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2010

THE SOCIAL RELATIONS OF TOURISM ON THE PERHENTIAN ISLANDS.

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ABSTRACT OF DISSERTATION

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A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in the College of Arts and Sciences at the University of
Kentucky.

By

Jacqueline L Salmond

Lexington, Kentucky

Director Dr. Susan Roberts, Professor of Geography

Lexington, Kentucky

2010

ABSTRACT OF DISSERTATION

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ON THE PERHENTIAN ISLANDS.

In recent years there has been an increase in the adoption of tourism as an economic strategy in many developing nations and a growing interest in how communities and individuals engage with tourism. This parallels research which aims to uncover alternative readings of community participation in forms of economic and social development. This research uses tourism as a lens to understand the economic subjectivity of communities engaged in tourism. Focusing on how the local populations understand, experience and participate in tourism, it paints a picture of the Perhentian Islands which challenges existing understandings of individual and community participation in tourism. The research is broadly framed as a post-development project which highlights the grass-roots and bottom-up nature of small-scale developments and focuses on the ways in which local populations are actively engaged with tourism. It draws attention to the role played by discourse and subjectivity in constructing and reframing understandings of the individual within tourism development. Such discursive constructs can be actively co-opted as a political tool to empower individuals and communities by reconstructing understandings of local engagement in tourism. By recreating understandings of community engagement with tourism, it becomes possible to create new subjectivities outside of the framework of hegemonic capital.

The methodology for this project incorporated participatory action research methods in order to facilitate community benefit through the research process. Research techniques involved both quantitative and qualitative methods in a number of settings. Ethnographic methods involving participant observation and in-depth interviews were complemented with focus groups, and property surveys. Research focused on key themes which were areas of interest identified by community members as well as questions which explored individual motivations for tourism work. In this situation, a number of motivations for engagement with

tourism employment emerged. The individuals were actively seeking their employment, rather than passively accepting tourism from a limited number of choices. There were also similarities between hosts and guests which emerged, challenging the usual binary construction.

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2nd July 2010

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THE SOCIAL RELATIONS OF TOURISM
ON THE PERHENTIAN ISLANDS.

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DEDICATION

To Mike, thank you for everything.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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1: INTRODUCTION

Understanding social phenomena is a challenging, but essential task. There are a variety of tools and techniques which can be used to explore and understand social conditions. This research uses tourism as a lens to understand the economic subjectivity of local populations in the context of Malaysia's push towards "full development" by 2020. Focusing on how the local populations understand, experience and participate in tourism, it paints a picture of the Perhentian Islands which challenges existing understandings of individual and community participation in tourism. The research highlights the grass-roots and bottom-up nature of small-scale developments and seeks to focus on the ways in which local populations are actively engaged with tourism. It aims to draw attention to the role played by subjectivity and discourse in constructing and framing understandings of the individual and groups within tourism development. The discursive constructs used to describe those involved in tourism create particular understandings of peoples and places generating discourses of tourism. How such discursive constructs are produced and utilized can impact the ways in which communities and individuals are understood by others, as well as how they understand themselves. Within the existing discourses of tourism, peoples and places are frequently framed as passive recipients of tourism, limiting the ability for alternative understandings to be generated. Through recreating the existing discursive constructs, they can be co-opted as a political tool to empower individuals and communities by reconstructing understandings of local engagement in tourism. Through focusing on recreating knowledge, this project is situated within the post-development literature and makes a contribution to both development studies and critical tourism theory. Through exploring tourism from the perspective of the producers, it aims to generate new understandings about those involved in tourism.

2: WHY TOURISM?

Tourism is of growing global importance, impacting increasing numbers as both hosts and guests (Smith, 1989). It is ever more sought as a path to development for many developing nations, generating valuable foreign exchange earnings for relatively little outlay. Government economic development strategies frequently promote tourism development as service industry jobs generate employment for mostly unskilled workers, often in regions with little or no other employment opportunities. There are an increasing number of development strategies, both from government and non-government agencies, which promote tourism as a path to alleviate poverty and provide income for rural communities. A large number of countries with high poverty levels are choosing or being encouraged to develop tourism: "Tourism is a significant economic sector in 11 of the12 countries that contain 80 percent of the world's poor" (World Tourism Organization cited in Scheyvens, 2002: 5). However, in many of these locations the benefits are not evenly distributed across the communities, and the goal of poverty alleviation is not attained (McKercher, 1993; Britton, 1982). Tourism is also frequently promoted as a "smoke free" industry (i.e. one which creates limited pollution) and is therefore seen as environmentally responsible development, irrespective of its actual impacts (Shaw & Williams, 1994: 27). Eco-tourism presents the opportunity to diversify the tourism product and expand the market for participation whilst at the same time preserving areas of natural interest. Tourism as a generator of income can be used to off-set some practices which may be considered environmentally unsustainable and to include local individuals in conservation practices (Cater & Lowman, 1994). In addition, tourism offers an opportunity to capitalize on natural resources and/or cultural capital, providing a location with a market advantage.

Given this global growth of the industry and its potential pitfalls, tourism is of growing interest in the academic community. As tourism research spans a wide variety of disciplines, it provides an opportunity for cross-disciplinary practice and co-operation within and between departments. Within geography, tourism is studied from numerous perspectives incorporating the gamut of the discipline's

specialty areas. From an environmental perspective, tourism impacts the physical environment, both directly through development, and indirectly through pollution and resource use. Given that in many locations, the physical environment is the draw for tourists, how these potential impacts are managed is of particular importance (Gössling, 2003; Belsky, 2004). There are also potential conflicts between local resource use and the tourism trade (Campbell, 1999) and between local and tourist access to natural areas.

In addition to environmental concerns, there are numerous considerations which relate to cultural factors. International tourism frequently places "different" cultures together, drawing into sharp relief our categorizations of self and Other. How another culture is understood is influenced by our own socio-historical context which shapes our conceptualization of self and situates others in relation to this. These subjective categorizations for both the host and the guest shape how interactions are conducted and understood. It is this cultural interaction which is often the draw for many types of tourism: "The desire to make contact with one's own culture(s), in all its forms, and the search for experiences of other cultures is very much at the heart of tourism" (Robinson, 1999: 1). Although there are potential benefits to be gained from these encounters for both hosts and guests, how the interactions are conducted and perceived by those involved shapes the outcomes of interaction (DeKadt, 1979). Contact between hosts and guests may be limited, cross-cultural exchange may be one-sided and interaction may be unwanted by host communities (Mowforth & Munt, 1998: 249).

The behavior and cultural influence of guests may present conflicts for producer communities. With international tourism, many of these conflicts are directly related to how different cultural identities are created and perceived on the part of both hosts and guests. The representation and creation of cultural identities occurs both within the given communities as well as from without via popular media, tourism promotion boards and government agencies. These processes can generate or exacerbate tensions between host and guest communities. As suggested by Robinson: "It is not that conflict situations arise solely from inherent cultural differences: they also derive from the processes

involved in the construction, accentuation and promotion of cultural identities" (1999: 22). Similarly, identity creation for the purposes of tourism promotion can generate tensions between members of the host communities who may have differing ideas of their cultural identity. Exploring how these representations are generated and whose purposes they serve can highlight some of the tensions which exist within communities involved in tourism.

From an economic perspective, tourism can be explored in terms of the distribution and lack of benefits to local communities and the global conditions of uneven development. As tourism places the producers and consumers of the given product in the same space, it highlights the conditions of production which are frequently concealed for other products or services. Consumers may be directly exposed to the conditions of production, or they may be shielded from these realities through deliberate manipulation of tourist spaces by those who wish to hide the conditions which exist. This makes tourism a distinctive exchange environment which brings into question our theoretical categorizations of producer and consumer, potentially creating new understandings. Tourism is also of interest to development scholars as it is frequently a catalyst for local development and is promoted by regional and national governments.

As much of the funding for development projects and social improvements comes either directly or indirectly from international organizations or investors, how the destination countries (or hosts) are perceived impacts how their development progresses. Post-development thought has drawn attention to the many ways in which paternalistic perspectives of developing nations can shape the development choices which are supported by outside funding. In some situations studies have suggested that communities in host destinations did not (or do not) want tourism and many of the developments to enhance tourism have been "forced" upon them (Bird, 1989; McClaren, 1998; Cukier, 1996). In some cases the negative reaction from local communities towards tourism stems from lack of benefits. International ownership of resorts and developments, along with tourist consumption of imported products leads to major "leakages" whereby the economic benefits from tourism are not received by the local population and the

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money "leaks" away (Hong, 1985; Pattullo, 1996). At the same time as the economic benefits leak away, the costs of tourism, both environmentally and socially, are felt at the local scale (Goldstone, 2001; Mowforth & Munt, 2003).

Although these studies are important for exposing some of the negative aspects of tourism development, they have resulted in an understanding of host populations which frames them as passive recipients of tourism. Whether the impacts are presented as positive or negative, the local populations are seen to be impacted *by* tourism rather than as active participants *in* tourism. These limited understandings of destination communities fail to recognize the necessary and active participation which does exist. Many of the individuals engaged with tourism have chosen to be involved and actively seek the benefits which participation can bring; these may be economic benefits, social status, gender empowerment or cultural interaction. Failing to acknowledge that these motivations exist is not only inaccurate; it establishes a particular identity for these host destinations as passive receivers of tourism. Such understandings impact a number of factors such as the provision of development funding and aid, the level of participation in planning or the types of projects which are approved. They can also limit the ability for individuals and groups to generate new understandings of their involvement in tourism and structure participation to benefit local communities.

3: BACKGROUND

The Perhentian Islands are an archipelago located in the South China Sea off the north-east coast of Peninsular Malaysia approximately 20km from the mainland (see Figure 1.1). Although there are several islands in the archipelago, there are only two that have continual habitation, Palau Kecil (small island, approx 1294 acres) and Palau Besar (big island, approx 2145 acres). All tourist facilities and accommodations are located on these two islands, although tourists may visit other islands as part of a day trip. The two islands are connected to the mainland and one another via small speed boat style ferries. As there are no paved roads or vehicles on the islands, transport between the beaches is either

walking on tracks through the jungle, or by taxi boat. Most of the tourist facilities on the islands are small-scale with an average of 25 rooms in simply built and furnished properties. The islands attract a variety of types of tourists, from classic back-packers to families and upscale customers with a range of properties responding top these dynamics. A large percentage of visitors to the islands are from other regions in Malaysia or from neighboring countries. Estimates from regional tourist boards place the percentage of domestic tourists to the islands at between 20-28% and my own (limited) analysis identified approximately 40% of visitors from domestic and regional sources. This makes the islands different from other regional destinations (such as Thailand) that have a predominately international clientele. Most tourist activities on the islands revolve around the beaches and water (kayaking, snorkeling and scuba diving). The islands are often described by journalists and guidebook authors as un-spoiled, but on the cusp of over-development.

Figure 1.1: Location of the Perhentian Islands
Cartographer: Richard Gilbreath

3.1: Brief History of Malaysia

To understand tourism on the islands, a brief review of Malaysian history is necessary. Malaysia was colonized by the British in the nineteenth century and gained independence in 1957. As with most post-colonial states, the years of colonization have left a lasting legacy on the country. One of the most obvious impacts of colonialism is seen in the multi-ethnicity within the country. The British encouraged Chinese merchants to relocate to Malaysia in order to facilitate the regional transfer of goods. In addition, the British imported Indian laborers to staff the rubber plantations and tin mines established on the peninsula of Malaysia. After Malaysia gained independence, these ethnic groups remained and form the current multi-ethnic society of Malaysia. According to the 2000 Malaysia census, the population of ethnic Malays is 58%, Chinese is 27%, Indian, 8% and other ethnicities 7%. The term *Malay* refers to the "people of Malaysia", the *bumiputera* or "sons of the soil", a term specifically reserved for those who declare an historical and territorial claim to Malaysia as defined by birth right.

The prominence of the Chinese migrant population within trade and business during colonization established them in a superior economic position in relation to the Malays. The Chinese migrants achieved advantage by utilizing a system of secret societies, called *Kongsis* which assisted raising capital and establishing business connections (Mellstrom, 2003). Prior to independence from the British, there was a conscious effort by those fighting for independence to unite the Malaysian people under an inclusive cultural identity as a method to encourage resistance (for a more detailed discussion see Ongkili, 1985). When independence from Britain was secured, the emerging Malaya Government established an informal social contract between Malays and Chinese in which the Chinese would have religious and economic freedom and the Malays would take a dominant position in politics and civil service (Anand, 1983). The Federation of Malaya became independent on 31 August 1957, and the formation of Malaysia followed in 1963, with the incorporation of Sabah, Sarawak and Singapore.

From these early years, ethnicity and race have influenced Malaysian politics and shaped cultural understandings. The categorization of a Malay

identity has a long history of multiple understandings and contestations (Reid, 2004). Vickers claims that the modern Malay identity traced to the concept of racial divides is an invented concept which stems from the British colonial period (2004: 29). Those in power have sought to use identity as a source of power and the efforts to build a Malay national identity after independence were closely tied with the role of Islam. Although the Malaysian Constitution establishes Islam as the official state religion, the country is not an Islamic state per se. As part of the social contract established at independence there is religious tolerance: "Islam is the religion of the federation; but other religions may be practiced in peace and harmony in any part of the federation" (Federation of Malaya Constitution, 1957, Article 3[1], quoted in Ongkili, 1985: 128). The application of *Shariah* (Islamic law) is decided and enacted at the state level: "State law may control or restrict the propagation of any religious doctrine or belief among persons professing the Muslim religion" (Article 11[4]). As such, the early development of Malaysia and the Malay identity was closely associated with Islam and religious values in general. At this time, there was a significant concern from the Malay population that multi-ethnic unity, whilst beneficial, could lead to loss of power for the Malays. To assuage these fears, the Malaysian constitution included a clause (Article 153) which guaranteed the rights of Malays would be protected. The establishment of *bumiputera* rights was a key political strategy: "The achievement of political independence in Malaya was accomplished side by side with the retention of special Malay rights" (Ongkili, 1985: 128). However, this ethnic preference was not (and is not) popular with some non-Malays and was among the factors that subsequently led to the separation of Singapore from Malaysia in 1965.

The struggles over ethnic preference and cultural legitimacy framed the early years of Malaysian independence. Despite the protection of Malay rights, the Malay population remained less educated, with higher poverty and unemployment than other ethnicities. At this time the development plans which had been established by the Government were securing growth and infrastructure improvements in multi-ethnic urban areas: "The five year

development plans started as early as 1950, and the first Malaysia plan (1966-1970) brought far greater benefit to the urban area, hence perpetuating the imbalance between the Malays and non-Malays" (Ongkili, 1985: 231). The predominantly Malay rural locations received less investment and remained on the social and political periphery, fuelling feelings of inequality. Ethnic tensions famously erupted in the Kuala Lumpur street riots of 1969 as disenfranchised Malays attacked homes and businesses of other ethnic groups.

In response to the ethnic tensions, the government established a set of regulations which extended Article153 and codified a system of preferences for Malays designed to redress the ethnic imbalance. Commonly known as the *bumiputera* laws, the regulations are described as: "The world's first affirmative action system tied exclusively to ethnicity" (Ong, 2000: 57). These regulations established quotas for Malays in government and higher education, offered discounts on real estate purchases and subsidies for businesses and property. In 1970, a government holding company, Perbadanan Nasional (PERNAS), was created to encourage Malay-controlled businesses and to invest on behalf of the Malay population. In 1971, the New Economic Plan (NEP) was released which established the development aims for the country through to 1990 (Anand, 1983). This plan incorporated *bumiputera* preferences by focusing future economic growth on the Malay population; aiming to raise the level of corporate ownership by Malays to 30%, reduce corporate ownership by other Malaysians (i.e., Chinese and Indians) to 40%, and restrict foreign ownership of business to 30% (Government of Malaysia, 1971, quoted in Anand, 1983).

Despite this attempt to redress economic inequality, there remains a stark difference within the country today both ethnically and spatially. As of 2007, the national poverty rate was 3.5% and unemployment was 5% (Bureau of Statistics, 2009). In contrast, the predominantly Malay eastern states (along with Sabah and Sarawak) have the highest unemployment and poverty rates and the lowest literacy rates. The ninth Malaysia plan acknowledges that: "The highest incidence of poverty, with a level of 8.3 percent, occurs amongst the Bumiputera community who form the majority of the rural population" (Government of Malaysia, 2006:

17). In contrast the multi-ethnic west coast remains more urbanized and is the location of national government, high tech industries and higher education. As such, the east coast populations are geographically and politically marginalized from the central political and economic powers in western Peninsular Malaysia. The greatest illustration of the spatial mis-match between the east and west coasts of Peninsular Malaysia is found in the two states of Terengganu and Kelantan. These states have the highest percentage of ethnic Malays (95% in Terengganu and 97% in Kelantan: Bureau of Statistics, 2000), as well as the highest poverty and unemployment rates within the peninsula. There is an historical legacy of uneven spatial development with regard to the east coast, leading to the establishment of development policies to address the existing inequalities within the region (Snodgrass, 1980). Although there has been an overall reduction in poverty both nationally and locally, the east coast rates remain higher than on the west coast.
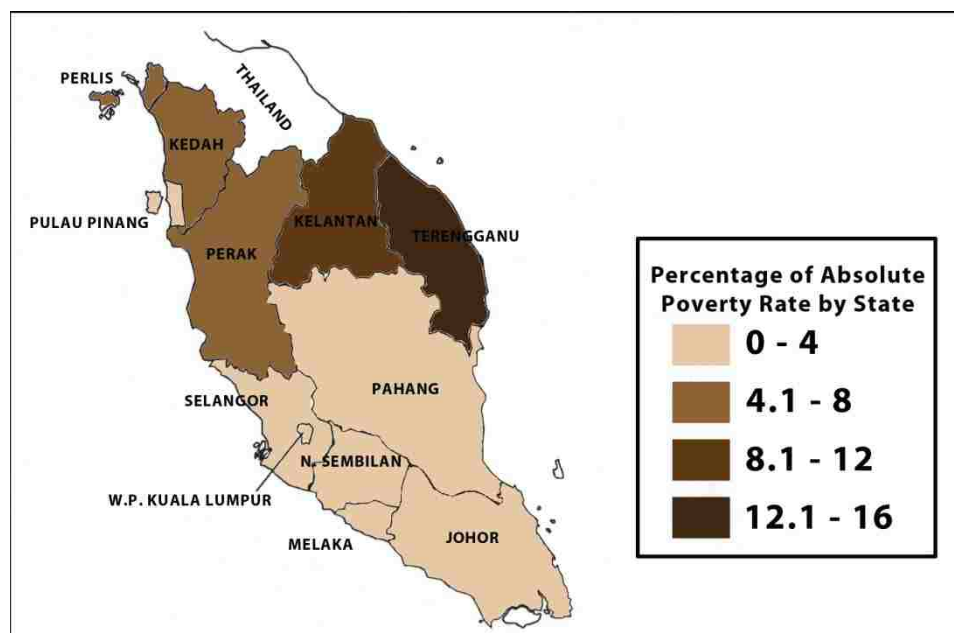
Figure 1.2: Household Absolute Poverty Rates by State in 2008, based on revised 2005 calculations. Data source: Malaysian Bureau of Statistics

Prior to the release of the Ninth Malaysia Plan in 2006, poverty rates for the country have been calculated based on criteria established in 1977. These

calculations established a Poverty Line Income (PLI) which was the minimum needed to meet basic needs of life, such as food, housing and clothing used to define *absolute poverty*. The original rates were considered to be flawed as they were not regionally adjusted (except for Malaysian Borneo), or adjusted for differences between rural and urban populations. In 1988 the government released a revision to their calculated rate of PLI which identified *absolute hardcore poverty* as the rate of income which was less than half of the established PLI. This definition aimed to focus poverty alleviation efforts on those most in need. The method for calculating PLI now examines data which is adjusted for multiple variables such as location of household, composition of household and consumption patterns (Government of Malaysia, 2006: 33). As such, it is difficult to evenly compare the changes to poverty rates. Despite these changes, Kelantan and Terengganu remain significantly below other states in terms of poverty rates.

There is also a political difference which is manifested spatially. The Barisan National (ruling coalition government) consists of the United National Malay Organization, (UNMO) the Malaysian Chinese Association (MCA) and the Malaysian Indian Coalition (MIC). The coalition government has been in majority power since independence, but in recent years the main opposition parties have grown in popularity and held majority seats in different states. Both Terengganu and Kelantan have a strong association with Parti Islam se Malaysia (PAS) which incorporates Islam and *Shariah* guidelines within political organization. Kelantan has been under the political control of PAS since 1990 and the state retains an association with more conservative Islamic values (Carstens, 1986; Wright, 1986). In addition, its proximity to the border of Thailand has recently led to the identification of the state with Islamic fundamentalist terrorism in the Southern Thailand region (*Bangkok Post*, December 18, 2004). The reality of these claims is not confirmed, but the suggestion of an association creates a particular discourse for Kelantan.

The neighboring state of Terengganu was under the control of PAS from 1999 to 2004. Although this was a relatively short time period, the regional

concentration of PAS in the north east of the peninsula raised concerns for those in the national government and an aggressive strategy was undertaken to win back, and retain control of the Terengganu seats. Of the two states, Terengganu has the largest tourist trade and thus the greatest potential for cultural conflict between tourists and the local population. In both states, there are examples of the PAS imposing limits on practices which are seen to conflict with their interpretation of Islam. In Kelantan supermarkets men and women are segregated in shopping queues, there was a ban on wearing revealing clothing and the performance of traditional dance by women is restricted if men are present in the audience (*Guardian Unlimited*, May 19, 2002; Zulkifle & McIntyre, 2006). PAS also has a history of limiting some development projects which are perceived to be associated with negative aspects of modernization. Instead, their policy is to focus development investment on facilities such as mosques and Islamic schools and to discourage projects funded by international business.

Regional development has become a political tool in recent years for both Kelantan and Terengganu. When the PAS party controlled Terengganu they placed limitations on developments on the Perhentian Islands by denying planning permission, placing restrictions on property expansions and enforcing development limitations. In Kelantan PAS has discouraged development from international investment companies and limited approval for large ventures. The state capital city Kota Bharu holds great cultural significance, not just within Kelantan, but within Malaysia as a whole. In 2005 the regional government renamed the city as an Islamic City aiming to preserve the city from developments which do not support the promotion of Islam. In 2008 a large shopping complex housing international brands such as Tesco only received construction approval for a location a considerable distance from the city. In contrast, the state funded investment in building mosques and Islamic schools is widely publicized on billboards and in the media.

In Terengganu the story is somewhat different and follows two conflicting paths. Developments are very high profile with large billboards and promotion of international brands and companies. Though the state remains largely poor and

undeveloped, investment from the oil refining industry and similar projects has raised the profile of the state in recent years. Since the UNMO party regained control of the regional seat, the Perhentian Islands and their on-shore jumping off points have received a considerable influx of funding and have become the flagship of tourism development in the state. At the same time, the UNMO has publicized its investment in Islamic schools and mosques in Terengganu to retain political support from conservative Muslim voters. In the most recent general election in 2008 UNMO retained political control of Terengganu, but failed to win back Kelantan from PAS.

