the phase of being in the *limen*, after being detached from a position in the social structure or from an established set of cultural conditions, the individual becomes a ‘passenger’ during which the passenger is “neither here nor there”. The passenger is between all fixed points of classification, passing through a symbolic space that has few or no attributes of the past or future state. In this liminal space, the person is in ‘outsiderhood’, situated outside of the social system, either “as a result of voluntary decision, imposed circumstances, or both” (Turner 1975:234).

The model of liminality falls short in describing volunteer tourism as a new stage of development. Even though I would contend that it is liminal phase of travel that involves questioning, experimentation, play, and experiences that are expected to be transformative, it is still considered a new stage of development. For this, I believe volunteer tourism must be seen as an extended transition, where it condenses the two sets of values the middle class has long tried to hold together, productivity and consumption. This twin objective is what lacks in describing volunteer tourism as a liminal phase. Youth transition can be configured as state of liminality to the extent that it is situationally and temporarily set apart from adulthood. They are thus embodying the state of ‘outsiderhood’ by physically leaving and removing

themselves from their spatial home, as an outsider in a foreign country. However, it is still a new stage of development and self-expression that makes it an established form of transition. Young people have both the time to spend in this way and culturally conditioned desires: for such an experience – as both a means of personal development and a potentially valuable cultural asset.

Who's Beck and Call?

The form of voluntourism demonstrates one very important way in which the boundary between leisure tourism and humanitarian or development work becomes blurred. The individuals who participate in volunteer tourism reveal how they function as both tourists and volunteers. The motivations of the voluntourist are ambiguous and it is difficult to discern the impact of the voluntourist but the fact of the matter remains that voluntourism is an emerging form of tourism that appeals to individuals of a class-generation from industrialized societies that seek to prolong their time as 'emergent adults'. As both the privilege of traveling and self-polishing, and the necessity to refine oneself to become more marketable for future higher education or career opportunities, volunteer tourism is an organizational form of tourism that appeals to both desires. The question is not whether such an individual is a tourist who decides to volunteer or a volunteer who engages in tourist activities, but the whole point of voluntourism is that it can be experienced both ways, as work and leisure, responsible qualification and pleasurable escape, preparation for adulthood and extension of youth; Bali simply enhances the pleasure pole.

There is a freedom and mobility for individuals to navigate both, within the established tourism industry and thriving NGO presence in Bali. I went to the EBPP

Denpasar office Monday through Saturday on most weeks and would spend Sundays on day trips, traveling to tourist sites, going to beaches and being one amongst the many leisure tourists. One of the other interns perhaps exemplified this fluidity even more explicitly. Being an avid surfer, she would arrive at the office in the morning after having surfed at dawn. She would sometimes ride her scooter to beachside tourist towns to have lunch and come back to the office in the afternoon to do work. She stayed in a hostel in Seminyak, a tourist beachside area on the west coast, close to the waves, shops and restaurants, a 20-minute scooter ride to the Denpasar office.

The volunteer tourist form provides the authentic adventure and experience of travel and volunteering, done within the privileged time of leisure away from the structured spaces of school and work. For the nonprofit organization, it provides an inexpensive, enthusiastic workforce that suits the organization to the capacity that a temporary workforce can. Nonetheless, the constant presence of voluntourists for organizations such as EBPP necessitates questions: who does this model benefit? The examination of volunteer tourism given in this chapter illustrates how this form of extended transition caters to the middle class, cultural formation of being able to do something useful while also in a sense doing nothing. The youth generation of travelers desires a compromise of the middle class twin set of values: the work ethic and the values of creativity and expressivity. From the perspective of the development, the individual motivations of the volunteer workforce do not prioritize the desire for community-centered development. These circumstances that accommodate and desires of the individual voluntourist rather than the needs and

desires of the intended beneficiaries of development create an NGO-centered development that strays from I believe can be accomplished with better effect.

Chapter Four: From Subjects to Protagonists

A Community-Centered Development

The common thread in discussing how EBPP needs to be more transparent, accountable, and adaptable to the communities of Desa Ban is that the organization needs to place greater emphasis on the community as the principle actor in development. This is the crux of community-based and community-driven development projects: projects that rely on community participation and actively include beneficiaries in their design and management, and in ideal circumstances, projects in which communities have direct control over key decisions including management of funds. In this regard, my impression is that there needs to be a shift in the organizing principle of development in Desa Ban. As it stands, EBPP is the main organization representing the needs of development for the people of Desa Ban. I believe that efforts to let the community decide for itself need to come from a community-centered idea of development.