3.2: Tourism in Malaysia

Tourism in Malaysia emerged as a secondary product alongside colonial expansion and was primarily encouraged by private enterprise and regional booster committees (Stockwell, 1993). Promotional materials for tourism were frequently linked with documents which promoted the region for resettlement, encouraging young men to migrate to the region. The first wave of tourism within Malaysia was focused on short-term visitation and the country was promoted and perceived as a stopover destination (ibid: 267). The codification of tourism as a governmental development strategy did not occur until establishment of the Malaysian Tourist Development Corporation in 1972. In 1987 the Ministry of Culture, Arts and Tourism was created, which shifted the Tourism Development Corporation from the Ministry of Trade and Industry to this new ministry. This was a key move which signaled a renewed effort to promote tourism and culture as a combined product. In 1992, the Malaysia Tourism Promotion Board Act was launched which specifically created a space for tourism promotion outside of its connections with development. As part of this change, the Malaysia Tourism Promotion Board was established, and the popular promotional name of *Tourism Malaysia* was created.

Tourist Arrivals and Receipts to Malaysia

Arrivals (in Millions)
Receipts (in RM Billion)

Year	Arrivals	Receipts
2000	10.2	17.3
2001	12.7	24.2
2002	13.2	25.7
2003	10.5	21.2
2004	15.7	29.6
2005	16.4	31.9
2006	17.4	36.2
2007	20.9	46
2008	22.1	49.5
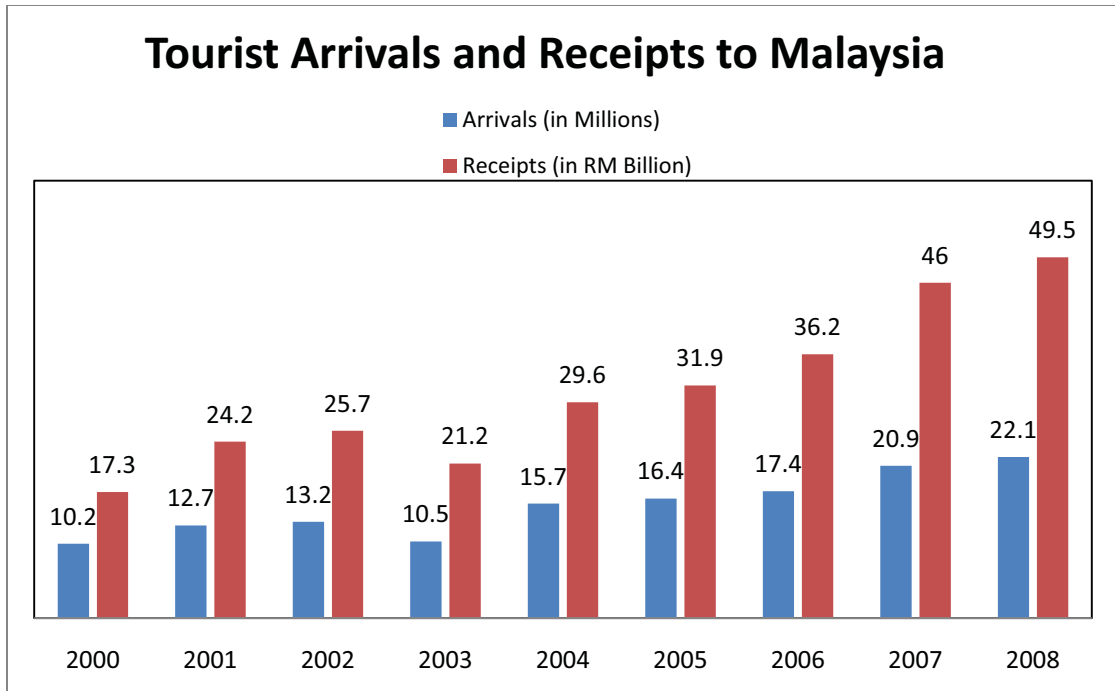
Figure 1.3: Tourist Arrivals and Receipts to Malaysia
Source: Malaysia Statistics Department, 2009.

Tourism today is a key part of the economic development of Malaysia and plays an important role in the generation of foreign currency. Tourism is currently the second largest generator of foreign exchange within Malaysia (data from 2009). Approximately 75% of the international tourism Malaysia receives is from neighboring ASEAN countries, with the remaining arrivals being Europe, 4%, USA, 2.2% and Oceania, 2% (Tourism Malaysia, 2009). Of the ASEAN arrivals, the largest percentages of visitors come from countries bordering Malaysia: Singapore, Indonesia, Thailand and Brunei. Although Malaysia does promote domestic tourism, and this is becoming an increasingly important market, the primary focus for promotional materials is on international tourism. State tourism officials indicated that the reason for this was not related to a more lucrative international market, but rather because the local tourists will come anyway and therefore do not need to be encouraged (personal interview, 2008). The importance of tourism is illustrated by the primacy it receives in policy documents: "For the Eighth plan, the policy thrust is to achieve rapid tourism growth on a sustainable basis" (Government of Malaysia, 2001: 433). There has

been a renewed focus on eco-tourism as a specific development strategy for rural regions within Malaysia and the rhetoric of sustainable development features in many governmental policy documents. Despite these efforts, tourism remains less developed within Malaysia than in neighboring countries in Southeast Asia.

3.3: Situating Malaysia

Tourism in Malaysia has a number of dimensions which separate it from other locations in the region. Malaysia has a thriving and growing domestic tourism market and receives a larger percentage of regional tourists than its neighboring countries. This significantly changes the dynamic of tourism in the country and provides an interesting contrast with tourism elsewhere in the region. Although there are some generalizations which apply to the country as a whole, there are also stark differences in terms of the type of tourism experienced in different areas of the country. The west coast urban areas focus on upscale facilities, shopping and heritage tourism (Cartier, 1997; Henderson, 2004). Much of the interior and Malaysian Borneo is focused on eco-tourism and nature tourism featuring jungle excursions and eco-lodges. These arranged packages often include cultural tourism situated in the *kampongs* (villages) offering homestays and the chance to participate in local craft-making. The east coast is the primary site for relaxation tourism, with a focus on beaches, snorkeling and scuba diving. Many of these locations have upscale facilities and there are also several beach and island locations throughout the country which have concentrated their tourism promotion on upscale resorts. Alongside this is a thriving budget or backpacker tourism market which extends across the country and exists in conjunction with the domestic market.

Before research began, I had spent time as a budget tourist traveling around Malaysia and South-East Asia in general. These personal life experiences gained over several years helped me to formulate a broad understanding of tourism in the region. More importantly, it gave me an insight into the particular tourist scene (backpacker, informal, traveler etc), which

although not unique to South-East Asia, has a significant influence in this region. There are a number of different descriptors used for this type of tourism, but the most common within academia and used by the individuals themselves is "backpacker tourism". Although this type of tourism incorporates a number of different ways of travelling, there are several characteristics which can be identified with backpacker tourism. Individuals will usually not plan their trips in the same way as traditional tourists, preferring to adapt and change their plans as they travel. They will often use local transportation methods, eat local food and stay in budget accommodation. In the past the "typical" backpacker was a student aged 18-25; travelling for three months or more often during their summer break or "gap-year" (many students will take a year out of education before entering university or after graduation before entering employment). In recent years, the typical backpacker has changed dramatically and it is now common for working individuals of all ages to take time away from work to follow the same backpacker path (Hampton, 2003). There are also a growing number of short-term backpackers who adopt backpacker habits for shorter journeys, often splitting the usual longer journey into smaller sections.

Although the dynamic of the individual backpacker has changed, the travel style and ethic remains the same. The behavior and practices of backpackers are influenced by the main guidebooks, the most popular of which is Lonely Planet's South East-Asia on a Shoestring (first edition, 1979, reprinted most recently in 2010) which creates a particular ideal for the backpacker (McGregor, 2000). McGregor examines how the guidebook influences the experiences of the individual tourist and how the narratives of tourism follow particular patterns. Through suggestions of where to go and comments about acceptable behavior, the guidebooks provide a normalized ideal for backpackers which has an undeniable impact on how tourism is organized and experienced across the region (and elsewhere).

As backpacker tourism follows different dynamics to organized or mass tourism, it often has a different relationship with host communities. Some scholars have highlighted the potential to provide benefits for host communities

and reduce the economic leakages experienced with many of the organized mass tourism projects (Hampton, 2005; Westerhausen & Macbeth, 2003). In contrast to mass-tourism, backpackers often eat local food, therefore reducing the need for imported products and placing money directly into the hands of local residents. They usually stay in smaller establishments which are often locally-owned and operated and demand fewer resources. This ensures that more local individuals can participate in the tourism market with less initial outlay. Often the limited resources used in these establishments create less of a strain on local environmental resources than mass tourism requirements, using less electricity, water and raw materials. Backpackers frequently spend longer periods at a destination than other tourists, which balances their low-spending potential with the greater number of days at a destination. As the style of tourism is more integrated with local populations, it can lead to greater cross-cultural awareness and lower the perception of economic imbalance between hosts and guests (Scheyvens, 2002).

With each of the potential benefits listed above, there are counter arguments which question the extent of these claims. Munt and Mowforth (2003) draw attention to specific situations where these assumptions about backpacker tourism have been inaccurate, suggesting instead that the impact of backpacker tourism on host destinations is no better (or at sometimes worse) than mass tourism. In addition to questioning the potential benefits of backpacker tourists, there are also a number of additional concerns regarding the type of activities backpackers undertake. Backpacker tourism is frequently associated with the use of alcohol and illegal drugs, raising concerns in many destinations of the impact on younger members of host communities (King, Pizman & Milman, 1993). Backpackers' physical appearance and chosen clothing can be culturally insensitive and their behavior may be unwelcome (Smith, 1989). In order to retain an identity as "trailblazers" backpackers frequently seek "new" destinations, thus expanding the scope and influence of tourism and potentially negatively impacting more environments and communities.

Backpacker tourism is widely spread across South-East Asia with a well defined route which is followed by many. The popularity of the main guidebooks (Lonely Planet, Rough Guides, Footprint Handbook), which all support variations on the same route, coupled with the peer pressure to "experience" certain places ensures a well-trodden path across the region (Westerhausen & Macbeth, 2003). In terms of backpacker travel, Malaysia is placed firmly on the "backpacker route" with specific locations highlighted as part of the country tour. Lonely Planet presents a three week tour of the peninsula "taking in all of the main highlights" (2006) and RoughGuides presents a similar tour visiting the same locations (2008). Other guidebooks also include the same locations as "must-see" areas to visit (FootPrint, 2006; Let's Go, 2006) and these locations and tours have been repeated in the successive editions of these guidebooks over the years. Despite being part of the backpacker route of South-East Asia, Malaysia is distinctly different from its neighboring countries and often presents an unwelcome change for travelers: there is less of a "party-scene" in Malaysia, with alcohol, illegal drugs and nighttime entertainment venues being less common. Malaysia is also more expensive than neighboring countries and has a less extensive backpacker network of guesthouses, cafes and bars (Richter, 1993). The more "advanced" stage of development in Malaysia is frequently cited by backpackers and the guidebooks in negative terms as are the cultural differences arising from Islam (personal discussions, 1996-2008).

4: TOURISM AND SOCIAL RELATIONS

This research examines the social relations of tourism on the Perhentian Islands by paying attention to how the practices and processes of tourism operate. How are the social relations of tourism produced and maintained? What different understandings influence interactions between individuals and groups? Why do individuals and groups choose to become involved with tourism? How does the practice of tourism influence individual and group subjectivities? Who generates understandings of tourism communities and what purposes do these serve? Through examining the ways that tourism is understood and practiced by

the producers of tourism, it becomes possible to generate understandings from this perspective. This challenges the existing discourses of tourism which serve the interests of international trade or national governments and instead focuses on understandings which can more accurately reflect the lived experiences of tourism for producers.

Involvement in tourism is an everyday practice, and it is through examining the daily lives of those involved that the social relations of tourism can begin to be understood. Focusing on the lived experiences of tourism practice can highlight the multiple ways that tourism shapes the lives of those involved. These relations of tourism generate particular spaces of tourism where social groups and differing social practices coalesce. In this way, tourism occurs in the "contact zone" (Pratt, 1992) where peoples mix and generate understandings of one another. These exchanges (positive or negative) influence both producers and consumers and can cause conflicts which arise from uneven power relations. The nature of tourism as a leisure activity necessarily invokes expectations within the traveler and can create an uneven balance between those "at work" providing for the tourists and those "at play". Tourism can be divided into those who have the socio-economic ability to travel, and those who do not, separating peoples and places along lines of privilege and power. In some situations, traveling can expose the lower socio-economic conditions of other individuals and countries. This can have positive impacts through raising awareness and establishing more equal terms of trade and negative impacts from those who seek to exploit to socio-economic unevenness.

Tourism does not just impact those who are direct participants but it also influences the lives of those not directly involved by creating particular understandings of peoples and places. The generation of promotional materials by governments, trade agencies and travel companies creates particular identities for destinations and peoples. Added to this, the circulation of travel narratives from individuals and media build the discourses of tourism which shape understandings of peoples and places. Indirectly, these discourses of tourism impact understandings of self for both tourism producers and consumers

by situating individuals and groups in relation to their experiences with Others. These discourses generate particular understandings of producer communities, often situating them as passive recipients of tourism. As these discourses of tourism circulate about and within tourism communities, they perform a disabling function limiting the ability for interaction in tourism to be practiced in different ways. Equally, through generating understandings about communities involved in tourism, these discourses influence how development is promoted and practiced from both within and without. This can limit the ability for communities to choose their own development strategies and exercise their power over the future of their communities. The generation of passive subjects further inscribes existing inequalities and fails to serve the interests of the communities concerned.

With this in mind, I challenge these passive understandings of tourism communities, instead arguing that communities engaged in tourism are active participants in the processes of tourism. In this way, I am looking at tourism from an actor-oriented perspective contextualized within the wider frameworks of national and global networks. Tourism communities may actively seek participation in tourism as a choice and may be motivated by multiple factors. Highlighting how individuals and groups choose to participate in tourism and the ways in which they resist certain aspects of development, can highlight the multiple ways that communities engage with tourism. This generates new understandings of tourism communities and reframes action and participation as choice. Through this focus, I hope to recapture the agency of the tourism communities as part of a rethinking of the economic activity on the islands.

In order to do this, the practices and understandings of tourism as a social activity are explored. Focusing on how tourism operates as a process of social relations can help to build a picture of how communities understand and organize their lives. Tourism is not performed in discrete spaces, but instead is part of the interconnected relations of social life. Therefore it is important to explore how individuals and groups interact, generating new and shifting spaces of tourism through the relations of encounter. The interconnected nature of tourism means that there are similarities between groups and individuals, linking and connecting

them. The existing definitions which generate separate understandings for hosts and guests, for western and non-western workers and for workers and owners fail to represent these similarities which exist, instead creating barriers to understanding. Highlighting the similarities rather than differences between social groups can begin to sketch a picture of participants in tourism through their relations of encounter. This does not attempt to erase difference, or imply agreement, but instead acts as a political tool to indentify the interconnected nature of tourism communities. By highlighting the multiple ways of practicing and experiencing island tourism, I seek to generate new discourses of tourism which reclaim agency for those involved. Detailing how individuals and groups understand their lives in the context of tourism begins to establish new understandings of tourism communities.

5: STRUCTURE OF THE TEXT

This research aims to explore the multiple ways of understanding tourism as a social practice from the perspective of tourism communities. The chapter design aims to layer different sets of information that build upon one another. However, the chapters can also be read out of sequence as each focuses on a given aspect of the research. Chapter two provides grounding for the research in existing literature to contextualize the research and situate the particular theoretical perspectives which underpinned the research. With such a cross-disciplinary subject, it would be impossible to include every perspective and reading on the subject, instead this chapter attempts to focus on some of the more fundamental aspects influencing the research. This review of existing literature reveals areas in research which have not been adequately explored to date. This research attempts to bridge these gaps and create alternative understandings of tourism as a practice. Chapter three provides details of the methodological processes of the research and details how the methods are guided by the theoretical perspectives of the project. Each method is described in detail, explaining how the information was obtained, recorded and analyzed. The methods used should not be viewed as simply techniques, but rather as an active

part of the research process. The field processes chosen seek to generate new understandings and connections through the practice of research.

The fourth chapter provides an overview of tourism on the islands aiming to instill a particular understanding of how tourism is practiced and distributed across the islands. Although text and images cannot replace actual experience, this chapter paints an experiential picture of island tourism and situates the particular context of island tourism within the country and the region. Rather than just representing my experiences of island tourism, this chapter uses narratives from tourists and workers to expand the descriptive power of the text. Drawing from these understandings about island tourism the following chapters delve deeper into the experiences of island residents. Chapter five focuses on how the tourism community views themselves in terms of their economic positioning, drawing on understandings of self in relation to employment. It explores how and why individuals become involved in tourism and how they understand their own positions in the wider global scale. Uncovering some of the ways in which individuals structure their participation in tourism to meet personal life goals, it explores how processes of change are negotiated and incorporated into local practices. In some situations these changes may conflict with local desires and/or the provision of tourism. This chapter also examines the ways in which owners and managers attempt to shape worker behaviors through the employment process, along with the ways in which these are resisted by workers.

Chapter six focuses on gender issues in relation to tourism, drawing attention to the dialectic relationship between tourism and gender. It shows the different ways in which tourism can be both limiting and beneficial to women. Tourism as a social process can impact the gender roles within societies, either reinforcing them through stereotypical behaviors, images and employment, or challenging them through empowerment and women's involvement in wage labor. How these challenges are lived on a daily basis becomes part of the crucial understanding of tourism as a social practice. Chapter seven focuses on change and development on the islands, drawing attention to how this is understood and experienced within the community. It examines how the

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individuals and groups have organized and mobilized themselves as a reaction to certain aspects of island tourism. Through exploring what the tourism community chooses to resist and what is accepted, an understanding of desires for island tourism can be generated. It also shows how social mobilization is understood in the context of island tourism as an exercise of political power. Chapter eight draws together the threads of research and generates some partial conclusions. The chapter reflects on some of the discoveries and shortcomings of the research and suggests avenues for further research.

Chapter Two

Theoretical Perspectives: Situating the Project

1: INTRODUCTION

This chapter establishes some of the key criteria and theoretical underpinnings which guide this research. It aims to situate the project within the broader literature and define the given perspectives guiding this process. Tourism research is situated within a wide variety of disciplines and incorporates numerous theoretical and methodological perspectives. Given the multifaceted nature of tourism research, this project aims to focus on the intersections between these cross-disciplinary perspectives, focusing on the spaces in-between which have often been overlooked. As this project incorporates a variety of different aspects, it necessitates consideration of literature from a variety of different, but integrated disciplines. Many of these have specific terminology which is used, often with varying meaning between disciplinary specialties. I will attempt to define how I use particular terms within this project, rather than how they are understood within different circles. The aim is to create new understandings from these viewpoints and to build upon the existing literature to question formulated perspectives.

2: DEFINITIONS: ESTABLISHING CRITERIA

As with any project, the terms used to describe particular phenomena are infused with meaning and carry certain connotations. I feel it is important to clarify some of the terminology used throughout this research as many terms have multiple meanings which can impact interpretation and understanding. My understandings and use of these terms have been created partially from the existing literature synthesizing a particular meaning from current uses and understandings; and partly from place-specific understandings which establish contextual meanings. These are not necessarily "local" or cultural understandings, but ones which have particular resonance for the project in this context. Although many of the terms used can be contested, I have limited my

clarification here to two key inter-related terms which often have multiple interpretations and are therefore often problematic.

2.1: Community

The term community has a variety of applications within a range of diverse situations. At the most simple level, the term is used to describe a group of individuals with a shared connection. More frequently community is connected with a physical locality and used to refer to the individuals living in a given area. In this sense community is a descriptor which is bounded by physical attributes which are usually easy to define, such as the neighborhood or regional scale. But community also refers to how these individuals are connected; this could be based on racial or ethnic grouping, gender or class, or a shared political or social interest. In this wide-ranging definition, community is not just physically bounded but includes the concept of "imagined communities" (Anderson, 1991) such as virtual communities, that may never meet but share interests. However, the term community contains a number of assumptions which may not reflect the true nature of the group concerned. Community suggests co-operation and similarity, when in reality there may be multiple viewpoints and little agreement. It assumes homogeneity across the group, frequently established based on majority criteria and silencing minorities within the group. Use of the term community also erases the individual subject, projecting a shared group identity onto all individuals. Despite these limitations, the term community has been reclaimed by some for political purpose.

I draw from the work of Gibson-Graham (2003a; 2005; 2006a) for my conceptualization of the term community, using it to create a new category of inclusion outside of existing criteria. Aguilar (2005) claims that Gibson-Graham's use of the term community draws from romantic ideals as it "evokes notions of cooperation, solidarity, inter-dependency and reciprocity" (2005: 28). I would suggest this is not in question, but rather that these notions of community are used not to deny community conflict, but rather to reclaim the idea of community as a political tool. Gibson-Graham use the term community deliberately as an

inclusive moniker to acknowledge shared positions, and (re)create a group identity which can be politically motivated. Drawing from a number of case studies, they suggest that the term community does not assume exclusivity or homogeneity, but can be used to political advantage by generating a shared identity among individuals. It is this concept of community which I utilize in this project. It is framed as an empowering use of the term to forge connections across and within social groups. It does not deny the differences which exist or suggest that there is agreement among group members, but rather that the use of the term identifies individuals who are connected by the commonality of a shared interest. This can be potentially beneficial, even in light of multiple positions, as the process of acknowledging shared interest identifies the similarities and differences through this activity.

My use of the term draws upon these ideas to use community as an inclusive term which attempts to incorporate all those involved with or influenced by tourism. I have used the phrase "tourism community" to describe the group of individuals who are collected together under the umbrella of tourism. Frequently in tourism studies this term will refer just to the host community, but I utilize the term in a broader sense to include both hosts and guests. As such, this is a community of similar interests and encounters, but one which is by no means homogenous or static. These interests may be any number of factors such as the successful organization of tourism, the protection of cultural practices, economic development, environmental protection, or cross-cultural interaction. The tourism community in this conceptualization is constantly shifting and changing, but retains the aspects of similarity in terms of the varied engagement with the processes of tourism. This is a deliberately loose definition which aims to briefly coalesce a disparate set of individuals and interests but which does not assume any longevity. It aims to represent the relationships which exist between and within hosts and guests in their many varied forms, and to illustrate the necessary collaboration between these groups of individuals. By incorporating hosts and guests together under this umbrella of tourism community it collapses some of the categorizations of difference between hosts and guests which serve

to support existing essentialized categories. I argue that the separation of hosts and guests into definite categories does not accurately represent the shared bonds of similarity within tourism communities. The use of an inclusive term aims to draw attention to the relationships between these individuals as they are situated within the broader frame of tourism.