Community-based is the key here, and a term I believe I can stand behind. I use the term to invoke the framing of the issues of development to the people who the development is intended for: the individuals in the communities. Perhaps the term ‘communities’ has been used by EBPP in reference to Desa Ban without much explanation of what it entails. The people that inhabit the villages of Desa Ban do not share a unified set of common values and ideals, especially when it comes to the issue of development, but because of the way they are targeted by the non-governmental

organizers of development, the idea that they are indeed a single, homogeneous community is projected upon them as if they were indeed such a cohesive unit. I do not intend to further stimulate this misunderstanding but instead have used the term 'communities' to stress the predominant way those who are targeted and grouped together by external development treat their constituents. If any real cohesiveness is to be found among the members of the villages of Desa Ban, it would be one based on circumstance, driven by position and life experiences (Marsh 1999), in this case, the circumstances of having been for over a decade on the receiving end of projects of development. It is not geographic location or common values that binds the so-called community together but, from my experiences, EBPP has tended to view them as such, and for this reason I believe that it is all the members of the villages of Desa Ban, the 'community,' that are entitled to a community-based development whereby its members are the main actors.

The conception of Desa Ban as a community is what necessitates reconfiguration. However, before I discuss the current debates in the assessment of development and my ideas to how EBPP can change its framing, I believe it is important to take a moment to understand why this image has been created and how this is unique to Bali. The expat community in Bali has created a unique form of tourism and development, or a combination of the two where it is neither one alone or the other but a completely novel phenomenon that takes from both categories. As I have shown before, this expat community in Bali emerged from a development sector that prospered, at least in part, from the existing residence and influence of a thriving tourism industry. Now, as I have argued throughout this project, the expat community

has placed the local people of Bali at the margins of consideration. By this I mean that the specific tenor that the tourism industry takes in Bali has trickled into assessments of development and into practices that determine how development is done in general. Tourism services have always been furnished for the tourist's needs and desires of leisure, with the needs of the local people as an afterthought. This emphasis on the wants and needs of the tourist, despite the official 'cultural tourism' framework, with its oft-advertised purpose of benefitting the local people by generating revenue while invigorating cultural pride, is ultimately what impeded cultural tourism to fulfill its goals. Instead, it has created a salient symbolic and physical rift in Bali between tourists and locals, and created a form of tourism that is disposed to the tourists' will. The blending of the two, tourism and development, by the expat community has deeply impacted how development is done.

This is something that became evident to me in observing the ways in which EBPP functions: From the performative representation of development as a way of ensuring funds to the dependence on a voluntary tourist workforce, I believe that the organization's work was permeated by the mode of representation and setting of priorities dominant in the tourism industry, which have bled into the development field through the expat community that interweaves the two. Because of this framing, ulterior motives regarding the survival and wellbeing of the organization become emphasized more than the priorities and needs of the communities they are intended to help. As such, I believe that my contributions to the existing literature on constructive suggestions for reconfiguring assessments of development must take into consideration a reframing of development in which priorities are reformulated. I have

attempted to flesh out this argument by describing the social and historical complexities of development work and the NGO presence in Bali while recognizing the downside of having the NGO as the main actor in development.

Current Debates on Assessment

There is a significant amount of literature that discusses and questions the role of NGOs in development work. Most works, however, focus on changes in the structure and activities of the NGO, and some of them call for the removal of the NGO as an actor altogether (*see, for example*, Wapner 1995; Brodhead 1987; Roche 2010). My suggestions will focus on EBPP and Bali specifically, and I will argue that there needs to be a shift that goes beyond the restructuring or refocusing of EBPP's work: The changes need to take place in the organizing principle of development in a way that would give the people of Desa Ban the right and power to self-govern. I will argue that critical interventions should be based on the understanding that development as it is right now needs to be complicated so that the current mode of representation is replaced by one of self-representation by the people of Desa Ban. I would like to start, however, by fleshing out the most relevant existing debates in the critical development discourse that pertain to how NGOs as agents in development should be assessed in order to understand where the current debate lies and where it can improve.

In discussions about the possibilities of an NGO-inclusive, community-centered development which is productive and positive, the most drastic position, and in my view shortsighted argument, is the claim that NGOs ought to be removed completely from the process (Wapner 1995; Mercer 2002). There are some legitimate

claims for this, supported by evidence that suggests that NGO interventions have done more harm than good, causing more misery than promise for life improvement (Fisher 1997). Stephen Biggs and Arthur Neame (1996) argue that the danger in relying on NGOs is the risk that they are becoming the symbol of the ‘technical solution’ to the problems posed by development, solutions that will be promoted by international development agencies to emphasize the optimistic potential of NGOs replete with sweeping generalizations. Others such as Angela Benson (2011) argue that many of the NGOs’ efforts benefit more the individuals working within the organizations than the people who are the presumed beneficiaries of the development aid, exacerbating the problems of development.

NGOs were first considered as an alternative to previous models of development dependent entirely on the state, its institutions, resources, and policies, which proved inadequate to address the issues facing inequality. These non-governmental organizations sprouted all over the world with the goal of filling in the void left by the shortcomings of the state in areas that were assumed to be its responsibility (Zaidi 1999). NGOs are private-sector organizations that grew out of individuals’ commitment to the care and wellbeing of peoples and which, simultaneously, resulted in the divestment of the welfare state and its capacity to address their countries’ development needs. From the beginning, the NGO world grew supported by significant amounts of multilateral and bilateral funds directed, through those NGOs, into countries in the global south for developmental purposes. At first, NGOs were perceived to be the ‘magic bullet’ by official development agencies, the all-in-one solution to many of the problems associated with

underdevelopment, and were supposed to carry out development with an approach that was far different from that of the state (Edwards and Hulme 1996). Since (at least) the Earth Summit in 1992 (and the parallel Global Forum at which representatives from over 9000 organizations from 171 countries participated), development agencies expected nothing short of miracles from NGOs (Little 1995). They were understood to be community-oriented and democratic, and to be better at understanding the needs of underdeveloped people all over the world (Zaidi 1999). However, these critical hopes and assumptions about NGOs rapidly begun to wane, with the wide acknowledgement of the inability of NGOs accomplish everything that they were tasked to do. Today, the growing mistrust in the ability of NGOs to meet all development needs around the world fuels the calls for their disappearance and replacement.

There are, however, many critics who still see advantages in having NGOs at the forefront of development work and who believe in the possibilities of NGO-inclusive reforms to how development is assessed. Their criticisms, directed at the NGOs' effectiveness, which regard their level of productivity and efficiency as well as their harmfulness, stem from the question of delivery and performance. Therefore, for NGOs, what this comes down to is the challenge of providing supporters, beneficiaries, and others impacted by the NGO with the information necessary to evaluate whether the organization in question is doing an 'acceptable job' (the meaning of which will come into discussion later). Chris Roche (2010) claims that this challenge has led NGOs to emphasize their positive impact and meticulous planning with their projects and programs. Instead he continues, NGOs need to come

up with practical solutions and incentives that can actively shape and change the ways that current organizations can make a difference.

Many academics and activists, such as Alan Fowler (1995) and Ghazala Mansuri and Vijayendra Rao (2003) argue that in order to assess NGO performance we must rely on evidence-based empirical evaluations of performance. In NGO assessment, the use of a proper evidence base is defined as using the NGO's past and current performance as the base of future assessments (Barlow and Beeh 2005). The concept of an empirical evidence base comes from a demand for decision-making to be based on sound evidence rather than intuition or 'the way it was always done' (Mansuri and Rao 2003). It involves a complex and conscientious decision-making that is not only based on the available evidence but also on circumstantial characteristics. Because of the ever changing and uncertain nature of any decision in development practices, evidence-based practice uses the empirical evidence of past and present as best as it can, while understanding the uncertainties inherent in each decision.

One large concern of assessment is that there is no other relevant party outside of the organization assessing the performance of the NGO. Chris Roche (2010) believes that donors are one such relevant party that should communicate adequately with the communities, the recipients of aid. NGOs often function as the bridge between the donors and the communities that the donations intend to help, and a direct exchange between donors and recipients is lacking. This gap can create a defective relationship between the donor and the NGO, where the latter, in needing support and funding, in order to obtain these, is compelled to 'sell' the idea of

development and showcase the organization's achievements to the donor. The donor, having no firsthand experience with the actual communities s/he is indirectly affecting, depends upon this secondhand description of the organization's achievements from the organization itself. While persistent exchange and interactions between the donors and the communities would be effective in bridging a divide between the two parties, as Roche (2010) argues, it is often not realistic or cost-effective to discuss this as a dominant solution.

There is an increasing emphasis placed by NGOs on understanding the problems to be tackled and on developing adequate plans as a way of ensuring a positive impact (Isbister 2009). However, this is based on the false assumption that people and communities are predictable rather than dynamic, creating a false expectation of how development works. Aaron Wildavsky (1988) argues that societies are irrational and that the most effective way of dealing with changes and crises is to give the capacity to the communities to adapt and react rather than for NGOs to try to anticipate every situation. If the goal of the NGO is to prove that it is realizing its mission, then it needs to be more open about its work and more forthcoming about the complexities of development work and the complications that always arise on the ground, rather than to conceal them from the public.