2.2: Local

Community is frequently paired with local, an equally multiple and contested term. There are a variety of interwoven and overlapping criteria that can be used to establish definitions of local for a particular place which can be based on physical territorial claims, political or legal status, racial or ethnic claims or emotional attachment. Local is also regularly used as a denotation of scale, local being small-scale, unique, specific and detailed (Massey, 1994: 129). In this context, local can be valorized as "real" and related to the material realities of life or it can be positioned as parochial and un-modern. For post-development scholars, the local scale is where grass-roots social change and local struggles create a viable resistance to global forces. Extending beyond the concept of social struggle as resistance, Gibson-Graham (2003b) situate the term local as a site of collaborative action against the disabling discourses of global. They reclaim the use of local to uncover possible ways of conceptualizing life outside of the framework of the local-global binary. When local is used to refer to territorial claims, it may be an exercise of power, having political connotations and the ability to include or exclude individuals and groups from legitimacy claims. Local is also used to relate to a sense of belonging, or an emotional and personal attachment to a place. Doreen Massey has explored how this concept of local can be used to fix a particular identity on the community, often as an attempt at control (1994: 157-173). Fixing a locality or place in this manner circulates around legitimacy claims of certain individuals as locals and others as non-locals or outsiders.

Despite the attempts to fix a concept of local, in many cases the lived experience of belonging follows a more multiple and nuanced path. In a case

study of sustainable tourism in St. Lucia, Liburd discovered that individuals who were not born locally were normally excluded from community decision-making and considered as outsiders. These individuals could gain respect and a sense of inclusion through commitment to group interests (Liburd, 2006: 165). In this way, the concept of local identity became somewhat fragmented and reconstructed through forms of social collaboration. Similarly, in a study of tourism in Brazil, Patricia de Araújo Brandão Couto (2006) found that descriptions used to define local and non-local were complex and shifting. There were several different definitions used to describe individuals within the tourist location and she identified nine different terms which were used locally. In this context, a local was someone who had gained status through length of habitation in the area, or through establishing trust relationships with other native locals.

The socio-ethnic history of Malaysia has created a changeable definition of the concept of local which shifts across the country and social groups. Although the usage may vary, the term local is often used to solidify political and personal legitimacy claims. In the context of the Perhentian Islands, there were multiple uses of the term local and definitions even at the individual level would frequently shift depending on specific contexts. The discourses surrounding island politics revealed how the concept of local was understood in relation to legitimacy or right to speak about island development. Local for some was equated with an individual who was born on the islands and lived in the village. For others it means someone who was born regionally, i.e. from Terengganu or Kelantan States. These uses of the term local suggest a territorial legitimacy claim over the islands and their surrounding transportation networks. Although territorial legitimacy claims are common, this understanding of local is not necessarily supported by regional or national laws which designate differing levels of territorial rights.

Despite the fact that the regional government of Kelantan State does not hold any legal control over the islands, individuals from Kelantan State were often afforded more legitimacy than those from Terengganu State. During field research, there were situations when individuals who were Chinese ethnic

Malaysians from Terengganu State were not afforded the same legitimacy and title of local as ethnic Malays from Kuala Lumpur. It became clear that some community members assumed a greater legitimacy to speak about island development for *bumiputera* individuals. Although the majority of those who identified this viewpoint were *bumiputera* themselves, there were also several non-*bumiputera* individuals who acknowledged the same. This may have an association with ethnic concepts of local which are supported by national regulations providing the rights for *bumiputera* to own land. On the islands, only *bumiputera* individuals can own land, meaning resorts and properties must lease the land from the owners. Therefore *bumiputera* individuals, whether territorially local or not, are often considered to be more legitimate than other Malaysians. In this way the concept of local in the Malaysian context often relates less to physical location and more to ethnicity. As such, definitions of local become more complicated by regional, national, racial and ethnic dynamics.

However, the groups of individuals living and working on the islands were drawn from a variety of national and ethnic origins. As the islands are monsoonal, many of the individuals drawn from regional or national locations return home, or move elsewhere during the off-season. Similarly, some with homes in the region choose to work on the islands for one season, or just a few months. Some who were born on the islands choose to spend time away from the islands, returning only on occasion, but perhaps maintaining legal right to land ownership. In contrast, some others who are perhaps from western locations have been living on the islands for a much longer period of time and consider the islands their home. In many situations, western individuals who have seasonal employment return to the islands each season (and have done so for many years). Changes to island development therefore impact a wide range of individuals who choose to work and live on the islands, temporarily or permanently. As such, deciding who has a legitimacy claim or a "valid" interest in island development is more complex than would initially seem.

In many situations, the right to speak in a given situation was related to levels of engagement with island politics. Many western workers and business

owners who were more active and involved in island affairs gained more legitimacy. These legitimacy claims were flexible, some westerners were clearly considered more valid than others and the validity would shift from situation to situation. In some circumstances western workers who were only temporary residents were afforded more legitimacy than Chinese Malaysians, suggesting an ethnic or racial bias. For many western resort owners, individuals who were born in the island village were considered to be less valid as they were not active in island politics. Although these legitimacy claims were not necessarily supported by regional or national laws, they illustrate who was considered valid within island politics. These experiences highlight how the concept of who is local can be used to control and limit certain community members and reveal the political and contested nature of the term.

Aside from territorial and ethnic claims to the terms local, there are also claims based on emotional attachment to the islands. Many who work on the islands claim a conceptual and emotional attachment to the islands which persists after leaving the islands. Often these individuals will remain active in island politics from afar and retain an interest in the development and future of the islands. Similarly, many of the tourists who visit the islands each year, or perhaps stay for extended periods of time on the islands claim an attachment to the islands in terms of "belonging" or "feeling at home". Individuals frequently described their connection to the islands in these terms and many maintain relationships with island residents and workers when away from the islands.

As the concept of local was so varied and contested, my use of the term has been loosely defined for this project. My conceptualization of local does not refer directly to any existing definitions and instead represents a more inclusive concept which reflects the community of island tourism. By deliberately using a wide-ranging and flexible definition for local I hope to reflect some of these fractures and retain the multiple understandings that emerged during field research. I have chosen to use the term in an active way to create a particular understanding of island life and to include those who have a connection with the islands. Drawing from my use of the term community; the term local aims to

represent the relationships which are formed through the process of participation in tourism. The phrase "local resident" is expanded in scope and used to refer to anyone who chooses to live on the islands. As very few individuals choose to remain on the islands during monsoon season, this provides an opportunity to use the term local in an inclusive way. As the concept of local resident is a loose one, it allows for the inclusion of temporary workers from elsewhere. Some of these workers are western workers on the islands for a season; others may be individuals from the mainland who choose to work for several months before returning home. By expanding the term local to refer to all who spend time on the islands, the problems of legitimacy claims are avoided and instead a political framing of individuals who have an interest in the islands can be created.

3: DEVELOPMENT AND POST DEVELOPMENT

This research draws from several disciplinary specialties; the two main influences are development and tourism. In recent years, development has received attention from a number of different perspectives and disciplines both within academia and practice. The motivations and desires behind development vary greatly and the terminology is far from neutral. Broadly speaking, the claimed aims of development was/is to improve the conditions of life for those in "less developed countries". Often referred to by post-development scholars as the "Development Project", it refers to all of the ventures which seek to improve infrastructure, living standards and political structures as a process of improvement or modernization. These projects are often codified by national governments, NGOs or international organizations as "development goals", the most prominent being the UN Millennium Development Goals. Despite the establishment of key goals for improvement, as time progressed, many practitioners and theoreticians began to note that goals of development and modernity have produced little positive benefits for the communities concerned. These frustrations led to a questioning of the worth of development: "In the face of such failure, deterioration and destruction, we cannot persist in talking about development as the harbinger of human emancipation. It would seem that the

model of development widely pursued is part of the problem not the solution" (Tucker, 1999: 1). Given the failings of development, some began to question the value of development as a concept.

Post development scholars sought to deconstruct the discourses of development to uncover the underlying ideological assumptions which structured development thinking. In the widely cited *Development Dictionary (*1992), Wolfgang Sachs gathers together a collection of essays which critically analyze the concept of development: "The idea of development stands like a ruin in the intellectual landscape" (Sachs, 1992: 1). For Sachs, development is situated as a post-war phenomenon which has advanced a particular worldview infused with western dominance and power. Using a web of development discourses, western hegemony has extended across the globe, silencing cultural difference and limiting alternative behaviors. The universalizing discourses of development have eroded place-based particularities in favor of "bureaucratic rationality" (Sachs, 1992: 109). Drawing on similar aspects of discourse analysis, Esteva traces how the concept of "underdevelopment" operates as a subjugating discursive construct which situates individuals in a particular subordinated position. Through the negative disabling connotations of the language used, global communities have been rendered as "less than" their western developed counterparts.

Following from this, Cowen and Shenton (1996) trace the emergence of the idea of development beyond that of the Marshall plan to include colonial practices and the influences from nineteenth century positivists. Using discourse analysis, they illustrate how development has operated as a doctrine through history, establishing development goals and creating concepts of desirable betterment. They highlight how development contains within its conceptual assumptions a hierarchical categorization which assumes that development (specifically a western or Eurocentric concept of development) is desirable and indicative of an improved social status. In this way development had been elevated to a way of thinking and being, influencing behavior and thought through constructing identities for locations as developed or underdeveloped. The same ideology creates an end-point for social organization, namely achieving a

developed status which is comparable to western notions of desirable society. Other locations are then judged and ranked based on these concepts which may not reflect the value systems of the countries or communities concerned.

The process of exporting a particular western ideal of the world creates a binary in which the west is presented as superior to the Other, more commonly described as the first world/third world, more developed/less developed, developed/developing and more recently global north/south. Other cultures are understood to be in need of development and unable to assist themselves, spawning packages of international aid and support programs (Mitchell, 1995: 140). Through the discourses surrounding development, governments and NGOs adopt a paternalistic stance: "The jargon of authentic development arises from the way in which development doctrine is stated for people who cannot account for the source of the doctrine itself precisely because they are not developed" (Cowen & Shenton, 1996: 454).

These discourses of development are constructed and maintained through the tropes which describe communities who are the subjects of development. The particular construction of these identities establishes an assumed passivity on the part of recipients of development, feeding into paternalistic perspectives regarding the underdeveloped: "By means of this discourse, individuals, governments and communities are seen as "underdeveloped" and treated as such" (Escobar, 1995b: 213). This process has been used by the dominant west as a method of power brokerage in order to dominate the Other. Escobar highlights how the creation of the concept of development and the Third World is intimately connected to the production of knowledge and institutions which support particular knowledge systems. Networks of international agencies establish normalized ideals and: "It is through the action of this network that people and communities are bound to specific cycles of cultural and economic production and through which certain behaviors and rationalities are promoted" (Escobar,1995a: 46).

Drawing on similar post development perspectives, Vincent Tucker explains how the development project has created a "Myth of Development"

which permeates discussions creating a polarization between developed and undeveloped. Tucker claims that the myth of development has allowed for the domination of the global south under western viewpoints establishing a Eurocentric hegemony. Development has followed an export path spreading a particular worldview, crushing and ignoring alternative ways of seeing and being. Through describing societies as "primitive" or "traditional", particular ways of being are judged as inferior and cultures are reduced to essentialized concepts. Tucker describes this as part of the western attempt to "fix" these societies into a particular category, denying the dynamic and changing nature of communities. These particular worldviews are advanced with economic and political systems and with the production of knowledge (Tucker, 1999: 13). These knowledge discourses create a particular understanding of these places as underdeveloped and as subjects *of* development. In this way, the discourses of development (and anti-development) "reduce the subjects of development to passive objects" (ibid: 14) and fail to recognize counter hegemonic resistance. Tucker suggests we need to focus on these local resistances to highlight the potential for positive social change.

Whilst drawing attention to examples of local resistance is useful, I feel it performs a disabling function. Within communities who choose not to accept certain ways of being, describing this as resistance denies the autonomy of the communities or individuals concerned. Positioning difference as resistance serves to elevate the hegemonic perspective to a greater status. I would suggest a re-framing of the critical categorization of passivity is more appropriate: rather than changing a categorization once it has been created, we would be better served to highlight how the individuals and communities are not passive objects, but instead active participants in their own choices. These individuals are not passively accepting something forced upon them; they are part and parcel of the co-creation of their own identities and lives. Social change is a multiple process which is situated within the global processes of change and development and cannot be neatly separated from other forces of change. To highlight that a communities' desires for particular changes may be steeped in particular western

understandings of progress may be academically interesting, but it serves to reduce all ways of being under the umbrella of western conceptualizations. Framing responses as resistance implies that individuals have been influenced by a particular hegemonic viewpoint and have actively chosen to resist. This then gives power back to the particular hegemonic discourse being discussed (Gibson-Graham, 2006b) and reduces alternative ways of being to mere counter points. In many situations there are alternative ways of being and behaving that are practiced as a life choice, not specifically as a resistance to a dominant worldview. Examples of Islamic traditionalism are counter ways of being which should not be framed as resistance and many small-scale community activities are established based on historical traditions, rather than as alternatives to an established normalized view. Therefore the disempowering reduction of subjects to passive objects should not be expanded to include resistance, but collapsed as an inaccurate category.

3.1: Transforming development

The critiques of development as an ideology leave open the question of where to move forward. Some suggest actively working within development structures to change and reform them (Hettne, 1990; Sen, 1999; Hickey & Mohan, 2004). However it has been suggested that such "alternative development" projects are merely old development in new clothes (Cornwall & Brock, 2005). Bebbington (2000) shows how many NGO-led projects have failed to redistribute power to local communities and have maintained existing power structures. Pieterse describes how alternative development has been "absorbed in mainstream development" (1998: 344) and that "In itself, 'alternative' has no more meaning than 'new' in advertising" (ibid: 349). The counter argument to this is that we need to reject development altogether and follow a path of non-development or anti development (Sachs, 1992; Esteva, 1992). The association of development with modernity means that development can never be reformed without conforming to the same assumptions modernity supposes. Therefore any structured development programs are doomed and instead the whole concept of

development as improvement should be rejected (Rahnema, 1992).

Between these two perspectives lies a middle ground allowing for development to be remade in multiple ways. Peet and Hartwick suggest that it is not the goal of development that is the problem, but rather the process: "Here we reach a different conclusion: there is a need to rethink the development project rather than to discard it" (1999: 197). They suggest a critical modernist perspective which searches for the gaps that can enable improvement in the conditions of peoples' lives. Once we acknowledge the failings of development as a concept and a practice, then action would seem the appropriate response. I am inclined to agree with Fagan: "Adopting the privilege of being antidevelopment is not, in my view, politically or morally viable when sitting in an 'overdeveloped' social and individual location" (Fagan, 1999: 180). Whilst critique and contention are important, they can also be limiting: "Any theoretical movement engenders tensions of course, but there appears to be a significant strain on this debate, which is enabling at one level but at another disabling" (ibid: 178). Upon reading Escobar's *Encountering Development: The Making and Unmaking of the Third World*, (1995) one feels particularly disempowered and without recourse for change. Reacting to this, some have suggested that post-development as a critical theoretical enterprise has focused too much on critique and supplied few options for positive engagement with the world (Munck, 1999; Blaikie, 2000; Hart, 2001; Parfitt, 2002). As Crush states: "To assert like Esteva (1987: 135), that 'development stinks' is all very well but it is not that helpful if we have no idea about how the odor will be erased" (1995: 19). Any attempts to generate new ways of doing development, by either western or non-western practitioners are automatically steeped in western ideology and hegemony. Gillian Hart describes this as the "cul de sac" of post development whereby any attempts to create new projects fall into the same traps by using the same language and categorizations of places and peoples (Hart, 2001).

Despite this catch-22, some have begun to search for ways to engage with positively impacting the lives of others without the traps of the modernist view of traditional development (Chang and Grabel, 2004). The solutions

presented are often loosely structured and short on prescriptions, which could be considered a necessary approach to allow a local teleology of development to emerge. Suggestions focus on bottom-up, small scale developments instigated at the local level and driven by local desires and concerns. To counter the universalizing concepts of modernity and development, Escobar suggests solutions to third world "problems" can never be prescribed from outside. Instead practice should focus on new social movements and grass-roots, locally organized projects (1995: 224-5). However, this leaves no place for the non-local to engage with the lives of others and raises concerns over how the voices of the Third World will be heard in the uneven global socio-economic climate. Esteva and Prakesh propose a rejection of the grand universalizing concepts of big Development and a return to local scale projects (1998). For them, the grand scale of global development projects denies the human scale of lived experience and therefore will always create a tension between reality and ideology. On a more practical note Tucker suggests that in order to achieve success with locally driven development we need to incorporate cultural analysis into projects and understandings in order to focus on culturally relevant objectives (1999). Entering into dialogue with non-western scholars (and I would suggest non-scholars) opens up a theoretical space for the transformation of the concept of development into locally contingent understandings.

Although the focus on locally driven and grassroots projects is a commendable step, practitioners need to be cautious of establishing essentialized categories of local and assuming that locally led projects are preferable or equitable (Mohan & Stokke, 2000; Hart, 2001). Some locally-led projects reinforce existing social hierarchies and prevent the even distribution of benefits across the community (Brohman, 1996). In a case study of Sherpas in the Himalayas, Fisher found that women were excluded from participation in the Sherpa trade in Nepal as it was traditionally a male activity. In an examination of the CAMPFIRE project in Zimbabwe, Scheyvens concluded that control of wildlife resources which formed the basis of ecotourism in the area remained in the hands of regional councils, rather than with the communities (2002: 77).

We are left questioning how this locally-led, culturally relevant development will progress. One avenue that has been consistently used to organize and/or legitimize small-scale projects is citizen participation or community-based planning. These terms have multiple meanings and participatory projects vary in their level of involvement and their aims for participatory input and techniques (Tosun, 2005). In the frequently cited article "A Ladder of Citizen Participation" (1969) Arnstein suggests a ladder as a model which gauges participatory projects in terms of their level of participation. Many participatory projects fail to achieve citizen power through participation, instead stalling at the tokenism stage. Participatory language may be used in the planning stage of project development to meet funding guidelines or to garner support for particular projects (Timothy, 1998). In situations where participation is included, there may be existing local power dynamics which limit the ability of some community members to participate equally (Reed, 1997; Tosun, 2000). In many projects organized from outside of the community, citizen participation frequently has to be encouraged and does not stem from grass-roots local concerns. Coerced participation in development projects is different in character from participation which is a spontaneous exercise of individual or group interests (Rahnema, 1992: 116). In these situations participation often fails to address the needs of local residents as it is steered towards particular development agendas: if the questions posed do not address local concerns then participation is of little use. Although participation may be beneficial, it does not automatically equal empowerment.

It is an implicit understanding that participation is always desirable, but the very idea of participation can be steeped in the same structural assumptions which shape Development. Concepts of universality undergird many organized projects, suggesting that western notions of development and techniques for achieving this are applicable to all places. However, the concept of participation may not be universally appropriate and for some communities participation is not culturally relevant. In a study of community participation efforts in Java, Timothy found that there were local socio-cultural concepts of power which limited interest

in participation at the community level (1998: 65). Similarly, in many structured participation models community heterogeneity is ignored and conflicts and contestations are subsumed under a universal community voice. Such universal development goals fail to allow for the shifting nature of groups and the variety of needs and desires. These limitations would suggest a more flexible approach to forms of participatory development could be more successful, one which is responsive to multiple community demands and has the capacity to change with shifting perspectives. Despite all of the deficiencies of (post)development projects, there remain avenues for possibilities. Responding to the needs generated by communities and reevaluating assumptions about social change can go some way towards co-establishing appropriate goals.

3.2: Subjectivity and Development

The post-development critiques have described the many ways in which particular subjects have been created through discourses of development. Clearly there are multiple phenomena which influence the understanding of self, and the disciplinary actions of Development are just part of the process. As external understandings of phenomena and/or identities are internalized, an understanding of self is generated. The self is shaped from numerous processes of identification and positioning contingent upon social relations. Foucault (1977) draws attention to the processes of power in forming the self through the internalization of social disciplining and forms of control. In one social situation a certain behavior may be acceptable; in another the action may be unacceptable, perhaps signaling the individual as criminal. As these social categories are known, the individual internalizes this identification through a process of self-disciplining and defines themselves within this categorization. As subjection is formulated on social relations, it is an ongoing process which constantly shifts and changes. Extending the ideas of Foucault, Judith Butler (1997) draws attention to how subjection is both an external and internal process. She sees this internalization as a key factor in the process of subjection which shapes the self from individual understandings of what certain positions mean. Through this

process of subjectivication an identity is created that belongs to and becomes the individual: the individual is created by and defined by her subjection. She suggests that the framing of subjection through interior/exterior denies how these processes of subjection are aspects of the definition of self; something which is tied to the psyche.

These processes of self regulation are steeped in the discourses we use to understand and describe social phenomena. Through uncovering how and why discourses create a particular subject position, the discourses can be changed and the subject can be recreated. JK Gibson-Graham emphasize the transformative potential of creating new alternative discursive constructs. Their research merges post-structuralism and second wave feminism, drawing inspiration from both deconstruction and performativity to generate both theory and praxis. Expanding beyond theory, Gibson-Graham seek to utilize post-structural thought in a political project: "Deconstruction for example, which is seldom associated with active political projects, can be seen as a tool for revitalizing and enlarging the sphere of politics" (2004: 406). Post-structuralism focuses on the role of language, illustrating how particular discourses create and recreate our understandings of the world. Such discursive constructs are situated as part of a larger socio-political context in which individual subjectivities are created. Therefore, through actively deciding which type of knowledges we wish to create, we can utilize deconstruction to reconstruct.

Paralleling post-structuralism, second wave feminism drew from earlier feminist deconstructions of how notions of "woman" had been created through patriarchal hegemonic social structures. By generating categories of acceptable identities for woman social norms create concepts of gender (for women and relationally for men). In this understanding gender is not a pre-given category, but is performed through the process of acting out the social definitions of gender. Feminist projects sought to highlight how such gendered subjectivities could be rethought through performing gender differently (Butler, 1990). Inspired by the multiplicities of these feminist social projects, Gibson-Graham focus on the

performativity of social life as a platform for social change. They frame performativity as a way of thought which influences how we see and understand the self; therefore by challenging this and rewriting the terms of our descriptions we can alter these understandings and destabilize existing conceptualizations. Their field research focuses on ways to highlight aspects of community and economic activities which reframe the subject outside of confines of an economic subjectivity. This then recreates the subjectivity of the individual (and group) and generates new discourses of economic subjectivity outside of the framework of hegemonic capital (discussed in more detail in Chapter five).

  The power to change social conditions lies in the ability to restructure our thinking to allow for possibilities. This necessitates a looser approach more open to different ways of being and seeing and which does not subsume everything under existing structural explanations. Each action we take or choice enacted within the research process is connected to particular ways of thinking and being; therefore the entire research process should be kept as open as possible. I see performativity influencing how I structure my research and specifically how I engage with participants to create new knowledges. To acknowledge difference, research findings should be presented as partial, contested and multiple. The process of creating new understandings does not just apply to the final stage of research (i.e.: the writing stage) but more importantly it infiltrates the project throughout. Performativity also informs the role of the researcher, which should be reflexive and open to self-transformation throughout the research process (and beyond). This is the point (or points) where theory intersects with action and theoretical perspectives become embodied through the practices of research and daily life. By creating new (or highlighting existing) ways of seeing particular phenomena it becomes possible to create new discursive constructs with political efficacy. As suggested by Judith Butler, we should look for ways that: "…we might make such a conception of the subject work as a notion of political agency in postliberatory times" (1997: 18).