Besides communicating the proper information to the people involved, Keith Horton and Chris Roche (2010) affirm that the question now is how to deal with the information and evaluations about the NGOs' presence. If the actors involved are able to communicate in dialogue with the NGO and give their assessment of the organization, while the organization itself provides an open and honest evidence base

for what it is doing, the NGO should be able to adapt itself to the changing circumstances to move towards a more community participatory model. NGOs have developed in an environment that increasingly looks for the reassurance of certainty in their endeavors, and it is important that assessing impact does not become fuddled with searching for certainty (Isbister 2010). In other words, NGOs should understand that although their impact is important, they need to recognize that uncertainty and risk are inherent to development practices, and decisions should not err on the side of caution for the sake of the organization's survival at the cost of its development goals. That being said, Jamie Isbister (2010) goes on to say that the imperative still remains for the NGO to provide ample, honest information about what they are doing and to receive constructive feedback.

Many argue that greater transparency would effectively allow the public to gain access to the information regarding the organization's performance (Antlov et al. 2005). Chris Roche (2010) claims that NGO transparency is often poor because of lack of scrutiny. For example, it is not common practice for NGOs to make evaluations and assessments of their work public, be it by placing them on their websites or publicizing them in any other way; it isn't common practice either for them to develop an easy and open mechanism for complaints and criticisms from the groups they support. Without a clear code of ethics or conduct and transparency control, NGOs can often continue to work without changing their ways even in the face of obvious problems and increasing calls for accountability (Antlov et al. 2005). Dennis Rondinelli (1993) contends that there is a tendency for NGO workers and practitioners to be wary of codes of management and evaluation, which they often

perceive as constraining of their ability to practice the “social learning that is so crucial to successfully implement complex and uncertain development activities” (vii). By this he means that NGOs insist that they require the flexibility and experimentation to ‘learn as they go,’ which cannot be confronted with rational techniques. True as that may be, others would argue that without regulatory mechanisms, NGOs roam free to abuse certain power relations inherent to the donor-NGO-community chain (Kelly 2009).

There are in fact principles, codes and standards of conduct that many international NGOs are signatories to. The scope of these ethical regulatory initiatives are variable. They can apply to a sector segment or be sector-wide. For example, since 2002, LP3ES (the Agency for Research, Education, Economic and Social Development) a national Indonesian NGO, has prepared and organized a code of ethics for community-based development NGOs around Indonesia (Antlov et al. 2005). The program was implemented in provincial capitals and involved at least 500 local NGOs. At the international level, ethical codes are generally developed amongst organizations that undertake similar types of work by international organizations and institutions ranging from multilateral bodies such as the UN to major international NGOs (Lloyd 2005). In addition, the World Association of NGOs (WANGO) has recently undertaken the ambitious task of constituting a Code of Ethics and Conducts for NGOs that would be broadly applicable to the worldwide NGO community (Gibelman and Gelman 2004).

However, Eric Kelly (2009) insists that the main problem here lies in the NGOs’ compliance to these principles in the face of no real mechanism of

enforcement and punishment; there is also the problem of the vast number of documents and codes (international, regional and local) that many NGOs have ratified (Gereffi and Garcia-Johnson 2001). Because the outlines for such codes of conduct already exist, these must be consolidated and simplified to form more definite benchmarks of quality and performance that are more accessible to public scrutiny. Horton and Roche (2010) argue that this must be done in ways that avoid unrealistic and abstract measures of quality and accountability. One idea they put forth is to address negligence standards within the codes of conduct. These would be various things that NGOs would agree not to do and for which there would be punitive or redress mechanisms that would be supervised or issued by the governing body officiating the code of conduct. Such an approach of regulation could perhaps be more effective and less limiting than a code of standards that would tell NGOs what they should be doing.

In Indonesia, there are two legal regimens for non-profit organizations: foundations (known as *yayasan*) and associations (*perkumpulan*). Many NGOs in Bali, including EBPP, are regarded as *yayasan*. For many years, all *yayasan* adhered solely to societal norms and Supreme Court jurisprudence (Antlov et al. 2005). The mission of a *yayasan* was defined by the founders and then developed into legal practice by authentication through a public notary act, registered in district court and announced in the State Gazette. Hans Antlov et al. (2005) go on to explain that although the objective of a *yayasan* is usually social, religious, or humanitarian in nature, since there hadn't been limitations on the purposes and activities of a *yayasan*, many actually operated as profit-making entities. However, with the fall of President

Suharto and growing international pressure from bodies such as the International Monetary Fund for state-sanctioned yayasan to act in good governance, the Indonesian parliament introduced a law, Law 16/2001, to promote transparency and accountability for all Indonesian yayasan. This law was a significant breakthrough for transparency and governance of NGOs in Indonesia, providing accountability mechanisms such as the following:

- Yayasan receiving funding from the state, overseas assistance, or assistance from other parties amounting to 500 million Rupiah (approximately US\$55,000) or more or having assets of more than 20 billion Rupiah (approximately US\$2.2 million) are obligated to publish its financial report in an Indonesian language daily newspaper (*Article 52 Clause 2*).
- Yayasan suspected of actions violating the law or of negligence in executing their tasks are subject to investigation by state or local authorities to obtain data or information (*Article 55 Clause 1*).