4: TOURISM

Along with development, the other main axis for inquiry in this project is tourism. Tourism has grown in global importance in terms of economics, culture and theory along with growing interest from popular culture and media. It has also received increasing attention within academia and the scope of research spans a number of disciplines with numerous methodologies and approaches covering equally varied research agendas. Throughout much of this work there are several threads loosely coalesced around related themes. In a similar vein to the crisis of development there is a growing crisis of tourism, whereby the value of tourism for given communities is beginning to be questioned. Given the breadth of tourism studies, it would be impossible to review all research; instead I focus on several common themes which specifically relate to my research project. I am particularly interested in discourses of tourism and how these circulate to create particular understandings of tourism as a process. Uncovering how the discourses of tourism operate allows for discursive constructs to be reclaimed, creating new understandings of tourism communities.

4.1: Hosts and Guests

Ignoring the numerous disciplinary differences, tourism studies can be broadly categorized into projects which examine the tourist (or guest) and those which study the community or individuals engaged in tourism (or host). The terms "host and guest" were most popularly used by Smith in the book *Anthropology of Tourism: Hosts and Guests* (1989) and are frequently used to describe these two communities which interact through the process of tourism. Exploring the relationship between hosts and guests, Doxey (1975, discussed in Mowforth & Munt, 2003: 251) suggested host-guest interactions followed a four stage path; euphoria, apathy, irritation and antagonism, suggesting that these stages are moved through as hosts and guests interact at ever more developed levels. Framing the interactions between hosts and guests as a linear path fails to incorporate the numerous subtleties and reactions which occur throughout host-guest relations. All interactions are subsumed under the understanding that they

will lead to a negative outcome for the host community. The model also establishes a particular understanding of how host and guest interactions will occur, potentially limiting the ability to experience interactions in other ways. Although Doxey's model has been revised by some, it still receives attention as a structure to understand host antagonism towards guests (Mowforth & Munt, 2003: 251). In terms of tourism and development, DeKadt (1979) suggested that the nature of the interaction between hosts and guests can influence how a host community reacts to tourism. If the interactions are positive then the host community will be more accepting of tourism development, conversely negative interactions lead to hostility towards new developments. Sometimes frustrations and antagonism from hosts may be masked in order to order to ensure economic success (Kayat, 2002) and hosts may accept undesirable activities in order to secure trade (Reid, 2003: 70).

Mathieson and Wall (1982) propose that the relationship between hosts and guests is established based on uneven conditions, establishing a "haves and have nots" scenario for the tourism community generating tensions and creating a perception of economic inferiority within the host population. Although this may be the case for the study area in question, it should not be presented as a universality which applies in all situations. This assumes a particular subjectivity for the host community, suggesting that hosts view the behaviors of the guests as desirable and perceive the economic attainment as culturally superior. In many cultures economic gain is not as highly valued as other social or environmental factors and therefore all research needs to be contextualized.

Differences between hosts and guests can be a point of contention preventing positive cross-cultural exchange. In many situations, the tourists visiting a location may have dramatically differing cultural norms from the host population, complicating the creation of shared understandings. Boniface claims that: "The political, economic and cultural dimensions of the First World culture may so strongly differentiate from those of the Third World that common meeting points of comprehension and shared views may be hard to discover, and the particularities and priorities of needs between developed and developing nations

are likely to be dissimilar" (1999: 289). In this way, the value to be gained from cross-cultural understandings is lost as the process of communication is never fully realized. Similarly, in the development of tourism within communities, the desires of the community may be so dramatically different from the desires of the guest community that compromise is impossible (McKercher, 1993).

The terms host and guest themselves are also contentious, creating particular understandings about the tourism community. The term host may be problematic as it suggests communities are willing participants, when in many cases tourism has been "forced" upon the community without choice (Mowforth & Munt, 2003: 96). The term also creates a compliant and passive identity for the local population, suggesting a welcoming environment for the guest and creating the perception of subservience and compliance. This serves to suggest certain behaviors for the host community, suppressing any conflict or disagreement which may exist. Similarly, the term guest may be too neutral, suggesting a pleasant relationship between the two communities and masking the uneven power dynamics that may exist between these two groups.

In addition, I feel the use of the two terms is problematic as it creates a binary between hosts and guests which may not accurately reflect the existing relationship. By defining the hosts as different from guests we fail to acknowledge the similarities and instead focus on the differences, creating particular categories for both groups. When looking at tourism in a given community, this may fail to incorporate all of the aspects of involvement in tourism that are necessary and which bind the host and guest into a relationship. It also fails to incorporate the multiple subjectivities of the two communities whereby the hosts may view themselves as something other than hosts at varying points during the tourism relationship. Similarly, the guests may have multiple and changing perspectives on their subjectivities which are not accurately reflected by the simple terminology of guests. The binary between host and guest becomes more complicated when considering locations, such as Malaysia, where a significant portion of the tourists are domestic or regional tourists. The binary between hosts and guests collapses as tourism takes a

different path and relationships are (per)formed in a different way. Despite these shortcomings, the terms are frequently used in tourism studies and appropriate replacement terminology has yet to be widely used. The terms are used in this research when referring to existing work which uses this terminology.

4.2: Tourist Typology

A frequent aspect of tourism studies is the concept of tourist typology which attempts to categorize either the people (tourists) or places (destinations) involved with tourism. These analyses are used for a variety of reasons: to market a destination to a particular group, to gauge the type of tourism offered at a location or to illustrate social change in a destination. In terms of the latter use, models map the processes of change which occur at a host destination as tourism develops. These changes can be as a response to the type of tourist who visits, a pre-emptive change in order to attract a particular type of tourist, or as a response to a slowing tourist trade. One of the most commonly cited tourist typology models is Butler's "resort life cycle model" (1980) which suggests that locations undergo a process of change which is driven by the visiting tourists. The first tourists to arrive at a destination are trailblazers who open-up a destination to tourism, which then leads eventually through a process of change to the mass tourism market. The stages in Butler's typology are linear and follow the order of; exploration, involvement, development, consolidation and stagnation, decline or rejuvenation. Since Butler, tourist typology models have been refined, changed and adjusted in a number of ways (Selin, 1999; Wickens, 2002), but many of the adjusted models retain the concept of a progression of change from underdeveloped to developed.

Although tourist typologies can be useful for illustrating changes, they carry with them a number of assumptions which are not wholly accurate and may be disabling for certain locations. Several case studies have highlighted how destination change may not follow the expected path of transformation. In a study of Bali, Cukier discovered that small-scale informal entrepreneurial activities were not wholly absorbed by large-scale international operations. Instead they co-

existed with the formal tourism and generated complementary services which became part of the expected tourist experience (Cukier, 1996: 55). Similarly, McKercher (1993) found that different stages of the destination development cycles co-existed, as different areas and properties were upgraded, built or fell into disrepair. This suggested that linear interpretations were not wholly accurate and more fluid and changeable definitions were necessary to describe destination change. As these typology models are often used to generate policy and to decide future development plans, fixed and linear models can limit the ability of host destinations to respond to changes and differences in cultural preferences. More flexible and nuanced models allow destinations to incorporate multiple viewpoints and a more diversified tourism product.

When tourist typology models are used to categorize tourists, they are equally as ineffective. Categorizing tourists as types is frequently used to generate predictions about desired facilities, activities and expenditures in a host destination and are often used along with destination models by planners and developers. However, models fail to accurately include the multiple differences which exist between tourists. In a study of tourists in Belize, McMinn & Cater found that there were multiple motivations and behaviors among visiting tourists which did not fit with tourist typology models (McMinn & Cater, 1998). Focusing on a singular tourist typology can lead to developing facilities and services which do not reflect the desires of visiting tourists and can limit the long-term viability of a given destination. Despite these shortcomings of tourist typology models, they remain a commonly used categorization to model the changes to host destinations in the face of tourism.

Tourist typology models used to describe destinations become part of the discourses of tourism which create particular understandings about places and peoples. Through this process they can influence decision making and generate certain understandings of acceptable or desirable development choices. As these discourses circulate through and around tourism communities they influence the changes which occur at a given place. By creating a linear path for tourism development with typology models, destinations are categorized within a

particular development stage, paralleling similar concepts of developed/underdeveloped as discussed in post-development (Escobar, 1995; Tucker, 1999). As with the discourses of development, such categorizations create a number of discursive constructs of and for host destinations which work to structure how a community perceives its options. These discursive constructs suggest that the development or progression of a destination is inevitable and that there is little which can be done to prevent this. They also create the impression that destinations in the "earlier" stages of development are "behind" those at a later stage, and that these types of tourism are less desirable. This can have a debilitating effect on host communities who are attempting to limit or control their tourism development. In many locations, communities decide they would prefer small-scale tourism and reject the mass tourism suggested by typology models. In these situations typology models counter these aims by presenting these types of tourism as undesirable and obsolete. Often models of destination change are too structured and linear to accurately represent the changing dynamics experienced in many locations. This can silence resistance, gloss over different behaviors and present an unchanging environment.

Similarly, models cannot faithfully represent the many different types of tourism and different ways of experiencing place and culture as a host and guest. When examining tourists as a type (rather than destinations as a type), the concept of typology organizes and categorizes individuals into a set group identity. By creating particular categories, a particular identity is assumed for all members of the group and deviation or difference is ignored. Phillimore and Goodson highlight how this can be problematic: "research aimed at generating these typologies may serve to strengthen or even construct stereotypes of the hosts, guests and/or the destination" (2004: 11). Likewise Hollinshead (2004) shows how the normalizing discourses of tourism create particular understandings of tourism and tourism participants. By creating particular stereotypes of accepted behavior, the identity is created to follow particular behaviors. In this way, models not only fail to represent the multiplicity of reality, but they may also serve to structure and coerce behaviors of both hosts and

guests. Models also generalize about people and places, presenting host communities as homogenous and unified, which is not always the case.

4.3: Power and Tourism

Recent studies have extended the examination of the relationships between hosts and guests to evaluate the distribution of resources and the access to facilities. Looking at Malaysia and South-East Asia in particular, McLaren highlights situations where tourists and locals compete for resources (1998: 90). Similarly, in a study of impacts of tourism on the Bay Islands of Honduras, Stonich, Sorensen and Hundt (1995) highlighted how local people had reduced access to natural areas and how tourism activities had caused a deterioration of the environment. In a similar vein, McKercher (1993) examines whether tourism development benefits local populations or is purely aimed at promoting tourism development. He suggests that local infrastructure is frequently overlooked when tourism development is present as there was a tendency for developments to focus on income generating activities rather than benefits for local populations. As the needs and desires of tourists and locals are drastically different, there is no way that development for tourism can co-exist with development for local populations.

Further studies seek to uncover how power operates through the processes of tourism. Situating tourism within the wider global context, some argue that the very framework of tourism as a process of exchange is built on uneven relations: "As one of the most penetrating, pervasive and visible activities of consumptive capitalism, world tourism both reflects and accentuates economic disparities, and is marked by fundamental imbalances in power" (Robinson, 1999: 25). Similarly Britton (1991) accepts a neo-Marxist perspective examining the appropriation of surplus and the uneven nature of tourism development. He applies dependency theory to an analysis of tourism in Fiji, highlighting how the processes of tourism are built upon conditions of unevenness. In this case study, as the foundations of tourism are built on inequalities, the relationships in tourism can thus be considered neo-colonial in nature, reinforcing social and global

hierarchies. In the general context of development in third world countries, unevenness is seen as a key aspect underlying tourism: "tourism seeks constantly and specifically to capitalize on the differences between places and when these include differences in levels of economic development then tourism becomes imbued with all the elements of domination, exploitation and manipulation characteristic of colonialism" (Momsen,1994: 106).

These economic imbalances can re-inscribe cultural difference and lead to friction between hosts and guests. In a study of host communities involved in tourism on Langkawi Island Malaysia, Kayat highlighted how the relationship of exchange is the key factor in determining the power relations between hosts and guests. He draws attention to how a powerless individual (in his terminology one who has less income) is drawn into an exchange with tourists even though they may not be in favor of tourism overall (Kayat, 2002: 175). McLaren (1998) identifies how local communities frequently lack power when deciding their involvement in tourism, both in terms of regional development and in terms of the tourists actually visiting. Examining development in Malaysia, McLaren identifies several examples of situations when the Malaysian government decided what type of tourism development to promote in specific areas, and did not consult local communities (1998). Development choices are frequently made by regional or national governments, or by regional booster committees rather than local actors (Dahles, 1999: 5). Which type of tourists to attract (upscale, mass tourism etc) is also decided at the national level and funding frequently comes from outside or international investment (Richter, 1993: 85). In many developing countries the tourist facilities are owned by international companies, leading to economic leakages whereby the profits of an enterprise do not remain within the local communities. In many trans-national or internationally owned enterprises management positions are staffed by non-local personnel, limiting the transfer of social capital in the form of learned skills to the local population (Munt & Mowforth, 2003).

At a deeper level, the very act of becoming a host destination is underwritten with threads of power relations. Many communities are not asked

whether they want visitors; there is an assumed arrogance on the part of the tourist that they have the right to travel wherever they choose. Even when given the choice of whether to participate in tourism, the dynamics of involvement may be established upon uneven foundations. Communities who have few other economic choices may be encouraged to accept tourism due to necessity: "The Selection of tourism as an engine of growth by many LDC's may be a result of lack of alternatives, rather than preference" (Reid, 2003: 70). As such, some argue that participation in tourism should not be viewed as a choice, but rather a form of cultural (and often economic) exploitation (Munt & Mowforth, 2003). In many situations, there are structural inequalities which may limit participation in tourism, establishing an uneven base from the start. Existing social hierarchies may preference one group over another, leading to further unevenness. Some tourism ventures demand high levels of economic input, language and skills and many communities lack the information, resources and/or power to be able to participate evenly in tourism (Scheyvens, 2002: 10). To allow for more equal conditions of participation she suggests that training and distribution of skills is a fundamental requirement for equal community involvement in tourism.

4.4: Culture and Tourism

Although there are multiple motivations for travel (Urry, 2002), one of the most commonly cited is the desire to experience culture (Graburn, 1989; Cohen, 1995; Robinson, 1999) and specifically to view difference: "The desire to make contact with one's own culture(s), in all its forms, and the search for experiences of other cultures is very much at the heart of tourism" (Robinson, 1999: 1). However the creation of the concept of difference can be damaging, generating barriers to understanding and leading to Othering: "not only do strangers and their hosts treat each other as types but also as objects" (Nash, 1989: 45). Once objectification has occurred, the relationships change: "People who treat others as objects are less likely to be controlled by the constraints of personal involvement and will feel freer to act in terms of their own self-interest" (ibid). In this way the promotion and generation of difference impacts both hosts and

guests, potentially creating behaviors and forging boundaries.

However, these cultural differences (whether real or imagined) may be a cause for conflict within some communities. In a study of host perceptions of tourism, King, Pizan and Milman (1993) discovered that the host community in Fiji had a varied view of impacts from tourism. Although some felt that tourism was beneficial to their community, they identified key social costs of tourism: increased alcohol consumption, drug use and sexual casualness. However, in this case the community had a balanced perspective towards tourism acknowledging the potential for future development despite the social consequences. Using Kenya's Eastern seaboard as a case study, Reid discusses how some tourist behavior, such as wearing revealing clothing and drinking alcohol, is insensitive to the local Muslim population. Similarly, Kayat found that many local Muslim residents on Langkawi Island were concerned about the increase in alcohol consumption by young local males after tourism had become more widespread on the island. In reference to Langkawi, it should be noted that the island was designated as a duty free location by Prime Minister Mahathir and consequently has an extremely low cost for alcohol in comparison to the rest of the country. As such, it is perhaps the type of tourism promoted, rather than tourism per se which has generated these negative associations for the host community. It should also be noted that many of the concerns regarding cultural differences and tourists are primarily applicable to international tourism. For many locations the domestic market is less relevant, but for others such as Malaysia, the domestic market forms a large percentage of tourist numbers (if not expenditures). This difference between domestic and international markets impacts how destinations change and develop and how tourism is perceived by host populations.

As discussed above, much of the literature examining tourism and cultures of host populations focuses on cultural changes as a reaction to exposure to guests (Brohman, 1996; Din, 1988; Fagence, 2003; Smith, 1989). Although many of these case studies provide useful insights into cultural change, the style of the research is problematic as it situates host cultures as static and homogenous

entities which are impacted *by* tourism. Host cultures are homogenized into a singular identity (often one created to promote tourism) and differences within host communities are ignored. Alongside this, tourism is frequently portrayed as the only influence on host culture, which fails to consider other influences such as business, trade, global markets, media and so on. The pre-tourism culture is usually situated as the "untainted" or "authentic" culture and something to be preserved and protected. Such presentations position culture as a one-dimensional, distinct and unchanging category which can be described and fixed in a particular time (and place). A more appropriate consideration of culture would acknowledge how cultures are constructed concepts in constant renegotiation.

As cultural difference is perceived as a motivator for travel, many destinations strategically market particular aspects of culture in order to secure market advantage. The process of choosing which cultural aspects to highlight creates a particular identity for host communities for the purposes of economics: "Cultures are selectively disassembled and reduced to two-dimensional word and image combinations within brochures" (Robinson, 1999: 12). The identity of difference for particular communities is created through highlighting specific cultural aspects which are established as monikers of a given culture. This generates concepts of difference and can exacerbate tensions between hosts and guests: "It is not that conflict situations arise solely from inherent cultural differences: they also derive from the processes involved in the construction, accentuation and promotion of cultural identities" (Robinson, 1999: 22).

Tourism promotion actively creates a particular cultural identity which is used to sell a destination, manipulating cultural capital for both state and political gains. In a study of the British Virgin Islands, Cohen (1995) explored how tourism promotion focused on particular aspects of the host community to generate an identity for the destination. In this example, sexuality had been utilized to create and promote a specific identity for the population, equating the islands with a particular sort of holiday experience. The represented identity was not chosen by the host population and in fact conflicted with their predominantly Christian heritage and reserved outlook on sex. Even when cultural representations are

influenced by community members, there may be tension over appropriate cultural monikers or desired cultural symbolism (Schech & Haggis, 2000). Community members may diverge over the aspects of culture to represent, or have differing agendas between elite and/or entrepreneurial individuals. These different representations of cultural identities are an exercise of power, whether from within the community from local entrepreneurs and governments, or from without from promotional activities of international tourism companies.

By generating acceptable and unified cultural identities for outside consumption, these processes relationally create cultural identities for their populations. Cultural identity is an ongoing and negotiated practice which is generated from multiple influences, both internal and external. Tourism is a particularly strong force as it provides a platform for the creation and maintenance of a particular cultural identity, influencing individual and group perceptions. These created identities establish acceptable cultural behaviors and societal norms through the representation of a culture in promotional materials. In a case study of Tibet, Mercille (2005) examined the role of media representations of the country and how these influenced the expectations of tourists visiting the destination and the individual concepts of identity of the Tibetan population. There were particular repeated images and phrases used to establish an ideal of Tibetan culture and present a normalized view of what it is to be Tibetan. When exposed to these idealized cultural representations, the host population undergoes a process of internal cultural conflict whereby they have to situate their subjectivity in light of their presented identity. As these presented identities are frequently controlled by those in power, they can be viewed as an exercise of power and influence. Morgan and Pritchard highlight how the represented identities of a culture can be used to analyze which cultural norms are perceived of as valid: "Media images reflect the prevailing cultural values of a society, drawing upon current images and stereotypes and by this selection they not only reflect, but also help to shape and reinforce such values" (1998: 186). In this way, the images presented by tourism bodies become illustrative of the intentions of those in power to create and influence a societal norm.

Through the process of identity creation for a destination, peoples and places are transformed into commodities which can be consumed or collected (Britton, 1991; Mowforth & Munt, 2003). Cultural practices may be adjusted to fit with tourist expectations, changing the meaning and importance to the local community. In Bali, long dances such as the Ramayana are reduced in length for tourist presentation; in Indonesia and Malaysia the shadow puppet shows presented to tourists are usually abridged versions. In some cases, the timing of cultural events may be adjusted to fit with tourist schedules (McCannell, 1999; Richter, 1989) or events which are traditionally private or family events are opened up to tourists (Bruner, 1996). Crafts which were previously made for cultural practices are generated for sale to tourists, often changing the significance and cultural value of the items (Cukier, 1996). As culture is presented for consumption, communities and individuals become objects to be observed, museumized (MacCannell, 1999) or zooified (Munt & Mowforth, 1998) leading to conflicts of meaning and identity within host populations.

Whilst the commodification of culture is doubtless problematic, there are a number of examples where a more detailed analysis reveals a complex set of relations between tourism practices and local cultures. In some situations, the presence of tourists has helped to preserve traditional craft making, protect heritage monuments or maintain cultural traditions (Bricker, 2001). In Bali, the dances presented for tourists allow free attendance for locals and they are frequently attended by locals as well as tourists. Although not as lengthy as full traditional dances, they are often the only way that working adults and their families can view dances and have become important cultural practices in their own right (personal experience, May 2005). The recreated tourist dances take on different cultural meanings to the Balinese and become aspects of culture in themselves. Bruner found that Balinese dances which had no cultural significance and had been created as a tourist attraction had gradually become an accepted and practiced part of Balinese culture (Bruner, 1996). In a similar case study, Mathews-Salazar (2006) found that a festival created for tourist consumption had become a platform to celebrate local heritage and identity.

Cultural activities performed for tourism can therefore influence group understandings and bring about social change. In a case study of the Toraja people in Sulawesi, Adams (2006) found that the process of creating art for sale to tourists reinforced community cultural identity in the face of government attempts to instill a homogenous Indonesian identity. The influx of tourists visiting the villages was viewed by the Torajas as a reinforcement of their cultural heritage and their social value as an ethnic minority. In a similar situation, the desire for tourists to experience cultural heritage strengthened the socio-political position of the indigenous population in San Cristobal de las Casas, Mexico (Van Rekon & Go, 2006: 85). Although the resulting relationship involved aspects of economic exploitation, the process of promoting cultural heritage to tourists afforded the indigenous population bargaining power to influence local decision-making. In some communities engagement with tourism has led to a restructuring of gender roles (covered in more detail in Chapter six) and increased power for women. More generally, tourism can be used to promote peace and understanding through a variety of organized tours which incorporate volunteer work, such as building homes, cleaning areas of dangerous waste and developing understanding of those in different socio-economic conditions (Higgins-Desbiolles, 2006).

The concentration within tourism research of "impacts on" fails to acknowledge that tourism is a two-way street influencing both hosts and guests. Exposure to other cultures can reinforce particular cultural identities or downplay aspects of difference. Even if the meetings between cultures reinforce particular stereotypes, or follow structured encounters, they are influencing the subjectivity of guests as much as hosts. In these ways, tourism shapes and produces both the physical lived environment and the social relations of host destinations. It also influences the identities of both hosts and guests by impacting the social relations within and between individuals and groups. Tourism thus becomes part of the subjectivity of a host destination, part of the on-going process of identity creation and cultural negotiation. Exploring these reflexive relationships within tourism communities allows for a more comprehensive picture of the connection

between tourism and host communities to emerge. This can begin to create new discourses of tourism and acknowledge the agency of host communities.