It is yet to be determined whether this law and its accountability mechanisms have been effective in promoting NGO transparency and accountability through evidence bases, but it demonstrates ongoing efforts to standardize the ethical conduct of NGOs (Antlov et al. 2005).

Practical Provisions with a Purpose

In calling for a community-based approach to development, I believe it is important to stay away from extreme arguments such as the ones that argue for the elimination of the NGO structure altogether. Instead, I believe that constructive, pragmatic recommendations can significantly improve the practice and assessments

of organizations like EBPP. First and foremost, I believe there is a good argument to be made against the call for the dissolution of all NGOs. Before putting forth my criticisms regarding the way that EBPP has imagined ideas of development on behalf of Desa Ban, it is important to recognize the work that they have accomplished. As David told me numerous times, the basic needs of healthy living were lacking; the people were “living in abject poverty without water, sanitation, roads, schools, health facilities and electricity.” Presently, the subvillages that make up Desa Ban have the large majority of these basic needs met, an accomplishment for which EBPP can take responsibility. From an evidence-based assessment perspective, these realities cannot be ignored. I take the recognition of these accomplishments as a precursor to the suggestions for improvement for a community-based development. What I am arguing is that, although these basic needs were met through the efforts of EBPP, I believe that the theoretical and practical approach NGOs like EBPP take in their work is imperious. By this, I mean that, while decisions in the development process were made by the NGO with the communities of Desa Ban as the recipients of their aid in mind, it is essential for a dialogue to take place where the beneficiaries of development can dictate and set development goals on their own accord.

In fact, I would argue that removing EBPP from the development paradigm would only bring back the state as the main actor in development. If the state were reinstated as the main engine of development in the area (acknowledging that the state has already failed in its attempts), significant reforms would be necessary for any hopes of a movement towards a community-centered development (Offe 1984). This is especially true in the case of Indonesia and Bali where state and local

authorities have been heavily criticized for their levels of corruption and disdain of democratic processes (Antlov et al. 2005). In the end, I believe that reform and a rethinking of goals and methods is necessary, but removing EBPP and passing on of responsibility to the Indonesian or Balinese authorities would be a very costly, resource-inefficient approach. EBPP does not represent a monolithic force that only engenders negative consequences. By properly acknowledging the abilities of EBPP as a catalyst for social and economic development, I argue that it is possible for EBPP to take steps toward a community-centered development approach for Desa Ban.

Of course, no single approach to development works as a ‘magic bullet’ of change; and the solutions are not meant to be simple prescriptions to be taken at face value. The commitment to purposely communicating with the communities and other stakeholders in ways that adequately address their concerns and reassure them that the organization is making significant and real contributions is not a simple and straightforward task but one that requires a sophisticated performative strategy. Nonetheless, I believe that there are a number of practical and specific changes that could improve communication between EBPP and the people of Desa Ban.

Firstly, I believe that social accountability mechanisms can be experimented with and adapted to fit the great demand for accountability from NGOs like EBPP. Although there is a widespread consensus in development regarding the importance of such social accountability, few appropriate mechanisms have been developed to effectively implement it (Antlov et al. 2005). An example of a social accountability mechanism implemented in the public sector is the Right to Information Act in India, which aims to enforce the right of citizens to secure access to information under the

control of public authorities (Horton and Roche 2010). In effect, this law advocates for citizen empowerment, allowing him or her to question the government, inspect their files, take copies of government documents, and evaluate government works. This kind of mechanism of accountability have been lacking in the NGO sector, where such an open evidence base is not accessible by the public and various other stakeholders (Isbister 2010). EBPP can test and adapt such mechanisms to ensure transparency and to empower communities to hold themselves accountable.

I believe that EBPP can also develop more efficient relationships with local research organizations that can provide expert methodological support and constructive feedback. EBPP can greatly benefit from this third-party assistance because, from what I saw during my months there, it lacked any accountability mechanism or institutionalized channel to regularly receive outside input beyond that of the donors. There were no evaluative or feedback systems, for example, to allow the people of Desa Ban to officially voice their opinions about the development projects besides through direct or informal communication with David and other staff members. By developing a more effective and impersonal method of communication and by evaluating individual contributions on top of organizational goals, EBPP would be able to create more solid evidence based on local expectations and performance assessment based on what the community of Desa Ban wants.

In response to the existing suggestions that call for the donor to assess performance for themselves, I propose practical suggestions to provide the right incentives to enable donors to assess performance. Although donors are not better judges of development achievements, their first hand experience and inclusion can be

important to ensuring that they, as the funders, are aware of the activities that are occurring without the direction of the NGO. In the case of EBPP, a direct exchange between the international donors and the people of Desa Ban was difficult and rare. Location and accessibility made this journey to Desa Ban cumbersome for many donors, who came to Bali for holidays and short work trips and preferred to stay near the NGO's headquarters. I did go to Desa Ban along with several donors a couple of times. However, the interactions that I witnessed between the donors and the people of Desa Ban were not as direct as I had expected. More so, the donors were led along a tour by David, traveling in a caravan of four-wheel drive cars through the rugged side of Mounts Agung and Abang. The tour would stop periodically at schools, clinics, water tanks, gardens, and other EBPP-sponsored or led programs and initiatives that David would show and talk about to the donors. For all intents and purposes, this was a tour of the site of development led by David, structured by him to best suit the donors' interests and not a first-hand direct exchange between the donors and the people of Desa Ban. Thus, I believe that we can begin looking for different means of bridging the gap between the donors and the communities. I do not want to rule out an exchange where the NGO is included in the picture. However, I think that new, innovative ways can be used to increase the direct communication between donors and the people of Desa Ban in addition to forms of communication mediated by the NGO.

For instance, EBPP can implement staff blogs and be connected to social media outlets more frequently and systemically to give a more raw and realistic assessment of their work on the ground. Another way of establishing a less doctored

view of the communities is to allow members of the communities of Desa Ban to speak for themselves. One way this would be possible is to equip communities with the tools and abilities to self-represent and express their achievements and assessments of the development support they receive. Social media websites such as YouTube and Twitter have allowed easy access to a greater audience for such uses and have already been piloted to support participatory video project in development programs (Global Voices 2007). When I left Bali at the end of the summer of 2010, EBPP had begun setting up various social media accounts for use in advertisement. Although I believe this is a step in the right direction, if they want to create a more honest and realistic representation, these social media outlets should be controlled and managed autonomously by the communities of Desa Ban in describing their responses to EBPP's presence. Giving an accessible voice to these communities will allow for a more direct exchange between them and donors as well as for the channeling of valuable feedback to the organization.

In addition to receiving accurate information, the people of Desa Ban must be able to respond to the organization's activities and give open feedback to a receptive organization. I saw how, increasingly, EBPP spent time carrying out evaluations of their work and planning out future directions and projects. Making these accessible to the public (especially the people of Desa Ban) would be the next necessary step for giving a clearer and impartial picture of their work. Allowing for feedback and criticisms, especially from those EBPP aims to help, is of the essence in any effort to create conversation channels that contribute to a community-centered organization. EBPP must also work to create measures to encourage a feedback and public

grievance mechanism for the people of Desa Ban. One proper avenue for expressing legitimate complaints could perhaps be an independent ombudsman or ombudswoman, a person who can act as an intermediary between EBPP and the people of Desa Ban. An ombudsman or ombudswoman can be the point person for the communities as well as a professional voice that can command authority for all the parties involved. Although this concept is rather novel and will perhaps need further discussion and experimentation, the idea of a trusted representative and intermediary between the supported communities of Desa Ban and EBPP is a healthy one and could perhaps open room for greater feedback.

Even if we were able to conclude that EBPP is giving adequate attention to programs and development projects that focus on sustainable ways for creating a community-centered approach to development, the final phase in critically assessing the presence of EBPP is, at heart, a consideration of how the community would fare if the NGO were absent. EBPP works with the mission statement to “help them help themselves,” implying a development strategy that will eventually pass on to the developing communities the management of the resources and systems for an improved quality of life and sustainable economic growth. Thus, for an organization like EBPP, whose principles lie on the objectives of providing underprivileged communities with the necessary tools to help themselves, an important question is: Where does the organization’s contribution and administration end?

EBPP, for example, started off in 1998 by bringing in Balinese physicians and nurses to administer vaccinations and routine check-ups. Then, they erected schools and started providing primary education to the children, and they built sanitary

pipelines that would carry water to the villages of Desa Ban from river basins on the other side of Mount Agung. These were projects that David proudly remarks were welcomed and celebrated by the people of Desa Ban. It has been almost thirteen years since these works were carried out, and EBPP is still a dominant, thriving presence in the communities. Since then, EBPP has introduced many new development projects and sustainable growth programs that deal with education, healthcare, and the environment. The question of where should an organization's contributions end becomes particularly pertinent when considering some of the more recent piloted programs and projects developed by EBPP, such as the establishment of after-school music programs and the opening of art galleries in the villages.