4.5: Before and After

Much of the existing literature, important though it is, focuses on "impacts of" tourism in a variety of ways (cultural, environmental, economic etc). As well as being a limited approach to examining tourism, this focus generates a number of related conceptual issues. When research is framed in terms of impacts it suggests a pre-tourism state or a period when the given location, environment or community were not impacted. Although this allows for a useful comparison of how tourism works within a given situation, it often implies that the pre-tourism state is preferable, assuming that tourism was/will be damaging in some capacity. This pre-tourism state is often described as pristine or un-spoilt but fails to acknowledge any other factors which may influence a location or peoples. In terms of examining cultural impact as noted above, this suggests that there is a pre-status of cultural organization which existed prior to tourism when the culture was unaffected by outside influences. In some locations this may be the case, but more often there are a myriad of influences on a culture or place which continually influence and change how cultures organize and perceive themselves. Tourism is just another one of these influences, but often gets positioned as a singular, or the worst catalyst for change.

Conceptually creating a pre-tourism status also fixes a particular place or culture into a given identity and establishes this as the accepted definition of a particular culture (Massey, 1994). These created identities may not reflect the reality or the desires of the host population and may establish a group identity which is fixed in a particular historical time period. With some communities this feeds into the desires of developers or tourism promotion officials who wish to market cultures as authentic or unchanged by modern life. This serves to fix these communities into a particular identity and provides a motivator to limit community development and social change (Schech & Haggis, 2000: 22). This can exacerbate conditions of uneven development in some locations whereby

rural communities are artificially stagnated as traditional communities. In the case of Bali, the community planners attempted to shield Balinese culture from the influences of tourism by concentrating facilities and promotion on one part of the island (Long & Kindon, 1997). This led to economic and structural benefits being unevenly applied across the island and failed to allow entrepreneurial activities from across the island. This cultural fixing also suggests that the given community has a singular or unified cultural identity. As discussed above, many locations have highly contested cultural organizations which contradict some of the idealized representations of community life prior to tourism. Certain aspects of a community history may be ignored in order to present a particular identity and current tensions may be silenced to present a unified community image. Denying heterogeneity serves to silence the voices of unrepresented members of the community and create or exacerbate social unevenness.

In terms of the environment, examining the impacts of tourism on a given environment falls into the same conceptual traps. The process of dividing a location into before and after impacts suggests a pre-state in which the environment was unspoiled and fails to recognize how environments may have been impacted by other types of activities prior to tourism. The idea of a pure environment belies the impacts of human existence, whether direct or indirect, and creates an imagination of environment. This extends into and influences tourism communities as nature is frequently manipulated to fit a particular ideal of environment which itself may be just as damaging. The idea of areas of paradise and wilderness places nature in a particular conceptual framework.

Presenting a "before and after" dualism also erases the processes in-between, reiterating the progression of tourism and development as linear. This fails to adequately acknowledge how tourism occurs as a materiality and how host communities adapt and change to shifting motivations or considerations. It becomes part of the tourism discourses which present host communities as passive subjects; as receivers *of* tourism. This masks how the processes of tourism are reliant on the host population's involvement and the many ways in which host communities are actively shaping the terms of their participation.

4.6: Alternative Tourism, or Alternatives to Tourism?

Much of the tourism literature raises questions about the appropriateness, viability or benefits of tourism for host populations. Once the critiques of tourism had become commonplace, it paved the way for different ideas to be generated and circulated. These new ideas are multiple in scale and scope and tend to be labeled ecotourism, sustainable tourism, pro-poor tourism or more broadly categorized as forms of "alternative" tourism. These projects tend to strive to limit social and environmental costs, whilst promoting improvements in living conditions and economic welfare. In many cases, forms of alternative tourism attempt to incorporate all of these goals, seeking more equitable and responsible tourism. Linda Richter (1998) evaluates many of these methods and aims to draw attention to the pitfalls and promises of alternative tourism development. She highlights the importance of socially responsible policies established by governments to guide and structure tourism development, but also sees a role for the individual as a tourist. Visitor education including pre-briefings and de-briefings which help to contextualize the tourist experience can go some way towards forging shared understandings and socially and environmentally responsible travel (1998: 209).

Regina Scheyvens, (2002) focuses on the more structural ways that tourism can be used to encourage community development which would "benefit local peoples and their environments" (xv). She is cautious to point out that the concept of development is a contested one, and the definition she uses "…is seen as embracing values of self-sufficiency, self-determination and empowerment as well as improving people's living standards" (3). Scheyvens suggests that tourism can be used to achieve these ends if certain factors are in place such as community involvement in decision-making and programs for training, environmental protection and social improvements. She rejects universal plans, and instead focuses on the need for local specificity in choosing appropriate avenues to pursue. In the case of St. Lucia, Momsen (1994) found that tourist demand for locally produced food decreased the consumption of imported food from 1971-1983, thus raising the opportunities for local

involvement in the provision of food for tourist establishments. In a study examining backpacker tourism in the Gili Islands, Indonesia, Hampton (1998) compares the economic leakages from backpacker tourism with those from mass-tourism. In this study, local communities benefitted more from small-scale backpacker tourism in terms of economic gains, as well as retaining power and control over tourism development. Hampton suggests that small-scale tourism can alleviate some of the problems of tourism industry, but that a lack of research data has discouraged the promotion of this type of tourism.

Although there are some who seek positive solutions to the concerns of tourism development, these promoted programs should be approached with caution. Some question whether the presented community benefits actually arrive, and promote instead seeking alternatives *to* tourism. Butler (1992) questions whether alternative tourism is actually better for communities and the environment. He suggests that presenting one type of tourism as a solution to the problems of another is a short-sighted resolution. Drawing a comparison with alternative tourism, he highlights how there may be some benefits to mass-tourism, such as limiting cultural impacts to a smaller area. He proposes that part of the anti-mass tourism rhetoric might be class-based as both hosts and guests fight against what is perceived as "low-class" tourism.

Others maintain that alternative tourism repeats the inequalities and lack of provisions for local populations seen with mass tourism (Munt & Mowforth, 1993) and projects remain centered on tourist needs rather than local needs. However, in many cases it is difficult to separate projects into separate categories as the two are frequently intertwined. For example, if improvements are made to water supply, the motivation may be a reaction to the growing demand for clean water from tourists, but the benefits may be extended to local communities. The same may be true for electricity supply, sewage treatment and trash disposal. It is also dangerous to separate developments in this way when it is recognized that a given community relies, for better or worse, on the income generated by tourism. The developments are fundamental in order to maintain tourism, and therefore indirectly communities often receive benefits from these developments. This is

not to suggest that all development follows this path, clearly it does not, but rather to generate a more complex view of tourism development which combines the communities of hosts and guests into a reflexive relationship.

5.CONCLUSION

This research intersects with a variety of different disciplinary viewpoints and aims to situate itself in the moments in-between which have received little attention. Theoretically situated within post-development, highlighting the ways that discourse influences understandings of peoples and places, this research seeks actively to change these discourses by recognizing the subjectivity of those involved. Highlighting the multiple ways that tourism operates within host communities can help to rewrite the discourses of tourism. Many tourism studies have failed to contextualize the desires of communities, presenting them as unified (when in fact there are diverse motivations among community members), static (when in fact they frequently change) and one-way (i.e. the community is affected *by* tourism and not examining how tourism is affected by communities). Tourism cannot be considered in isolation, the changes which occur need to be contextualized as part of wider national and global changes. In the case of Malaysia the government push towards a particular sort of development has created diverse impacts across the country, either through encouraging projects, or a generated fear of over-development. These all become part of the discourses of tourism and are important to understand how and why this particular group of people choose their development, and similarly, how much influence they have over the proposed developments which take place.

Chapter Three

Tools and Techniques: The Methodology of Research

1: INTRODUCTION

Research with communities engaged in tourism is of increasing interest to a variety of scholars from different disciplines (Munt & Mowforth, 2003: 35). Accordingly the research methods chosen vary widely due to the differing disciplinary backgrounds and research goals. As tourism studies often involve changing or disparate communities (in terms of both hosts and guests), the methodology chosen needs to reflect this. Therefore this research was structured as an ethnographic project which utilized multiple methods to obtain a variety of data. In addition to techniques which sought particular information, the research methodology was designed to be an active research project with the potential for positive outcomes.

With all research involving human subjects, the protection of individual identities is important. Given the small-scale, intimate nature of the islands, it was particularly important to take measures to conceal the identities of the participants and their respective places of employment and business. Throughout the research individual and resort names have been altered and identifying property data has been concealed. In situations where a property would be identifiable from a set of descriptive data, the information has been altered to protect the identity of the property and individuals concerned.

2: THEORETICAL UNDERPINNINGS

This research is broadly framed as a post-development project, seeking to understand some of the multiple motivations for engagement with the tourism industry and how these are situated in terms of local social dynamics. Post-development highlights new ways of conceptualizing development which do not stem from westernized concepts of modernity and progress and which highlight individual and group livelihood choices. Emphasizing different perspectives on development within local tourism, this research examines why and how people

chose to engage with tourism from the host perspective. Drawing from post-development theory, the research was guided by the philosophy that research should engage with the process of critiquing existing structures of understanding, but should also attempt to be pro-active and construct something new (Grosz, 1992). This provides an avenue for post-development researchers to navigate out of the cul-de sac of post-development (Hart, 2001) and address global inequalities without returning to the problems of western hegemonic perspectives which are inherent in traditional development models (Escobar, 1995). In the particular context of tourism on the Perhentian Islands, the research sought ways that tourism could be understood differently from the perspective of the participants in tourism with a view to creating new discursive constructs for and about island tourism.

The research is grounded in a feminist epistemology, drawing from poststructuralist thought. Poststructuralist feminist research seeks to uncover the processes which create inequalities and subjugations, frequently from the perspective of gender, but also including other aspects of disempowerment. It is this extended concept of feminist research which I utilize to structure my epistemological and methodological outlook. Feminist research methods are particularly suited to research within marginalized or under-represented groups as feminism sharpens our awareness of power dynamics and oppression of all groups (Moss, 2002). Poststructuralist feminist epistemologies eschew detached "objective" research which lays claim to one way of knowing or understanding, and instead acknowledge the existence of multiple perspectives and alternative ways of knowing. Feminist researchers have drawn attention to the underlying assumptions existing within so called objective research and revealed how many of these are steeped in a particular ideology which is drawn from masculinist perspectives (Haraway, 1988; Rose, 1993). Much of the objective positivist research tells the story from one perspective only, often favoring particular types of knowledge and silencing different ways of knowing and different local knowledges (Bebbington, 1993; Sillitoe, 1998; Fischer, 2000). Drawing from poststructuralist thought, this project acknowledges the multiplicity of knowledge

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claims and the shifting and changing ways of understanding particular phenomena. It seeks to explain given situations from the perspective of those involved, as grounded in their everyday experiences, paying attention to subjugated perspectives and other ways of knowing and being.

To achieve this, Feminist methodologies often focus on the lived experiences of groups and individuals. It is through the materiality of daily lives that the roles played by power relations are exposed and created, and individual and group subjectivities are forged. Attention to the ways in which daily activities are described and performed can reveal how these activities are situated within local and individual understandings. The feminist research process extends beyond the participants to acknowledge the input and influence of the researcher. This is fundamental for recognizing how and by whom knowledges are created in order to situate the type of knowledge which is generated. This serves to highlight the many different ways of interpreting phenomena based on individual subjectivities and underscore the multiple and partial nature of research.

Much of the academic and popular knowledge creation about locations involved in the provision of tourism establishes a particular identity for the host community (Robinson, 1999; Palmer, 1999). These created host identities serve many purposes: to make a destination seem exotic, primitive, underdeveloped, subjugated etc. The discursive constructs surrounding host communities then reinforce such understandings through further research or tourist experiences which are based upon these same assumed identities. Although in some cases aspects of created identities are at least partially accurate, in many more they are not. More importantly, these understandings of host destinations frequently perform a disempowering function whereby hosts are portrayed as passive recipients *of* tourism, rather than active participants *in* tourism. By viewing those who are engaged in tourism in a passive light, this feeds into particular discursive constructs for these individuals and groups which limit how their input is valued. The understandings created about host communities generate impacts and it is this generation of impacts that has structured the techniques chosen for my methodology. Drawing from JK Gibson-Graham (2006), research methodology

sought to encourage participation in order to foster new and highlight existing individual and group strength. This could then create new understandings from both within and without about involvement in tourism and livelihood choices for developing communities.

Feminist methodology highlights the importance of two key related factors within the research process: positionality and performativity. Although the two are often intertwined, it is useful to separate out the different understandings of each. In the context of research, positionality refers to the political, social and/or ethnic characteristics which can influence the research process. For example, who is conducting the research and how they are understood by the research participants are key factors in influencing and understanding what responses are received (Alcoff, 1991). Similarly, the interpretation, publication and distribution of the results is also influenced by the social and historical context of the researcher. Some feminist scholars have drawn attention to the number of white and/or elite women scholars, questioning their role in knowledge generation (Spivak, 1988; hooks, 1984). Some feel that being a member of the group under research (insider) is beneficial for forging a closer connection with research subjects (Alcoff, 1991; England, 1994) whilst others suggest this assumption presupposes a homogenous identity onto a group and fails to recognize multiple identities (Kobayashi, 1994; Mohammed, 2001).

Given these considerations, the positionality of the individual should not be considered as a pre-determined category for either researcher or participants. There are age-related, gendered and ethnic/racial factors which are clearly visible, but many of the nuances of individual subjectivity are masked. There are a number of less obvious factors which establish a particular identity for the researcher in the eyes of the research participant, such as clothing, accent and educational status. Many feel that in order to overcome some of these separating factors, divulging personal information and acknowledging ones positionality can be important for establishing a rapport with research participants (Ley & Mountz, 2002) and establishing legitimacy in the research context (Gilbert, 1994). However, the terrain of research means that understandings of different

positionalities may not be straightforward. Mohammed (2001) describes how understandings about her were created by her research participants prior to her research. When she attempted to correct the misunderstandings they had about her, she was met with confusion and hostility by her participants. Often in the context of researchers who are engaged with projects in the Global South, the western academic has an assumed legitimacy which influences the responses and behaviors of participants (Alcoff, 1991).

Although there are often many pre-conceptions about a researcher (and likewise about participants) prior to field research, most of the understandings are generated through communication during the research process (McKay, 2002). In this way, the practice of research can be understood as a performance in which the researcher and participant are engaged in certain roles (Mohammed, 2001). Throughout the research process, whether consciously or not, we choose which aspects of our subjectivity to reveal and which to conceal. Mohammed describes how she chose to allow her research participants to assume she was married in one instance as this was the performance required from her to secure participant engagement. She does not see this as misrepresentation, but rather as an extension of the types of performance we engage in throughout our everyday lives. Whenever we interact with others we present ourselves in a particular way, through our speech, our clothing or our physical gestures. We may speak differently with work colleagues than with our families, or we may stand differently in a bank compared to a bar. This concept of the performativity of daily life is drawn from Judith Butler (1997) who highlights how everyday interactions are a performance of our particular subjectivities, over which we have little control. In behaving in a particular way, we reinforce our own notions of self within particular categories, and likewise reinforce social norms for particular behaviors. It is through these daily performances that our own subjectivities are formed and re-formed in relation to the social situations we encounter. As with other social interactions, the research process involves a performance which establishes the identities of those involved and the relationship between researcher and participant. How our positions are

negotiated and understood becomes a vital aspect which influences the research process and the understandings that are created.

2.1: Personal Positionalities

Despite reading widely about positionality and the research process prior to field research, I fell into the same traps as other researchers once in the field. My previous field research for my Master's Thesis provided me with a number of learning experiences, but each new avenue of research (and arguably each avenue whether new or not) can reveal different challenges. Initially I had sub-consciously considered my position in relation to my participants to be pre-established: I "knew" myself and therefore my representation of self within the research environment would make me knowable to my research participants. Although I was aware of potential power dynamics and the roles played by difference, I felt that I would be able to present myself as "me" and this would communicate to my participants an understanding of everything I felt and thought about the research. I was approaching the relationships as if they had already been formed and was assuming I knew how I would behave given previous research experience. I could not have been more wrong.

In the early stages of research I did not realize I had pre-determined my own categories of self, it was not until my research participants asked me questions which challenged my understanding of self that I realized I was attempting (poorly) to create a persona to represent. I was unwittingly attempting to create the identity of the value-neutral objective researcher who was all-knowing and perfectly organized. Not only was this a mis-representation of myself, but it was also indirectly endorsing a particular research methodology which I did not support. I began to understand that I was seeking some legitimacy for my research endeavors through a set of value criteria which I did not agree with. By doing this I was creating barriers between myself and my participants which did not reflect my aims for the project, or the reality of my own position. This created contradictions which were revealed to my research participants more readily than they were revealed to me.

At the same time I was attempting to establish my research as valid, I was also attempting to convey my positionality as a non-elite to my participants. I felt it was important that my identity was framed as I felt it should be: I am from a low-income family, first in college, could certainly not be described as financially stable and am by no means in the higher echelons of my academic career. However, although these positionality criteria would doubtless earn me legitimacy in some circles, in comparison to the social and economic conditions of (some) of my participants I am still in a very different position to them. This is not to make a value-judgment over which is the more acceptable status to have, but rather highlight that my attempts to convey a shared understanding could be perceived differently than I intended. I did not realize I was creating this contradiction until I began to feel that research was not progressing how I felt it should: something did not feel right.

Once I relaxed into research, I began to achieve a comfortable relationship with (most of) my research participants and more importantly with myself as researcher. After initially attempting to unknowingly pursue the persona of the elite researcher, I was forced to admit defeat and be my usual uncomfortable self-doubting critic. Acknowledging this identity for myself was crucial to allow me to successful navigate the process of field research, it was also essential for a research environment which was more equal. I would not suggest that these personal shortcomings erased the power-dynamics of the researcher and participant, but that the exchange of information was conducted on a more honest basis as I was not attempting to be something I was not.

2.2: Participatory Action Research

There are many critiques of tourism and its impacts on host destinations (Britton, 1991; Hutnyk, 1996; Mowforth & Munt, 1998), however, this research aims to draw from some of the hopeful literatures of late which attempt to move beyond critiques to search for ways to improve social situations or to empower groups or individuals (McKinnon, 2007; Gibson-Graham, 2006). Whilst critical analysis of phenomena is valuable, this project aimed to move beyond critique to

creation in generating knowledge with and for research participants rather than about them. I attempt to search for the hopeful tourisms in small scale locations through situating the participants as active contributors in tourism. Much of the recent feminist research methodologies have highlighted the potential for research methods to be both reflexive and beneficial to the participants (Kobayashi, 2001; England, 1994). The research was designed to be an active research project which aimed to open avenues for expression for the host community whilst creating new understandings of tourism communities. The research methodology fostered individual and group reflection among the research participants as an avenue for social organization. The scope, direction and outcome of such social organization was not predetermined, but rather the aim was to allow for participants to guide the outcome (if any) as desired.

Frequently, such research projects are referred to as Participatory Action Research (PAR) and vary in their level of participation and research goals. Of recent researchers, the most vocal advocates of PAR are arguably Gibson-Graham (2006). Their research design often incorporates multiple techniques which aim to encourage research participants to discover new ways of seeing themselves and therefore creating new understandings. Although their research has an agenda, the structure and direction of this remains open and responds to the experiences of the participants. The practice of engaging in questioning becomes a process of performativity which creates new subjectivities for the research participants as well as the researcher.

In order to cultivate this process, Gibson-Graham primarily utilize focus groups as a technique to encourage the process of interaction and exchange. In previous studies, focus groups have been identified as a process to encourage self-reflection (Gibson-Graham, 1996; Cameron, 2005) as well as an important technique for fostering group exchanges. Through sharing information, the individual subject transformation is broadened across the group, extending the transformative potential to the group as a whole. Through interacting as a group, individuals are offered the opportunity to situate their own perspectives and opinions within the group dynamic. For some this might mean they find their

perspective differs, for others it may be that they discover their viewpoints are shared. The aim is not to achieve any consensus, but to encourage communication and interaction. Through the process of information sharing focus groups can (re)create social connections and develop understanding between and within social groups. By interacting and sharing at the group level, new knowledges and understandings can be created which may benefit the individuals concerned and the researcher.

Group techniques are also important for allowing the research process to be flexible and respond to changing dynamics: "…both the researcher and the research subjects may simultaneously obtain insights and understandings of particular social situations *during* the process of research" (Goss and Leinbach, 1996: 117, emphasis added). This allows the research direction and techniques to be modified and altered as necessary and ensures that the research process is a truly participatory one. The process of observing negotiation of difference in the group setting gives the researcher a greater exposure to social conflicts and their resolution. This is often an important insight for identifying which group members have power and which do not.

In addition to transforming participants, participatory research methods can transform the researcher (McKay, 2002). Drawing from the fundamentals of feminist research techniques, the research process is understood as a process which influences all those involved and cannot be screened from individual subjectivities. This project was guided by the concept of "weak theory" drawn from Eve Sedgwick (Gibson-Graham, 2006: 7), which suggests that the research process should remain open to new discoveries. Weak theory is the antithesis to the structured and designed projects ("strong theory") which close off avenues of new discovery by framing projects within certain language and terminology and failing to acknowledge differing understandings. In contrast weak theory focuses on spaces of possibility and exploring avenues of different theorizations to transform our understandings. By approaching field research with an open agenda, new discoveries can be incorporated and, more importantly, new understandings are fostered. Research design does not attempt to "uncover" any

existing knowledge or prove any set of understandings, but rather focuses on creating something new through the process of research.

Irrespective of the intentions of the researcher, the process of conducting research establishes the researcher as an "expert" and creates a particular identity for the researcher from the perspective of the participants. This creates an uneven power dynamic which does not encourage equal exchange (Kobayashi, 2001; Gilbert, 1994; McLafferty, 1995). Although this power dynamic can arguably never be erased, there are methods which can be utilized to help erode this perception of the researcher as expert and encourage the understanding of the process as a form of exchange (Falconer-Al-Hindi & Kawabata, 2002). Although focus group techniques do not completely erase the hierarchical relationship between researcher and participants (Goss & Leinbach, 1996), they can provide a situation wherein hierarchical divisions become somewhat blurred. Through employing PAR techniques to destabilize these hierarchies, new spaces can be created in which a researcher-participant dynamic is reformed. The researcher is re-framed as a co-participant in the research and the process can then be understood as an exchange between co-creators of knowledge.

3: FIELD RESEARCH

As our theoretical understandings of researcher and participant have changed, so too have our understandings of research starts and stops. As more researchers combine methodologies, the boundaries of what is considered ethnography have blurred somewhat. Heidi Nast (1994) highlights how "the field" within research should be conceptualized as a social terrain, incorporating factors which shape our understandings of ourselves and the world. In this way it becomes difficult to separate research activities from non-research activities, essentially collapsing the category of research. This creates conceptual difficulties where the researcher identity has to be constantly recreated and redefined. The initial understandings of "insider and outsider" often become blurred and the researcher identity becomes something new.