Such recent developments are arguably beneficial to the quality of life of the people of Desa Ban, but do not have the same level of urgency as some of the earliest programs dealing with very basic needs. Are after-school music programs and art galleries the kind of programs that a development NGO should be implementing? Sustainable projects, such as the ones that EBPP credits itself for, must center on the community's ability to sustain them in time without the assistance or guidance of the NGO's administration. Thus, at a certain point in time, sustainable development programs necessitate that the administrative organization, in this case EBPP, remove itself from the picture once it believes that its goals have been accomplished and a particular project is well-rooted in the community. Unfortunately, sustainable development is a vague term in itself, and organizations rarely include plans for concluding their work. The justification of impact to establish a claim of presence and authority are also used to demonstrate why an organization should remain (Isbister

2010). Evidence of the positive impact the organization has had in a community is often presented as the reason why the organization should stay, an approach that depends on viewing the organization as the main actor in development. But as I have discussed above, the beneficiaries of development, the communities, must be situated at the center of consideration and their needs to be prioritized. If development is to be sustainable, and communities are to truly help themselves, development organizations such as EBPP must see themselves as catalysts or facilitators of change in a process that, in the long-term, gives authority and control to the communities themselves.

Clearly the challenge lies in an organization's ability to anticipate a cutoff point when management and responsibility would be transferred to the community, a step that many organizations like EBPP might not be inclined to take, especially if the organization is a means of livelihood for its staff or if the staff has a strong attachment to the organization and its projects (both of which I believe are true of David). On the other hand, without the proper mechanisms of internal regulation, it seems far too easy to justify why more development is needed and protract the presence of the organization indefinitely. But this would not be doing justice to the communities served or to even to EBPP's original mission, which claimed that its goal was to help the communities self-generate their own growth and prosperity. Through adaptation and response to the needs of community members and other affected parties, EBPP must realistically determine the limits of their capabilities and effectively decide what's best for the receivers of development, the people of Desa Ban. Ultimately, EBPP needs to become aware that the time will arrive when they will not be necessary for the stable, continual development of Desa Ban, when they

will have to recognize that they are nothing more than a small step in the big picture, in which the ultimate objective is to give the recipients of development aid the necessary tools for a democratic, sustainable development.

Community-based participation can be a mechanism for enhancing sustainability and improving effectiveness, making development more inclusive, by “empowering poor people, building social capital, strengthening governance and complementing market and public sector activities” (Mansuri and Rao 2004:2). EBPP cannot, by its very nature, be a central force in community empowerment. Projects dominated by the decisions and ideas of EBPP can lead to a pernicious type of representation by those in visible positions running the development projects. Interventions that are community-based and empowering are difficult to define, conceptualize, and, even more so, put in practice. As such, a community-based intervention will likely make development efforts messier; the inclusion of more voices in the conversation, rather than letting this be one dominated by experts and officials, can complicate the streamlined process of the organization of development. However, I believe that, in a situation where the community is being denied its role in self-representation, the potential mess is but a small, inevitable step toward the long-term goal of autonomy, where the people of Desa Ban are at the helm of their communities’ development. From my understanding, community-based interventions are those that allow for an inclusive involvement of the intended beneficiaries in projects of sustainable, collaborative development.

Concluding Remarks: Towards Self-Representation

Where I began

This project started with an idea that grew out of my experiences in Bali in the summer of 2010 and that continually developed and shifted throughout the research process. When I first arrived in Bali, I hoped to gain valuable work experience by working as an intern at the East Bali Poverty Project, where I would be exposed to the field of development aid and to the ways the non-governmental sector operated on the ground. However, I did not expect the reversals of thinking I experienced when I eventually came to understand the complexities of this type of work and how differently the process would shape up to be than what I had first imagined. There were several crucial aspects to the personal, experiential process that I underwent that became apparent only as the whole research and writing process unfolded.

By processing my experiences and insights through writing, I came to understand just how unique Bali's case is regarding the ways the tourism and development industries potentiate one another. This is in large part due to its history of mass tourism and how it came to shape the business industry and lifestyle on the island. In addition, I was able to see for myself how development NGOs operated in such a unique environment and witness the conditions that made for a complex mode of development, one that requires better processes of evaluation and discussion about issues of framing and accountability.

Furthermore, what I came to understand, and what I largely underestimated before embarking on what became my research project, was the *importance of being there*. My position and frame of reference is directly connected to my experiences as an intern, and it is from the observations and reflections that this position allowed that I have attempted to create my own understandings of development work in Bali.

Where I arrived

From these experiences and understandings, the research process shifted towards one that could accommodate the changes to the stream of experiences and insights that arose while I was on the island, changes in my thought process and also in the subject matter of the research: Bali, tourism in Bali, EBPP, and the individuals I met and activities of which I partook. The things I participated in were dynamic, and what I witnessed was only a moment.

Tourism in Bali has undergone significant changes through time and is in a state of constant flux (Howe 2005). EBPP as an organization is also continually changing, growing as it increases its resources and human capital while influencing relationships and its prominence in Desa Ban and Bali. Moreover, EBPP is made up of the people that constitute it, individuals who are also in constant change. The transient workforce is but a salient example of the flux inherent to life at EBPP. As I hope my narrative has shown, the individuals surrounding and within EBPP have undergone change and have changed the organization. Additionally, I believe this project is evidence to how an single individual (myself) has been changed through a (short) period spent at EBPP.

What I accomplished

This account of the relationship between tourism and development in Bali is based on my experience working for the East Bali Poverty Project and my observations of the landscape and the people and processes that were happening around me.

This project started with an effort to historically contextualize many of issues in tourism and development in Bali. I noticed the sheer presence and intensity of the tourism industry quite early upon arriving in Bali. As I began working with EBPP, I witnessed that the sphere of tourism, which I assumed was a distinct entity, was very visible in EBPP and overlapped with development work around Bali. On the one hand, Bali has become the site of a large community of expats, whose members seem fluidly move between work in the tourist industry and work in the development industry. This expat community produced a unique landscape of NGO work in Bali that seems to take too many cues from tourism, including, I believe, its forms of representations of Bali and Balinese people.

In examining the relationships between EBPP and the organization's main actors through analysis of one particular episode where several important donors came to the main office of EBPP and the interactions between David and the donors that ensued many of the problems rooted in the overlap of industries became apparent. These, along with the narrative of the personal history of David based on several interviews I conducted with him, conveyed how there is a tendency for NGOs such as EBPP to focus themselves and the struggle for their survival. In doing so, they produce a barrier to a community-centered development by holding themselves

at a central regard, where the NGO's ability to sustain itself in time becomes the measure of the performance of development.

One of my thesis main contributions is, then, the examination of the apparent lack of boundary between tourism and NGO work in Bali, where much of the labor force for organizations derive from people that arrive originally for leisure tourism purposes. Even when this is not the case, as members of the expat community, workers can fluidly move between sectors, taking part in tourist activities and interchanges without losing their badge as an NGO worker. These circumstances, where a particular consumption lifestyle becomes inseparable from the development goals set up by the organizations, contribute to further create an NGO-centered development whose interests are compromised by structures and needs extraneous to their goals.

All of these conditions that I witnessed and experienced made for an organization in Bali that is disconnected from the principle of a community-centered approach that I believe can allow for what the people of Desa Ban and EBPP truly want to achieve, and in the organization's words, "implement sustainable programmes which empower [the community] towards self-reliance". EBPP as an organization was strongly affected by the forces of the surrounding environment, namely the establishment of a mass tourism industry, that allowed an organization like EBPP to come to existence, but also created the circumstances that limited it in truly achieving its goals.

My research and writing process ended with some critical reflections regarding what a community-centered approach means in NGO work, where

organizations such as EBPP are not considered the protagonist but rather only the catalyst to the main actors of development, the people of Desa Ban. By outlining my reflections in the fourth chapter, I attempted to contribute to reimagining the role of organizations like EBPP in promoting a type of development where people on the ground, in this case the people of Desa Ban, can define for themselves what they want and if they want it. The chapters, and my progression through this project, followed a larger train of thought that led me to this reflection.

Remarks for Concluding, Reflecting, and Continuing

In a research and writing project like this one, it is impossible not to emphasize the inclusion of certain details or circumstances to the neglect of others. A productive future line of inquiry could focus some more on the individuals I refer here as ‘the accountants,’ who were a significant part of my experience in Bali. A focus on the accountants would be one example of analyzing unique perspectives of three young men from Desa Ban who work for an organization that does development work in their communities. Further inquiry could be meaningful in providing another dimension, a perspective from individuals from Desa Ban and how they perceive their experiences working for EBPP. In addition, a closer analysis of the individual experiences of the voluntourists and their motivations as well as their perspectives on development work could substantiate the very perspective of this mobile workforce that I have attempted to develop in some of the main points of the narrative.

In the end, I reflect on several developments that can extend or refine certain aspects about this project, such as providing more descriptions of individual experiences to substantiate the insights that I made throughout the thesis. Although

my experience as an intern in Bali (and one that was at first unaware of his role and this project) is extremely valuable for providing an intimate perspective, descriptive insights from other perspectives – voluntourists, EBPP staff members, donors, etc. – can develop the narrative even further. A widened vantage point can provide a thicker narrative of how development is conceptualized and how different individuals understand their involvement in development and tourism in Bali.

Finally, having written an account about a specific organization and the individuals associated with it, I believe that the research I conducted and my retrospective thoughts can be developed into a conversation. I hope this text works as the beginning of a dialogue, which puts forth an ideology of community-centered development as an aspect of development work that should be given principal consideration. My hope is that steps can be made to realize a self-represented development by the intended protagonists.

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