Within tourism research specifically the identity of the researcher becomes complicated: " ...in a community where tourists are a factor and the subject of study as well, the ethnographer is likely to be identified with the tourist population, stereotyped and classified as a member of a group or category of outsiders" (Nunez, 1989: 270). As such, tourism researchers often become more acutely aware of their association with the tourists at a locale, adding an additional layer of nuanced understanding to the research. This underscores how the researcher identity is not created in a vacuum and how little influence we may have over how others perceive us. In "Where Asia Smiles" (Ness, 2002) the author recounts a tale of feeling happy when she was described by a local person as something other than a tourist. She points out that she was like many others and was not happy to be described as a tourist and instead wanted to "fit in" with local life. For this researcher it was important to separate herself from other tourists and maintain her identity as a researcher. In this example, the researcher framed herself as outside of the realm of the tourists and sought an affiliation with the hosts rather than the guests. This highlights that for many, the term tourist is not a neutral term, but instead carries with it many connotations. How these varied perspectives of "tourist" are conceptualized by both the researcher and participants influences how the research process takes place and how results are framed and understood.

3.1: Practicalities and Difficulties

There were a number of practical considerations which guided the structure and organization of field research. There were also several unanticipated difficulties which necessitated a flexible and responsive approach to field research. The offshore location of the islands required significant pre-planning as any resources not available on the islands would necessitate a day traveling to obtain them and a considerable amount of lost time and money. Similarly, scheduling interviews with those in official positions who were based on the mainland was difficult and necessitated a two or three night stay on the mainland, or a long-distance trip to Kuala Lumpur. Although I initially considered

these journeys as "wasted" research time, I began to realize that they helped me to contextualize the conceptual position of the islands in relation to regional and national hubs.

The physical conditions on the islands are less than perfect for research activities. Accommodation is basic and usually I did not have a desk and chair, making typing research notes more difficult. Many locations did not have an electrical socket to recharge my laptop computer or batteries for a voice recorder, and often if they had an electrical outlet the supply was only available during evening hours. In terms of infrastructure, there were few quiet locations for conducting and recording interviews which impacted how the research could be recorded. In some locations there were also limited facilities to obtain additional supplies or connect to telephone or internet service. Although many researchers in remote locations are familiar with such limitations, there is the expectation that as a tourist destination, the islands are comfortable or convenient. Despite visiting the islands prior to research, I did not realize the extent of my own expectations and the frustrations they would cause until well into my field research.

There were a number of physical constraints on doing field research and the awkwardness of presenting the body of the researcher. In Kuala Lumpur, the dynamics of interviews were very structured and organized, often planned significant amounts of time in advance. In terms of personal representation, the clothing chosen had to be more formal to match the research space. The practicalities of limited research funds necessitating walking in serious heat and humidity and this meant that I arrived disheveled and felt I did not adequately portray the competent researcher. In contrast, conducting research in regional locations required wearing culturally sensitive clothing (long sleeves, loose pants and headscarf). Despite the perceived need for this cultural sensitivity, I felt like a "faker" for adopting this dress and believed that my representation to the interview participants was somewhat comical. In stark contrast to the mainland experiences, the islands presented a new set of challenges. Initially I wore clothing which I considered to be appropriate to the research process, which

made me look distinctly unusual in the tropical island setting. There was also a sub-conscious desire to not look like a tourist that influenced the clothing I had chosen to bring. It was after several uncomfortable interviews that I realized that the clothing I had chosen was creating a barrier and was not adequately reflecting my personality, or establishing the conditions for open exchange. I was "performing" the function of a researcher as I perceived they expected me to look and behave, rather than being myself.

The local language on the islands is Malaysian. Due to the colonial history of Malaysia, coupled with the importance of tourism to the islands, the majority of the population speaks at least some English. Although I completed two courses of Malaysian language training, interviews and focus groups were conducted in English with a local interpreter present. Initially I decided on English as a primary language fearing that my limited language skills would not provide me with the depth of understanding to interpret linguistic nuances. I was aware that distortion and misrepresentation can result from failures to adequately understand the cultural significance of the responses given by research participants. However, on arrival to the islands, I found that conducting interviews and focus groups in English provided a service for some of the participants who were keen to practice their language skills. Even with an interpreter present and the option to conduct focus groups in Malaysian, participants overwhelmingly chose to speak in English.

The use of a second language was also beneficial in the focus group setting as the cross linguistic process of translation provided an enhanced level of understanding to participant responses. Being in the group setting allowed individuals to use locally relevant terminology within the group discussions and translate their meanings back to me (Goss & Leinbach, 1996). As each individual sought to translate her or his ideas, they would often embellish their responses seeking to explain their perspective, leading to a more detailed understanding of responses overall. Often other participants would join in to try to help to contextualize the translation, allowing for another level of explanation and clarification to take place between the group participants. It also became

apparent that my spoken Malaysian was a source of confusion (and amusement) for many of the local participants whose regional accent of Kelantan State made pronunciation of words very different from the standardized pronunciations taught in Kuala Lumpur language schools. The very process of having my pronunciation ridiculed and corrected by my research participants was a valuable development which eroded some (although obviously not all) of the researcher/subject hierarchy and helped to establish a more equal footing between myself and my participants.

The islands have a monsoonal climate which affects the islands from October to February each year. During this time, most resorts, restaurants and shops on the islands are closed and there are limited boat services to and from the islands. Responding to these physical limitations, the research was conducted in two phases stretching across two tourist seasons. The two phase approach allowed me to build a relationship with some resort operators and staff, but also allowed me to monitor the changes of staff from season to season and between high and low season. The seasonal nature of the islands meant that some staff are employed for one season only and this also impacted the structure of research design. This did allow for an interesting analysis of the staff who did return for two or three seasons, providing a more in-depth understanding of individual motivations. By the time the field research was complete, I had traveled to the islands for four consecutive seasons, allowing me to observe the changes on the islands and gain a short-term temporal comparison of island tourism.

3.2: Pre-Research

I first visited the islands on my second visit to South-East Asia whilst I was seeking a research topic for my dissertation. The islands had a unique feel which seemed different from other types of small-scale tourism found across the region. This was one of the primary reasons I found the islands an interesting location for potential study. However, my interests were not formalized until I began speaking to other travelers about the islands and relating their responses to academic

research. The experiences I had on the islands did not match the conditions described in tourist research and I began to feel there was something missing from the descriptions of tourism in such destinations. Similarly, I felt that the narratives of travelers painted a very particular understanding of tourism on the islands which was not completely accurate. Such understandings altered how guests behaved towards islanders and reflected a particular understanding of cultures in the Global South.

During my second visit, I formalized the pre-research process by conducting participant observation at several locations. I spoke with tourists, staff and resort owners to gain an understanding of island concerns. Given the existing literature about the stratified nature of development in Malaysia, I was expecting islanders to feel marginalized from central government in Kuala Lumpur and lacking in development. However the responses in pre-research (re-confirmed during field research) suggested otherwise and highlighted different islander concerns. From these I identified three key areas of concern highlighted by participants from which I could structure my overall inquiry into island tourism. These concerns were used to formulate themes for the focus group discussions conducted and to provide a structure for understanding how tourism is viewed by the local populations.

One recurring theme was a concern over future development of the islands, specifically in the context of tourism and often relating to environmental sustainability. This was chosen as one key focus group theme. Another related but less vocalized concern was that of cultural conflicts with the provision of tourism. Some individuals were concerned over the consumption of alcohol or drugs and others expressed concerns over nudity and improper behavior. Both were incorporated into the theme of conflict which also allowed for the inclusion of other aspects of cultural concerns over island tourism. The last theme was identified from the rhetoric of island workers in contrast to the understandings of island tourism from outsiders. This theme coalesced around identifying motivations for employment and reasons for participation in island tourism.

3.3: Research techniques

  3.3.1: Surveys. The first stage of research was conducting property surveys at each of the resorts on the islands. Although this was my third visit to the islands, there were a number of properties I had not visited and this gave me the opportunity to codify the facilities and conditions at each resort. The survey questions are designed to help build a picture of the type, scale and distribution of island participation in tourism. The surveys examined what facilities each resort had as a way to gauge the level of development on the islands. The surveys also provided a picture of the distribution of types of property across the islands and of the spaces of island tourism. Surveys were designed to evaluate the facilities in order to situate each resort as either budget, mid-scale or upscale. They also provided an opportunity to question the resort owners regarding future development plans in order to assess whether the tourism development on the islands conformed to regular tourist typologies (Butler, 1980). The key questions to evaluate resort status relate to facilities which are usually associated with the move towards more upscale properties: number of rooms, hot or cold showers, electricity (for how many hours of the day), bar, restaurant, shop or dive shop on site and what affiliations the resorts had with other properties (A full copy of all survey questions is available in the appendix). A total of 37 resorts were surveyed across the two islands which constituted the total number of properties at this time. Surveys were conducted with the onsite owner or manager in most cases, although in a few cases at the larger resorts, it was difficult to secure time with these individuals. In these cases a senior member of reception staff was asked to complete the surveys. All properties participated in the surveys.

  Quantitative survey questions were augmented with qualitative questions designed to understand how tourism is viewed by each property owner/manager and situate their responses in terms of future island development. The questions helped to build a mental map of the connections between and within resorts and how island tourism is understood by participants. They also demonstrated some of the social and economic supply flows which support tourism on the islands and provided a reference point for further questions in interviews and focus groups.

These survey questions were augmented with personal subjective evaluations which helped to contextualize each resort and the type of tourists they are aimed at attracting. I stayed for at least one evening at each resort, allowing me the opportunity to conduct participant observation throughout the resort and to witness the staff and tourist exchanges on the properties. Through this process, I was able to observe how the spaces of each individual property change at different times of the day, and how staff behavior is controlled and monitored at each resort.

This initial stage was useful in gaining an entry point into island tourism and making connections with potential participants for the second phase of research. The friendships and connections made at this first phase were invaluable for validating my position on the islands and provided me with a knowledge of the islands which many of the residents confined to one beach did not have. Being able to discuss my visit to all properties also helped to establish my status as an independent researcher and not affiliated with either government or international development organizations. This was hugely important as there were a number of resort managers/owners who felt cautious of my presence fearing a different agenda which might perhaps threaten their property. They were reassured by my interest in all properties and my lack of affiliation with organizations

3.3.2: Participant Observation. In addition to surveys, the first phase of research involved an extended stay at three resorts to conduct a period of participant observation. Although participant observation in field research is an ongoing process, these stays were focused on observing the staff and daily functioning of the particular resorts. The resorts were selected based on their willingness to participate as identified during property surveys as well as their locations on the islands. As a process of comparison, I wanted to evaluate the differences between the types of resort, whether upscale, mid-scale or budget, and to compare the differences between the two islands. On Palau Kecil I stayed at one resort on the main tourist beach of Long Beach and one resort on a small

remote bay, and on Palau Besar I stayed at one resort on the main local tourist beach (actual location identity protected).

At each resort I was allowed the opportunity to shadow staff by volunteering to work for the day. My duties varied from general resort cleaning and reception activities to cleaning the rooms and serving food. This process spanned the level of resorts in terms of upscale, mid-scale and budget as well as the types of duties expected of staff. The opportunity to interact with staff and monitor their daily activities allowed me to observe the different methods of control and rewards for staff across the resorts. I was able to gain an insight into how tourists are perceived by workers and how workers view their own status and position across the different resorts. These insights could not have been gained with any other method and the process was invaluable for establishing an understanding of how employment at the different resorts was structured. I hoped that this process would secure connections with staff and help with recruitment for focus groups. However, with the seasonal nature of employment, I found that when I returned to the islands most of the staff had changed. Despite this setback I found that having completed this preliminary process ensured I was remembered by management or that I could reference the previous season's activities in order to gain leverage in recruiting willing participants. Given my status as an outsider on the islands with no formalized affiliation locally, this process was an invaluable tool for the success of my research.

Participant observation was an ongoing process throughout the research, with data being recorded as field notes. In the second phase of research I secured employment at a resort, working in their dive shop and staying in staff accommodation. This allowed me the opportunity to observe day-to-day operations as well as interview staff and customers. Initially I was concerned about how this would position me in relation to other resorts, local workers and tourists. I felt that an affiliation with one resort would prevent me from gaining participants from another resort. Although this may have been true for some, I found the connections I gained allowed me leverage to secure participants from a number of related sources.

As opportunities presented themselves on the islands, I engaged in a number of activities which permitted me a different type of related participant observation. On several occasions I participated in beach cleaning and reef cleaning activities, both as a participant and as an organizer. I was able to examine how tourists perceive their own impacts on the islands and how locals understand such behaviors. I was also able to observe the different dynamics which govern staff behavior when monitored versus unsupervised. The process of collecting trash that had washed up onto the beach or reef was a useful process to examine the type of material deposited and ascertain its source. It also gave me the opportunity to directly impact some of the negative environmental consequences of tourism on the islands.

In response to requests from staff at some locations, I also engaged with short language training sessions, often conducted informally, which helped to extend the language skills of some. These sessions were primarily to provide a beneficial service for the research participants, and for local residents who did not participate in research. They frequently ended up providing me with valuable insights into how the relationships between individuals were negotiated and uncovered some of the local power dynamics. They also provided an opportunity to persuade other individuals to engage with research activities or to re-clarify information which had been given at previous sessions.

3.3.3: In-Depth Interviews. In order to gain deeper knowledge of key aspects of island tourism, I conducted in-depth interviews with a number of key informants. These individuals were selected due to their expert knowledge of the given subject (Flick, 1998: 76) and were recruited using a snowball sampling technique. Some interviews were conducted ad-hoc as structured interviews were harder to arrange for certain participants. The interviews were guided by key questions, but were loosely structured allowing for the participant to steer the conversation. At each opportunity I sought to share information with the participants, treating the process as an exchange of information rather than a one-way flow. Participants were encouraged to guide the interview around a

loose set of discussion criteria and frequently the interviews would go off-topic. I considered this to be part of the exchange between researcher and participant and found it more beneficial to keep the process informal rather than attempting to control the direction of the discussion. In some cases this meant that "interviews" would take considerably longer than anticipated, occasionally stretching to an entire day or needing to be conducted over several sessions. This provided more contextual information than could be obtained from shorter question-driven interviews alone and allowed for interviews to be structured as a mutual exchange of information and opinions, rather than a one-way flow. In these cases, the lines between interview and participant observation became rather blurred.

In order to preserve the accuracy of the participant's opinions, interviews were audio recorded when possible and supplemental data was gathered with written notes. In some cases, individuals were reluctant to be audio-recorded and written notes were the only method of recording responses. As it was impractical in many cases to audio-record or take written notes during these exchanges, these encounters were recorded as soon after as possible. In most cases I was able to audio record personal recollection of the discussion points soon after the interview. When this was not possible, notes were handwritten. As recollection of an encounter can be inaccurate, in most cases direct quotes from these participants are not used within the text. Instead, the general idea of the discussion is used to ensure that statements are not inaccurately attributed to individual participants.

3.3.4: Focus Groups. During the second phase of research, a series of focus groups were conducted at different locations on the islands. In previous research, focus groups have been identified as a useful way to study social interactions and group dynamics (Wilkinson, 1998; Neale, 2001; Cameron, 2005; Stewart, Shamdasani, & Rook, 2007). Group interactions provide the opportunity for the researcher to observe social dynamics providing "…an important opportunity to explore issues relevant to the person-in-context" (Wilkinson, 1998:

112). They are also a useful method for exploring how individual and group interactions occur (Cameron, 2005: 157) and for creating new understandings (Gibson-Graham, 2006).

Group participants were selected utilizing a purposive sampling technique (Bedford & Burgess, 2001) identifying individuals with specialized knowledge of a particular subject. These focus groups are not intended to be considered a statistically significant representative sample of the population (Stewart, Shamdasani & Rook, 2007: 54-8), but rather to provide an insight into the local understandings of tourism. Each focus group contained a mix of men and women (except the deliberate women only group), but there were usually more men than women. This unevenness could be for a number of reasons: there were less women working on the islands, women were generally less fluent in English (although the option to speak Malaysian was provided, there may have been an assumption that English was necessary), women were generally less outgoing than men. Most participants were aged between18-35, reflecting the average age of employees on the islands.

After conducting the first focus group, I found that a less structured approach was necessary. This is some ways responds to the general island "space" which defies structure and conformity, and also responds to the practicalities of arranging times for participants and keeping the process as beneficial as possible for participants. In many cases the conversations at sessions was allowed to go off-topic for longer than would be normal (Neale, 2001) but I found this helped to create a more relaxed environment which encouraged participation and interaction. Similarly the ability for some participants to join after the session had started or leave before we had completed enabled a greater number of individuals to participate.

There were a number of difficulties with conducting focus groups on the islands. I initially intended for the focus groups to bring together individuals from both islands and different beaches into one session in order to encourage social connections. However, during phase one of research, it became clear that the islands have a very localized perspective which binds them to their individual

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locations. There was little interest in establishing connections across islands or even between bays, apart from within existing personal connections. It also became clear that the practicalities and economic considerations of establishing a shared islands-wide focus group would make it unworkable for this particular project. Even limiting sessions to participants from one bay raised difficulties in terms of employment obligations and location issues, it is possible that future research may be successful is organizing such events.

As the research was under way some of the perceived difficulties of conducting focus groups on the islands ended up being beneficial to the overall process. As discussed by Dyck (2002) spaces can be transformed through the research process; what was previously a neutral space can be transformed to one of uneven power dynamics. If it is acknowledged that the research process changes spaces, then it can also follow that the chosen space can influence the research process. The islands do not have readily accessible large spaces which would usually be the preferred location for such sessions, so in response to this, focus groups were carried out in a variety of different locations. Sometimes these locations had poor acoustics for recording, and on one occasion heavy tropical rain made audio recording difficult, but these limitations became positive encounters as it encouraged participants to sit closer together and facilitated deeper interactions with one another. Similarly, conducting sessions in informal situations helped to create a relaxed and inclusive environment for participants, and helped to raise awareness of the research which assisted with securing participants for interviews in later focus groups. The relaxed environment was important for many of the local participants who were uncomfortable in structured settings; many had limited formal education and expressed to me that they felt uncomfortable in more formal environments. Likewise, it helped to destabilize my position as researcher as the environments used were often the spaces familiar to the participants, making me the uncomfortable outsider, not them.

Discussion themes for the focus groups were taken from the pre-research issues identified by participants and from themes identified during participant observation. In most of the focus group sessions, we began with a theme for

discussion and the conversation began with a general question. I had several additional probe questions to encourage participation (Cameron, 2005: 167), but in many cases these were not necessary. In several of the focus groups sessions, the initial identified theme was used as a starting point, but fortuitous discussion tangents were pursued if they related to other themes.

The first focus group was conducted with staff at one of the resorts; the session had 9 participants, all island workers and lasted 1.45 hours. The theme for this session focused on environmental pressures on the islands as they relate to tourism. The questions focused on how environmental problems are understood and what solutions exist for the future:

> What are the environmental pressures of tourism?
> How do you think these problems can be better solved?
> What do you think about the marine park?
> What are your opinions about (over)development on the islands?

These questions were focused on perceptions of environmental pressures as they relate to future island development, rather than being an exploration of actual environmental problems. The session illustrated how the pressures of tourism are understood by those who rely upon the industry for employment, irrespective of whether the identified concerns were "real" or not. This helped to identify what is seen as "appropriate" development and how this is similar between across individuals from different backgrounds. It also highlighted a level of local knowledge about environmental concerns and protection which is not recognized by those from outside the islands.

The second focus group focused on the multiple motivations for involvement in the tourism industry. It had 12 participants, all island workers, although three participants did not join for the entire session. The questions were aimed at understanding why individuals have chosen to work in tourism and to identify their decisions as choices:

> Why do you want to work here?
> What is your ideal job?
> Do you work with friends and/or family members?
> What do you like about your job?
> What do you dislike about your job?

This situates the decisions made by individuals as choices which are calculated based on a range of pros and cons (Gibson-Graham, 1996; Belsky, 2004). The session also uncovered a number of similarities for employment choices across employees irrespective of their individual jobs and backgrounds.

A third focus group was conducted with just women participants asking the same questions listed above relating to employment choices. This session was harder to organize, but I was assisted by a willing staff member who recruited additional female participants. The session had 5 participants, all were local Muslim women and the session lasted 1 hour. Although I readily had conversations with most of the women outside of the focus group setting, they were initially reluctant to speak once the session had started. This is possibly because their responses were being recorded, and most women were embarrassed or uncomfortable when asked to speak directly to the audio recorder. Although the women were not new to technology, (they all had mobile phones and used computers for the Internet) the audio recorder created a barrier. I found that allowing the women to hear their recorded voice played back to them helped to encourage participation. As the session was slower to start, a period of English language training was used, along with the accompanying critique of my Malaysian language skills, to encourage conversation.

In addition to questions related to employment choices, this session also asked questions regarding domestic responsibilities. These questions aimed to establish the requirements for women and contrast the roles of women and men working in tourism. A number of studies have found that women working in tourism frequently have to perform domestic obligations alongside their employment obligations (Levy & Lerch, 1991; Stonich et al. 1995; Wilkinson & Pratiwi, 1995), placing additional pressure on women. Similar studies have also found that women workers in tourism frequently perform domestic style activities within their employment (Dahles, 1999; Momsen, 1994). This session provided insights into how familial obligations are negotiated on the islands via the distribution and sharing of domestic tasks and how worker subjectivity is understood differently by women and men.

A fourth focus group was conducted mixing local and western workers containing 8-12 participants (some joined the group after it had started and some left before it ended) and lasted 3 hours. The dynamic for this group provided a fascinating insight into the subjectivities of the individuals concerns and reinforced a shared commonality between western and local workers. The central theme focused on both motivations for employment as noted above, along with discussions of the social and spatial conflicts with island tourism. These questions were more potentially intrusive for local residents, but there was not a reluctance to speak. There was one participant who seemed less open about some of the issues discussed, so he was approached for a personal interview at a later date. In addition to those listed above, key questions were:

Are there tourist activities which you do not like?
What do you like about tourists?
Do you think there is more alcohol consumed by locals on the islands?

This session provided an opportunity for discussion to be shared across the social groups and uncovered many similar motivations and opinions between westerners and locals. This was invaluable for highlighting how the economic subjectivities of these seemingly disparate groups of individuals converged around certain themes. It seemed to be beneficial to the participants as they also seemed surprised and pleased by the convergence of motivations and opinions. Outside of the focus groups environment, the conversations exchanged were frequently discussed and shared with others, creating new understandings which extended beyond the group participants.

4: ANALYTIC METHODS

In all phases of the research, the data obtained was transcribed from written notes or audio recordings as soon as possible after the initial session. This helped to ensure that any problems with notes or recordings could be addressed. In some cases, responses which were not clear were later clarified with the individuals concerned providing an additional opportunity for supplemental data to be obtained. Transcribing notes in the field was also beneficial for highlighting additional avenues for research questions and

highlighting avenues which had not been successful for inquiries. The process of writing field notes whilst the interviews or sessions were fresh in my mind allowed me to record non-verbal data which contextualized the research. These notes provided an added layer to the responses obtained and allowed for information to be situated alongside other participant responses (Maxwell, 2004).

In interviews and group discussions I paid attention to subtleties of speech such as hesitancy and signs of changing perspectives to agree with the group direction. These vocal aspects can give hints to some of the underlying thoughts governing what is being represented. Although they are interpretive and should not be taken independently of responses, when considered as a whole they can help to contextualize the significance of responses. There were a number of structured mannerisms which were routinely recorded: tone of voice, laughter, talking over one another, interrupting, reluctance to speak and anger. I also noted physical mannerisms where possible, such as whether individuals adopted an open stance whilst being interviewed or whether they were distracted during the sessions. In the focus groups sessions I noted how individuals reacted to one another's statements, who had dominance in the group and who seemed nervous or reluctant to speak. This ensured that the data recorded retained individual voices even if information had been obtained within the group setting.

In addition to recording information from participants, I also maintained field notes which recorded my personal responses to the interaction: were sessions successful, were participants enjoying the process, was I surprised by responses and so on. In addition to these personal responses to the research process, I also recorded how I was feeling about island tourism and local workers overall. This process of reflection was an invaluable tool to help me structure and record my changing understandings of island tourism. Similarly, it was helpful to reflect upon how my research was altering my own understandings of my position, both as an individual and as a researcher.

In order to analyze the research data, discourse analysis was used to identify how tourism and personal positions within tourism were understood and negotiated. In order to uncover the personal subjectivities of individuals, the

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analysis focused on how understandings are created and maintained across the group setting (Hajer, 1995; Cheong & Miller, 2000; Belsky, 2004). I focused on the ways in which individuals describe their positions and situate themselves in relation to island tourism. I also paid attention to how island life was situated in the wider political economy of Malaysia and globally.

I began with content analysis which focused on two key aspects: commonly occurring themes (Cope, 2005) and frequency of selected key words (Crang, 2002; Jackson, 2002). I initially reviewed the data obtained to identify themes. The initial themes selected for focus groups were obtained from data gathered during pre-research and these themes were then cross-referenced with the later data to ascertain if I had correctly identified legitimate concerns. Even though focus groups were organized around key themes, it became apparent that certain themes would persist across sessions and interviews, whilst others would be less prevalent. I selected a number of key words in relation to the particular themes and recorded how frequently these words were used.

In order to uncover the underlying themes behind the responses, contextual analysis was used alongside content analysis. This process focused less on the actual responses and more on how they were delivered. With the in-depth interviews, there were a number of recorded aspects, such as tone and body language, which provided additional meaning to the responses. In the group setting, there was a wealth of non-verbal information which aided in explaining how groups were negotiating meaning and how individuals behaved in a group setting (Cope, 2002). This also allowed for difference and argument to be recorded when there was a verbal or non-verbal response.

Although the analytic methods used allowed me to highlight key recurring themes, I felt it was also important to maintain the voices of individuals. For this reason I have included sections of dialogue, when appropriate, along with longer quotations to attempt to maintain the context of information sharing and communication. Similarly, when translating data, the actual phrases and words have been maintained to allow the individual perspectives to be retained, especially when they differ from group or usual responses. Finally, the stories told

by individuals are the best indicator towards understanding how particular factors are perceived, so these have been given priority within research writing.

5: REFLECTIONS ON FIELD RESEARCH

The process of conducting field research is a life changing experience for most researchers. The changes undergone by the researcher often become a valuable part of the research data and help to personalize and contextualize the research (Nast, 1994). The positionality of the researcher impacts the results obtained, this in turn can alter as the researcher changes (Alcoff, 1991). The personal element is important in highlighting that the research is partial in nature and that another researcher could potentially obtain very different results. My research reflects the views of my participants, but it is clearly influenced by my own socio-historical context. I was motivated to conduct this research by a sense of injustice and misrepresentation of those at the supply end of tourism, drawn from academic readings, popular media and conversations with other tourists. Clearly this perspective will have guided my research and influenced some of the observations I have chosen to record.

In addition to impacting the researcher, the process of research also impacts the participants. Merely through the process of asking some of my participants to question or verbalize certain aspects of other lives they are undergoing a process of self-examination and reflection. This can change an individual's self-perception and influence their understandings and categorizations of their own positionality. Similarly, when I was asked questions by my participants it forced me to question my own world view and reasons for conducting research, often without obvious or comfortable answers. These processes of questioning and understanding became exchanges in which different viewpoints of similar subjects were placed into dialogue with one another. In this way, research can be seen as a performative process of creating new knowledges, rather than uncovering something which exists in a predetermined state.

5.1: Frustrations and Realizations

The different phases of the research process brought about different problems or frustrations. The first phase involved a lot of physical moving around from beach to beach and switching locations frequently. This process had its benefits as I remained detached from my surroundings and had more free time to write notes or transcribe data. However, it was also a very lonely experience which made me feel like more of an outsider on the islands. I began to become very frustrated with the physical conditions on the islands and the lack of comfort and convenience (especially in the more budget accommodations I was staying in). I avoided talking to other tourists as this was not considered part of my research and I attempted to avoid any tourist-type activities to separate myself from someone who was on vacation. Despite my theoretical distaste for the idea of the objective researcher somehow neutral from their surroundings, I found myself sub-consciously adopting this stance. I became uncomfortable speaking to non-participants about my research and it seemed as if I had to keep the details of the project separate from the participants to somehow keep it pure and untainted. I was offered the opportunity to work at several resorts, but was concerned about how this would position me on the islands and how much time I would have left to conduct the research.

It was not until critically reading my field notes from the first phase of research that I saw I was making this separation between myself and the research. I was viewing employment as something other than research and attempting to keep the day-to-day interactions with people outside of the research process. Part of the reason for this was related to how individuals (in academia as well as outside) react to those conducting research in tourism. I have had countless examples where my research has been mocked as an extended holiday and ridiculed as not "real" research. Sub-consciously responding to this I was attempting to validate the research through emotional neutrality and scientific objectivity in the field.

Once I realized this, I decided that taking a job could be a beneficial tool to augment the research process. The decision was not taken lightly and I remained

concerned about how being a worker would change my status on the islands and how it would alter my interaction with locals. However, the experience was hugely beneficial and although it changed my position on the islands, it provided me with an opportunity to engage with other workers at a level previously unattainable during the first phase. Whilst working, the ability to monitor daily activities and to access staff and tourists for interviews proved invaluable. It also provided an insight into how staff cognitively situate themselves and their own subjectivities on the islands whilst at work and in downtime. I began to observe what behaviors were mimicking the creation of home space or recreation space for island residents. Similarly the process of staying in staff accommodation and eating staff food was a very different experience from that obtained as a visitor to the islands. After my period of work was completed, I was allowed to stay in staff accommodation and remained a part of the resort.

Throughout the research process, there was a frustration with what is frequently identified as "island time". In many tropical or relaxed tourist destinations, activities are conducted at the speed of tourism, namely in a more slow and relaxed manner. My research participants were primarily those involved in the supply side of tourism and there was an expectation that arranging times for interviews would be difficult given their employment and business obligations. Such scheduling issues were less of an issue when compared to the pull of "island time" and gaining a commitment from participants. Previous research in Malaysian *kampongs* has uncovered how the perception of speed and "busyness" is seen negatively by some communities (Ong, 1987), where it was framed as an attachment to western desires. Ong describes how time was measured for her participants in terms of the amount of time it would take to smoke a cigar (ibid: 111). A similar perspective is seen on the islands where many of the Malay workers displayed similar views on intensive working. Many of my participants suggested that they would rather "take life easy and stress free" and there were frequent examples of individuals refusing promotion or additional work because of this viewpoint.

This pace of life raised a number of issues for field research. Arranging meetings and times for interviews was treated with the same casual attitude, obtaining a firm time or date for an interview was very difficult to establish. Participants would frequently adopt the behavior of tourists: casually changing plans, relaxing in the sun, or going on excursions. Often I would arrive to an arranged meeting to find that my participants were in beachwear or were keen to conduct interviews on the beach. This could have become a contentious and exasperating aspect to the research, but I chose to view this as an indication that my research methods needed to be adjusted. It also gave me a valuable insight into how those involved in the supply side of tourism viewed their role on the islands. It became clear that many workers viewed their positions on the islands in similar terms to tourists and would frequently perform their daily activities in a similar manner to the tourists.

There were numerous distractions of island life which hindered conducting structured interviews. In several situations I had to conduct interviews over a number of sittings due to interruptions such as thunderstorms, medical and structural emergencies, or the sighting of a group of monkeys. Again these complications became part of the research as it gave me an insight into the multiple and changing roles of island workers and owners. When interviews were not interrupted, they often became extended conversations which spilled out to include other staff and occasionally tourists. People would frequently join in with a discussion forming impromptu focus groups, or changing the direction of conversation. Although this meant that the direction of the interview would become lost, it did provide an opportunity to observe the interactions across staff and tourists on the islands. As the research went on I found that one of the less beneficial side impacts of conducting field research in tourism is the realization that I can never again go on a vacation. Training myself in the field to actively observe and to note everything that I witness has now become normal behavior for me. Every destination visited or discussion had with other tourists potentially informs my research, similarly every conversation with those who choose not to travel also becomes part of my understanding of the dynamics, reach and import

of travel and tourism. I have also been forced to reflect on my own and others' reasons for travel and how these are informed by types of Othering. This has left me with a reduced desire to travel and a keen awareness of the underlying assumptions and stereotypes of travel.

6: CONCLUSION

The epistemological and ontological framework for the research dictates the appropriate tools and techniques to be used for field research. This project was structured to reflect multiple ways of knowing and to validate different ways of being, whilst at the same time constructing new understandings about island tourism. Using a variety of techniques ensured that data was obtained from a number of different sources and that the maximum amount of individual perspectives was represented. These different and sometimes conflicting perspectives were layered to provide a richer and deeper understanding. Although much of the quantitative data gathered was not used in the final reporting of research, the mere process of gathering the data was a useful exercise which added to my understanding of island tourism.

The use of focus groups extended the project from a passive field research to an active environment with the potential for stimulating social change. As a political tool, focus groups can impact individuals who participate, as well as those who do not. The process of gathering individuals to discuss a particular issue creates a discourse around the particular topic from both inside and outside the group. The use of non-traditional techniques in this manner also destabilizes existing notions of research and more accurately reflects the blurred lines which exist between research and real life.

The process of conducting field research was an enriching and enlightening experience which uncovered as much about my understandings of self as it did about my research participants. I was confident prior to starting research that I knew what needed to be done and that I could cope with the difficulties of field research. However, as the process wore on, I became less secure in my abilities and the validity of my project. My own personal physical

and emotional needs were stretched thin and it forced me to re-evaluate what is important and valued in my life. In this I mirrored my research participants, many of whom were struggling to come to terms with their life interests against a multitude of social and physical inputs and pressures. This allowed me to connect with many of my participants in ways I had not anticipated and altered my perceptions of social relationships. Although not an outcome I had expected (or intended) conducting field research turned out to be a humbling and life-changing process.

Chapter Four
A Picture of Island Tourism

1: INTRODUCTION

With this chapter, I create a sense of the spaces of tourism experienced on the islands during the time I undertook my research. The details in this section will help to paint a picture of island tourism and show how the spaces of tourism across the islands vary and change. Clearly in such a situation, the types of developments and the social spaces that are created are never static. As such, much of the information here can be viewed as a snapshot of island tourism which provides a temporal stamp for Perhentian Island tourism and development. Some of the island infrastructure has changed over the four years I have been visiting the islands and the social spaces have responded to these differences. However, a certain sense of place remains across many of these changes which can be monitored across these physical alterations. In addition to providing information about infrastructure, this chapter also provides contextual information to help express some of the key aspects of island life.

2: BACKGROUND

The two main islands in the Perhentian archipelago, Palau Kecil and Palau Besar, are prime locations for tourism. The tropical monsoonal climate provides abundant sunshine and high temperatures during the tourist season. The offshore location imparts a sense of remoteness and the overall lack of tourist infrastructure encourages rest and relaxation. The physical geography consists of fringing coral reef, rocky sandy bays (see Figure 4.1) and interior jungle which remains largely intact. The islands feature four main bays with tourist facilities and several smaller bays with limited or no facilities. Some of the bays have been cleared of vegetation in order to build tourist structures, but the extent of this clearance varies across the islands and most of the smaller bays remain secluded with no development. The islands have no roads and there are limited infrastructural facilities. Palau Kecil houses the small village which contains

between 1200 and 2000 inhabitants (estimates vary). The village has a school, mosque and clinic with an emergency boat ambulance for transportation to the mainland. There is a water treatment plant on Palau Besar which treats ground water to drinking standards and supplies the resorts on this island.

Figure 4.1: Island beaches showing shallow coral reef

The interior jungle of the islands is home to a number of different species and tourists are frequently offered "jungle treks" to identify some of the wildlife. The islands provide a native home for black monkeys, calugu, snakes, and tree-frogs amongst others. There has been little research to document or monitor the numbers, types or health of the flora and fauna of the islands. One survey conducted by the Coral Reef Institute discovered there was a great diversity of species on the islands, many of which were potentially under stress from tourist development (Coral Cay, 2005). Several island residents indicated that there had been recent surveys (as yet unpublished) which have uncovered new island species and helped to provide a baseline for numbers of island populations.

A similar story exists for the coral reefs surrounding the islands. In areas, there is obvious stress and the reefs are damaged by both human activity and run-off from development. As there have been no studies prior to development activities to establish baseline criteria, it is difficult to accurately assess the impacts on the surrounding reefs. In conjunction with the PADI (Professional Association of Diving Instructors) Reef Check program, a number of recent studies have begun to chart and map the health of the coral reefs, which will provide future data for conservation and sustainable management. The surrounding deeper waters are prime fishing grounds and support a thriving regional and local fishing industry. However, construction and oil refining activities on the mainland coupled with over fishing have placed the stocks of larger fish under threat, which in turn has an impact on the smaller species of fish which inhabit the coral reefs. In order to address some of these concerns, the islands were designated by the Malaysian government as a Marine Park protected area in 1994. The Marine Park is funded by the government and collects entrance fees from tourists to assist with funding. The Marine Park boundary extends to one mile offshore surrounding each island and aims to protect and restore the marine environment. Certain activities are restricted within the Marine Park boundary, such as fishing, removing material and jet-skiing. The Marine Park posts signs across the islands advising of these regulations, and has established buoys to prevent boats from anchoring on coral,

and created designated snorkeling areas to protect swimmers and the reef. Marine Park officials also perform water quality testing, collect sample data and establish artificial reefs.

3: HISTORY OF ISLAND TOURISM

Prior to tourism on the islands, there were limited permanent habitations on other beaches and population was mostly confined to the village. Tourism began with local and regional tourists visiting the islands and small numbers of international backpackers. These early tourists were what are known as "trailblazers" (Butler, 1980), staying primarily with local families, or camping on the beach. Tourism began slowly with very small properties being built by local individuals to take advantage of the growing interest in the islands and transport to the islands being negotiated via supply boats. At this time there was no electricity on the islands, lighting was kerosene lamps, toilets were non-flush pit toilets and washing would be mandi-style (water is scooped in a bucket from a sink to wash). There were few places on the islands to buy food or supplies, so food would need to be brought from the mainland and water would have to be purified.

Today the islands have a range of properties varying in size and standards (Figure 4.2 below). The older and more traditional styles of accommodations on the islands are built with natural and predominantly local materials. Although many properties remain simply built using mostly wood, there have been some recent developments which have used concrete and consist of more lavish styling. At the budget end properties have around 10 rooms either in wooden longhouse style shared dormitory rooms or individual chalets with outside shared toilet and wash blocks. At the luxury end are properties which have around 100 rooms, 24 hour electricity, air-conditioning, hot showers, pool and television (only one property). Although at the luxury end the accommodation is significantly different from the budget end, the facilities on the islands often do not match the luxury tag and remain at a lesser standard than what would be encountered on the mainland. The majority of properties fall somewhere in between, with an

average of 25 rooms covering a range of standards. Most have fan cooling only, with one or two rooms with air conditioning, electricity is often during evening hours only and bathrooms have cold showers and flush toilets (some have part saltwater flush).

Figure 4.2: Range of island resorts, low budget and high-end

3.1: Who Comes to the Islands?

The word *perhentian* means stopover in Malaysian which is a fitting moniker for the islands as most visitors stay an average of 3-4 days. According to

the tourist authority (Tourism Malaysia) during the 2002 season 70,000 tourists visited the islands, and the temporal data indicates that these numbers have been steadily rising since records in 1990. However, numbers alone do not provide a detailed description of the type or sense of tourism which exists on the islands. In terms of who visits the islands, there is little government data documenting specific details of the make-up of tourists to the islands. Data which does exist is obtained from the required purchase of Marine Park pass prior to travelling to the islands, this records country of origin, but is not uniformly recorded. In addition, there is some data from travel organizations, but this is often aggregated regional data and questionable in terms of accuracy. There is also little longitudinal data to evaluate the changes in island tourism over time and no base study evaluations for comparison data. One exception to this is a study conducted in 1994 which surveyed a selection of tourists on the islands and recorded their occupations in order to evaluate if the type of tourist visiting the islands was changing (Hamzah, 1995 quoted in Hampton 1998). The study suggested there was a shift from backpacker type tourists to more professional tourists. In order to add to the data from Hamzah's study, my research examined registration books from three properties, recording the stated occupation and country of origin for each tourist for a period of one year. The data is collected in tables 4.1 and 4.2 below.

Every tourist is required by Malaysian law to register when staying at a property, but this is limited to recording the nationality and passport details. The details for occupation are a voluntary section, but included in the same registration process. As the details for occupation are voluntary, some have suggested that the listed occupations may not be entirely accurate. There is a tendency for some to exaggerate the status of their employment when listing on such books, either for amusement or personal gain. In addition, many of the guidebooks suggest that "student" is a more acceptable status for some travelers to list rather than unemployed or some of the more troublesome occupations such as journalist which may raise alarms in some locations (Rough Guides, Lonely Planet, Footprint). Similarly, there is a suggestion circulated among

travelers that listing oneself as a student will assist in obtaining a discount on accommodation, however there is an equally pervasive myth circulated that individuals receive better quality rooms and service by listing a higher ranking profession irrespective of the standard of the establishment. Despite all these vagaries, the data provides a starting point when used with data gathered by Hamzah which can help to build a picture of changing tourist typology for the islands.

Table 4.1: Guest Book Analysis: Occupations

	Budget	Mid-range	Up-scale
Student	127	116	88
Engineer	12	62	127
Teacher	25	70	79
Professor	9	21	109
Doctor/Medicine	16	46	162
Nurse	19	12	119
Retired	7	17	186
Employee 1	38	200	489
Employee 2	23	67	320
Employee 3	27	45	204
Total	303	656	1883

Employee 1: Manager, CEO, Computer Technician, etc.
Employee 2: Office Worker, Plumber, Electrician etc.
Employee 3: Retail, Call Center, Domestic, Manual labor etc.

Properties were chosen to represent three different categories providing a contrast of island resorts. The budget property had approximately 6 rooms and 3 dorm room facilities for sharing guests. The rooms were simply furnished and had evening electricity, shared bathroom facilities and cold-water showers. The mid-scale property had approximately 25 rooms, all with bathroom facilities with cold water showers. Electricity was during evening hours only and rooms had better furnishings and a fan. The upscale property had approximately 60 rooms, all with en-suite facilities, hot shower and 24 hours electricity. The rooms were

newly furnished and had air-conditioning. The occupational data for the most frequently occurring responses was gathered as listed, other occupations were aggregated into the three listed categories of Employee 1, 2 & 3.

The results (Table 4.1) indicate that the mix of tourist types to the islands is indeed diverse, contrasting with the data gathered by Hamzah which supported a more uniform tourist typology in terms of occupation. Tourist models predict that the early types of tourists or trailblazers begin to move away when a destination becomes more popular or too expensive (Butler, 1980). The process of change then continues with more up-market tourists moving in and demanding higher quality facilities and hence changing the charter of a destination. However, a change in the professions of tourists visiting the islands does not necessarily signal changing socio-economic characteristics. Given the changing global economic structures, employment is increasingly flexible and contract and freelance employment is growing in scope. Many individuals who travel as backpackers (i.e.: choose budget properties and locally produced food) may be professionals taking an extended break. In a similar study of the Gilli islands of Indonesia, Hampton (1998) discovered that tourists who self-identified as backpackers and sought out budget accommodation were increasingly professionals rather than students. In addition, there is a growing interest in the potential environmental and social benefits of small-scale tourism and as such, the increase in tourists from professional backgrounds does not necessarily signal a change in island tourism. What is apparent from the survey of guestbook entries is that the type of tourists visiting the islands remains diverse (in terms of occupation) and that the perceived change from budget to up-market has not occurred wholesale.

In terms of country of origin, the tourist typology is equally diverse (see Table 4.2). In many South-East Asian destinations, international tourists and specifically European tourists make up the bulk of visitors (World Tourism Organization). However, Malaysia differs from other South East Asian countries as its largest number of international tourists come from neighboring ASEAN countries. The largest numbers are from neighboring Singapore, with Thailand

featuring second. Malaysia also has a thriving domestic tourist market and the Perhentian Islands are a popular destination often incorporated into a visit to Kota Bharu in Kelantan state. This is in part due to the cultural importance afforded to the state of Kelantan as the traditional home of Malaysian culture, but also supported by regional tourism promotion. In contrast to the data recorded for occupations, with destination country it is less likely that misrepresentation would occur as passport details are required for guests to register for accommodation stays.

Table 4.2: Guest Book Analysis: Country of Origin

	Budget	Mid-range	Up-scale
Europe	198	933	923
Malay	56	149	586
Asia (other)	86	47	321
USA/Canada	65	47	115
Singapore	52	40	347
Australia/NZ	89	29	167
South America	27	15	28
Other	14	21	245
Total	587	1281	2732

There are a few points to note regarding the destination countries recorded. The ownership of a given property seemed to influence the types of guests who chose to visit a resort and there emerged a pattern of tourist preferences. There are a number of possible reasons for this. Firstly, there are certain properties which would attract visitors from particular destinations due to the native languages spoken at the property's dive shop. Some locations advertise training in particular European languages which clearly influences the decision to stay at a particular resort. Secondly, there are certain resorts promoted by group booking agents targeted in some locations (Singaporeans were more likely to book a package). Lastly, whether or not a property has a *Halal* restaurant clearly influences the decision for Muslim visitors. This means

that the recorded data here does not provide a complete picture of the tourists visiting the islands; a more full survey comparing all properties would provide a more accurate picture. However the data does show a wider representation of non-European visitors and larger numbers of domestic visitors than for other South East Asian countries (Richter, 1993).

4: CHANGING ISLAND TOURISM

Monitoring how tourism in a given destination changes over time provides valuable insights into the direction for future tourism in a given location. In addition to evaluating who visits the islands as detailed by the data listed above, attention to the types and standards of facilities which are built can illustrate a changing tourist demographic. Caution should be used when monitoring changes in infrastructure as some projects will have a dual use. Infrastructure improvements can serve the local population as well as the tourist population, so it becomes impossible to separate projects as solely for a changing tourist market. A more useful analysis can be conducted at the macro level by examining the supply of tourist services and products as the changing requirements are more closely reflected by the provision of services. In a study of Kuta Beach in Bali, Connell (1993) reviewed the changing array of tourist services as a method to evaluate change in the type of tourists visiting a location. Evaluating tourist services and products provides a grounded sense of destination change, but whether these changes are perceived as positive or negative relates to how these changes are situated within the wider understanding of tourism. To contextualize the actual changes I have included the narratives of change from guidebooks, tourists and island residents, providing an insight into how change is framed and understood.

It is commonplace in many tourist guidebooks to describe the process of change in a tourist destination in negative terms, invoking descriptions of locations as over-developed and spoiled. The changing descriptions of the Perhentian Islands in the Lonely Planet Guidebooks (LP) illustrate the perceptions of changes in island tourism. The Islands first feature in the LP

guidebooks in 1985, where the islands are described as "idyllic and unspoiled". The journey to the islands is described as an adventure and the facilities are described as "limited shops and supplies". As the islands begin to receive tourism in greater numbers, the guidebooks change to reflect this. The 1993 guidebook describes the islands as having "some development, but still able to get away from it all". As the later guidebooks describe the islands, there is a greater focus on how to avoid the overdeveloped beaches and a focus on how the islands have changed. This creates a particular narrative about the islands which is transferred to tourists creating particular understandings and expectations of the islands prior to their visit.

In tone, the islands are described as on the cusp of over-development, something which potentially feeds into the perceptions of those visiting the islands. In contrast, much of the popular and promotional media describes the islands in terms of their seclusion and pristine condition. A newspaper article describes the Islands as: "such a nice place to be: the pellucid waters of the South China Sea fringing two jungled islands, ringed by beaches with small, friendly lodges hidden in the trees. No roads, no mass-market tourism - bliss" (Barker, 2006). These descriptors also create a particular identity for the islands in which seclusion and lack of infrastructure are situated in a positive light, thereby influencing the preconceptions of those visiting the islands. Forms of development are negatively encountered and visitors expect the islands to remain socially, economically and environmentally "fixed".

4.1: Stories of Change

I conducted several in-depth interviews with individuals who have experienced the change on the islands over several years, both as hosts and guests. A selection of the comments has been chosen to illustrate some of the changes and the perceptions of changes. One couple from the UK in the 40-55 age bracket have been visiting the islands for 15 years as tourists, staying in the same small, budget resort. I asked them to describe the islands when they first visited:

Jonathon: Things were very different then, there were fewer people, less resorts, it was much more remote. Back then you couldn't get a beer (indicates his bottle), you had to bring it with you.

JS: What do you like about the islands so much to keep coming back?

Katharine: Oh they are so beautiful, very relaxing.

Jonathon: Where else can you get a place like this (indicates the resort and beach) where there are hardly any people. We don't come in July and August, we like it like this. It's more relaxing.

JS: What about the changes to the islands?

Jonathon: Well, it's all swings and roundabouts isn't it? Some things may look bad, but they are more convenient, like the pier here- it's much easier getting off the boats. And there's much more choice for food. When we first came you just had this one place and Sharmi's (name changed) along this beach, so it got a bit boring after a while. Now there's a bit more choice.

For this couple the changes to the islands were viewed in a very balanced way. For them, although the description of the islands as remote carried a certain nostalgia, they viewed the changes as positive overall. Although they did not directly say they preferred the islands now, there were positive descriptors of the changes encountered. They were also positive about the future of the islands and did not feel they were going to become overdeveloped. This was in the face of a large recently renovated jetty built on the secluded beach on which they stay.

A second couple from Denmark in the 35-45 age bracket who have visited the islands five times in the last 12 years described their first visit to the islands:

Markus: When we first came here they didn't have the direct boats, you had to barter to get someone to bring you out. There was no jetty over in Kuala Besut, you just walked down to the water and waded through the mud (laughs). But it was fun.

Andi: Yeah, there were less resorts here then, and no electricity, you had kerosene lamps to see.

Markus: There were much fewer people too, but all the locals were so friendly. That's why we came back again.

JS: Would you want to use kerosene lamps now?

Markus: (laughs) Well no, it is useful to have electricity for the fans and to go to the toilet at night.

Andi: (laughing) No, definitely not.

JS: What do you think of the islands now?

Andi: There have been a lot of changes. Like over on Long Beach, it is too busy there now, too many teenagers, we don't go over there now. We prefer this bay, it is much quieter and you don't have to worry about the

beach parties.
Markus: "Yeah, if they are not careful it will become just like the other beaches in Thailand, that would be horrible".

Again, for this couple the nostalgia of the past provided them with a certain authenticity of experience, but they retained a sense of balance about changes to the islands. Their responses were a reflection of their continued interest in visiting the islands, but there were obviously limitations to the changes they felt were acceptable. The comparison with Thailand's beaches was frequently made by tourists and island residents, with Thailand being presented as an example of tourism overdevelopment. Change for many particiapnts was acceptable, but only within certain criteria. One Malaysian individual from Selangor who had been living and working on the islands for 14 years described the changes as inevitable and part of progress.

> Mohammed: When I first came here in 1996 they had about 15 properties, that was all. This place wasn't here, this is new. But now, there is all these new developments on the beaches. But that is progress, it's happening everywhere.
> JS: What do you think of them (the developments)?
> Mohammed: Well the problem is they need to do research first, need to find out if it is needed. The government has money but they don't know how to use the money. Need to research first to find out if it is necessary or not.
> JS: So will development continue?
> Mohammed: Honestly, yes. But it needs a balance, y' know economic and tourists and the reef and everything. But you must have a spare, don't use too much. Sometimes you can take care of the islands, like all things, resorts not bigger than this. You still can do it, but you must have a balance.

So for this individual the process of change was a negative experience, but a reflection of the wider processes of change globally. For him the process of change was a delicate balance which was closely tied with the environment. Development was not bad per se, but uncontrolled development was seen as detrimental to the islands and the natural environment. He also indicated that over-development was damaging to human life and lowered the quality of life for many. A similar perspective on change was described by a western woman who

had visited the islands as a tourist and decided to stay to work. She described her experiences:

> Susan: When I first came here in 1994 they didn't have the boats they do now, there was no timetable, you just got the supply boat when it came from Wakaf Bharu. First time it took 3 hours the second time it took 5 hours. The diving back then was spectacular, the corals were beautiful and there were tons of turtles. Over on Flora Bay when the tide was out there would be loads of baby sharks in the lagoon. I stayed in an A-frame hut for the first two years over on Flora bay, we had electricity from 7-10 and kerosene lamps. There were only share toilets and outside showers at the time. Sleep-in and Ami's (names changed) resorts were here then, but they were much smaller, only about 20-30 rooms
> JS: What changes have you seen in the last 14 years?
> Susan: There have been lots of changes- you can see there has been nutrient overload in the water - you can see that from all the algae growing on the coral - and everything. There has been a decline in schooling fish – we used to have large numbers of Jacks and Trevaly but now they are all gone- it's the commercial fishermen. There is supposed to be no fishing in the Marine Park, but they don't enforce it.

A Singaporean participant had visited the east coast islands since childhood and had returned to work temporarily on the islands had similar experiences. For him the changes were dramatic:

> I have been coming to these islands and the island south of us, Palau Tioman for the last 15 years and 15 years ago they were so much nicer. They were so much nicer and there were maybe one or two resorts, you know and not many people, but it was definitely so much nicer". When asked to reflect on the future of island tourism he responded: "I think development is inevitable, even if there are no tourists, people will develop naturally, and even with so many people coming here I think it's nice that the rate of development is still kinda slow y-know.

So for him the island development was as much for local residents as for tourists and the pace of development was realistic. There was still a sense of nostalgia for the unspoiled past, but this was tempered by an understanding of local desires for life improvement. This was a key aspect which remained throughout many discussions about change on the islands and contrasts with the view that development is primarily for tourism. Many of the island born residents viewed developments as primarily for local residents, even if they served the function of improving island access for tourists.

One individual who was born and still lives in the island village suggested that the improvements for tourists were primarily for the benefit of islanders.

> Irwan: Even when they build these big things (jetties) who benefits? If it brings more tourists in, then it is us. We benefits from added jobs and money and such. Without the tourists we would have nothing to do. It is like the windmill, it is for the village. We did not have electricity, then they put this in and we don't need to use our generators all the time.
> JS: Did any of the villagers ask for these improvements?
> Irwan: Oh no- we do not get to say what happens, that is all the government, they just come in and say 'we are building this here', we don't have a say in what goes on.

For Irwan even though the developments might be beneficial for tourists, it was the island residents they were serving. Although the large-scale developments were viewed negatively by him (see chapter seven for further discussions from Irwan) he still felt they were at their core for the benefit of the local population.

Across the experiences of those who have visited or lived on the islands for a number of years, there are several key aspects which emerge. International workers on the islands seem to have a more negative perspective regarding island change than tourists, Malaysian workers or village residents. It could be that the tourists are positive about the islands as they are returning to visit: it would be likely that tourists who did not like the changes would have stopped visiting. It is also possible that the island workers felt more of an emotional attachment to their place of work and this led to a more negative association with change. The nostalgia and valorization of the past by island workers illustrates a more complex relationship with island change. There was an attempt by some of these individuals to "fix" the islands development at certain stage which seemed to be more related to the type of tourism which currently exists on the islands. There was a sense that these individuals associated themselves as trailblazers who had "found" the islands and they seemed to resent current tourists. These individuals made their livelihoods either directly or indirectly from tourists, but were not pleased with the presence of tourists on the islands in large numbers.

This conflict was acknowledged, but not resolved by many participants. For some the further expansion of tourism on the islands was a negative aspect,

despite the potential for personal profit or advancement. One resort owner suggested that they would move away if the islands became any busier as they did not want "that type of life". So the relationship between tourism on the islands and the character or feel of life on the islands is held in a delicate balance. There are certain developments which would not (or are not) welcomed as they are perceived to be a process of change towards a more negative over-developed stage. Although the concept of over-developed varied somewhat, there was a sense of limitation being applied to the process of change.

4.2: Personal Experiences of Change

There were a number of changes to the islands even during the short period of my temporal observations over the course of four years. My initial visit coincided with the recent change in regional government and the switch from a PAS policy which halted new island developments to the UNMO strategy of high profile construction. The change in development focus was utilized as a political strategy by UNMO to gain regional support by investing in the state. When the government won back state control from PAS they embarked upon an aggressive improvement strategy, which included new developments on the islands and at mainland supply points. The developments were seen on my first visit when two new resorts had been built having received planning permission from the regional government. One resort was very large and consisted of a significant restructuring of the bay and mangroves surrounding the area. The second was a smaller resort, but still more up-scale than other island properties. Both these resorts were newly built, or being completed on my first visit.

My final visit coincided with a major government funded development plan which was perceived to be in order to gain political support for UNMO. Most of these projects were started or completed in early 2008, just prior to the national election. The electricity supply for Palau Kecil was improved, with a wind turbine and large-scale solar panels connected by power lines to the village (although most electricity is still supplied by generators). These two projects have been promoted as environmentally sensitive methods to produce electricity and

publicized as part of the national push towards greener energy generation (Chew, 2008). Although this method does not produce emissions and therefore is a "greener" alternative, there are a number of concerns over these installations for the islands. In order to connect the supply from the turbine and solar panels to the village, areas of the forest were cleared to construct power lines. There are also growing concerns from new studies which indicate that wind turbines can impact birdlife and bats. The islands have a number of crucial keystone bat and bird species which could be impacted by the turbine. As there are few records of the species or populations which inhabit these islands it is difficult to assess any environmental impact from such constructions.

In addition to environmental concerns, many island residents are unhappy about the construction of the wind turbine as they feel it negatively impacts the aesthetics of the islands. In order to take advantage of the best wind supply, the turbines are built at the top of the rise overlooking long beach and are therefore visible from the beaches on the opposite island (see Figure 4.3 below). There is also a perception among some island residents that the turbines and solar panels are a high-profile development with little practical application. Many suggested the turbines have never worked properly since installation and that the supply lines do not even connect to the village. This continues to be an opinion which circulates across the islands and within mainland communities (Wata, 2009) with the suggestion that the project is a green-washing campaign designed to make the islands appear ecologically sensitive in order to attract tourists. The supply engineer for Tenaga Nasional Berhad (the electricity company supplying the islands) advised me this was untrue and individual village residents confirmed they were receiving power from the new supply. Although I cannot corroborate the truth of these claims, on personal observation, the turbines were visibly active for over 80% of my visit time. In addition, there were large areas of the jungle which had been cleared and electricity supply poles had been erected.

Figure 4.3: Wind turbines and supply lines through the jungle

In addition to electricity improvements, there have also been recent extensions to the telephone system which is connected via cable to radio towers, and public telephone kiosks have been installed on many beaches (see Figure 4.4 below). The most high profile developments are the two large concrete jetties

on Palau Kecil and the reinforced and expanded jetties on Palau Besar. In addition to the jetty, long beach has a new concrete building in the centre of the beach which provides retail space. This structure has been built in front of existing businesses, completely obscuring them from passing tourist traffic. These developments have not been popular with many islands residents and some have organized petitions in an attempt to halt construction (discussed in more detail in chapter seven).

Figure 4.4: Telephone kiosk installed on the beach

In addition to the changes on the islands, there were several changes to the support infrastructures located on the mainland. At the airport in Kota Bharu, over the four year period I witnessed increased advertising of taxi connections and the process to book transportation from the airport to the jumping off point for ferries was streamlined. There were a growing number of agents at the airport to book accommodations for the islands and arrange diving and excursions. In Kuala Besut the ferries previously docked onto wooden jetties or pulled up onto the shore, by 2007 the shoreline was secured with concrete and small huts were constructed to sell tickets and collect Marine Park fees. By the final visit in 2008, there was a new purpose built concrete pier complete with bathrooms, a waiting area and surrounding retail and restaurant space. (see Figure 4.5)

Figure 4.5: Top picture shows earlier mainland departure area and bottom picture shows the newly redeveloped pier and departure area.

At the smaller scale there were two new properties built and two which were expanded and renovated. One property which had been in the construction phase for three years remained in this same state. Other properties had altered

some aspects of their resort, such as adding bars, shops and restaurants or expanding room capacity. Only two properties ceased operations during my four year time span and overall there was a feeling of expansion and improvement across this period. During my first visit it was difficult to obtain certain supplies; there were very few stores on the islands and those which did exist frequently had few products. During the final year there was a dramatic increase in the number of stores, with many new stores being relatively large purpose built facilities (as opposed to many of the smaller ad-hoc types which previously existed). The stock in shops also increased both in terms of quantity of each product and diversity of products offered. This could reflect increasing numbers of tourists, increasing demand for more products as well as the financial stability of those opening and operating shops.

In addition to the stores opening up internet cafes were also more prevalent. During my initial trip it was very difficult to get an internet connection; some beaches did not have any service, at others the service would be one computer or one location only offering limited internet access. It was commonplace during the first visit to have the internet connection down for several days, or to have the connection drop several times during use. In parallel to the store openings the reliability and amount of supply dramatically improved over this four year period. Cell phone connectivity was similarly impacted by the infrastructure improvements, with greatly expanded coverage across both islands.

In terms of food options there was also a change in variety of food and beverages available. Initially there was little choice on many of the beaches in terms of a variety of foodstuffs and western food options. By the fourth year there was a sharp increase in the variety of dishes offered, both local and western and in the number of facilities offering dining services. There was a marked rise in snack foods on offer, such as chips (potato fries) and sandwiches and simple local rice and noodle dishes were augmented with non-local garnish items. There was a large increase in the number of properties advertising vegetarian food (if not supplying it) and western breakfast items such as muesli. The island stores

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sold a different and larger variety of food items reflecting more westernized tastes. Initially snack items had been Chinese style, such as instant noodles, snack peas or local candy, but by the fourth year it was commonplace to find ice-cream (often in varying states of solidity) western cookies, candies and potato chips (crisps).

Alcohol was also much more commonplace and had diversified by year four. During my first visit I saw very few obvious signs advertising the availability of alcohol and very few places sold beer or liquor even when asked. On one beach there was an individual who sold beer from a cooler, but this was not advertised and to find it you had to seek him out and approach him. By the fourth year there were more obvious signs, both local written signs and sponsor/commercial signs from international brands (see Figure 4.6). There were more bars set up, although most restaurants still maintained a separate space for drinking or separate bills for purchasing alcohol. There were more locations advertising "exotic" drinks such as cocktails, rather than beer or local liquor (Arak or "monkey juice" as it had an Orangutan on the bottle) which was the norm previously. Most locations still maintained signs which stated that alcohol was not for consumption by Muslims (see Figure 4.8). Although these factors illustrate changes to island tourism, it should not be assumed that this is necessarily illustrative of a growing western market. As a large majority of the island tourism is generated from neighboring ASEAN countries, these changes could reflect the rise in expendable income and the changing tastes for these groups.

Figure 4.6: Changing tourism illustrated by the growing availability of alcohol

5: DIVERSITY OF ISLAND TOURISM

The changes detailed above have not impacted the islands evenly and there exists a wide variety of differences across the islands. Some of the beaches have received more development, whilst others remain relatively unchanged. It is these differences which create diversity across the islands and combine with the social practices to produce a different sense of place for each of the islands beaches. Each bay has evolved in different ways to respond to the diverse interests of tourists and to the different perspectives of the resort owners and workers. On several occasions on each of the beaches, island workers would praise the benefits of their particular bay and contrast them to another bay which was portrayed in a negative light. They perceived their area of the beach as distinct and separate from other locations. On a given bay there may also be micro-spaces in which the "flavor" of a beach will change from one end to another with the concentration of facilities or a change in resort types. There are also changes throughout the season which correspond to ethnic holidays and/or holiday periods for schools and different states.

To provide a picture of these differences, I will highlight the character of each bay at the time of my visits (see Figure 4.7). Pasir Panjang on Palau Kecil, also known as Long Beach, is the main backpacker beach. It is the longest beach on the islands and receives the greatest amount of intense sunshine due to its orientation. The clientele on this beach is predominantly young (18-30), mostly western and it is unusual to see Muslim families on this beach. The accommodation is much more budget-oriented and the cheapest properties on the islands are found on this beach. There are beach restaurants and bars, organized beach parties and fires (although not to the scale of Koh Phangan in Thailand). Alcohol is more readily available including hard-liquor and the alcohol sales, frequently matched with music, are more obvious than in other locations. This beach has individuals wearing skimpy beachwear, frequent topless sunbathing and has the highest concentration of water-based activities. Although the character of this bay intensifies in summer, it remains constant throughout the season.

The reputation of Long Beach as a party beach and a backpacker beach is used by many as a negative descriptor. During interviews and casual conversations the topic of Long Beach aligned as a negative frequently occurred. When speaking of development on one beach, the participant responded: "we are different here, it's not like Long Beach, we are more relaxed. I would hate it to be like that, all party and (motions hands in the air dancing), here it is nice and relaxing" (Kamal, personal interview). The same sentiments were repeated from a number of individuals suggesting that there is a localized sense of community which distinguishes each bay from one another. Several tourists also supported these sentiments about Long Beach: "Well, it's good to go over there to party, but you wouldn't want to stay on that beach" and similarly "After coming over here (Long Beach) I'm glad I am staying over on Besar" (conversations with tourists). This sense of negativity associated with Long Beach also has a restricting factor for development and behavior on other beaches. There is the sense that any intensification of "party" activities on other beaches would be negatively received by island residents and tourists.
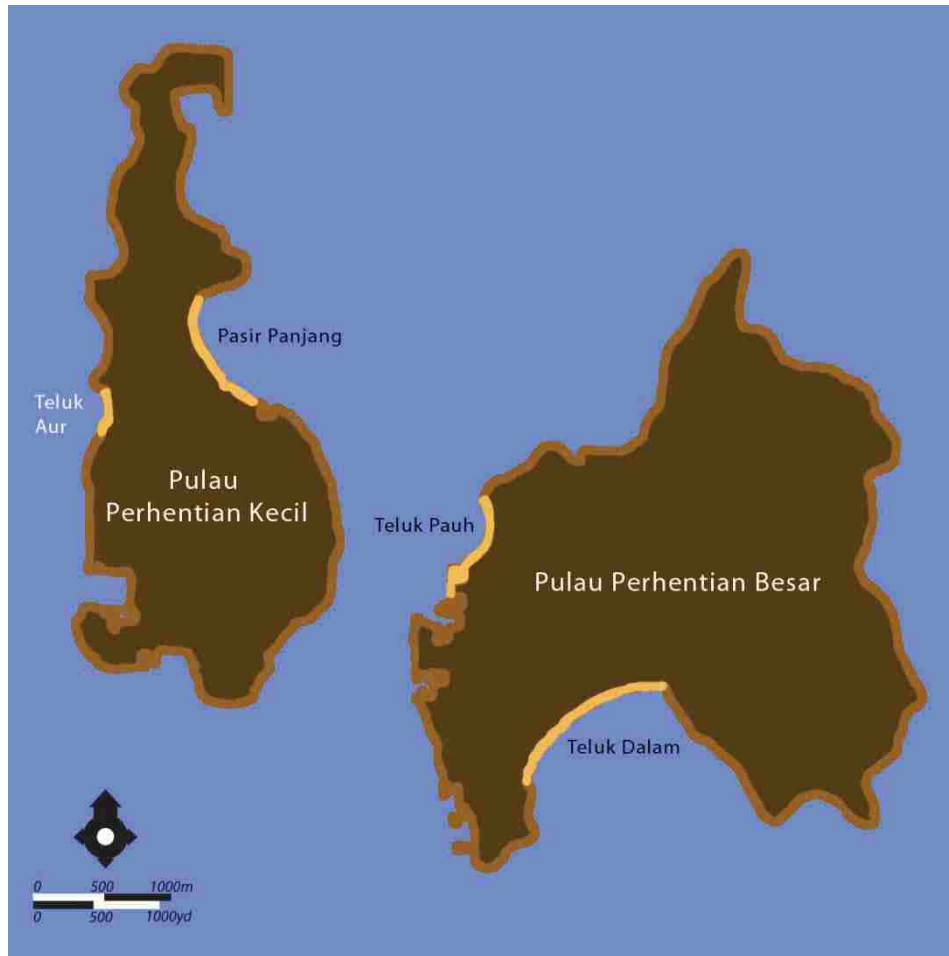
Figure 4.7: Locations of island beaches

In contrast the other main tourist bay on this island Teluk Aur or Coral Bay, has a changing character which varies throughout the year. Linked to the other beach via a jungle track, it is smaller, has some snorkeling and has the benefit of a sunset view. The beach has a mix of represented properties from upscale to budget, along with similar restaurant facilities. The beach often has a mix of ages and tourist types making a particular "identity" for the beach difficult to ascribe. Following from this the character of this beach seems to respond more readily to the clientele and the beach space shifts from family orientated, to couples, to younger groups. This beach has a large resort which is Muslim owned and frequently attracts Muslim families in large numbers, especially during school holidays. The beach has recently received a new jetty and a major renovation of a large upscale property. There are two permanent locations on the beach (at

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time of writing) which served alcohol, but both were rather low-key affairs even in peak season. The previous year the only alcohol available was from one fixed location or impromptu sales from an individual with a cooler. This would not be advertised and customers would learn about the contents of the cooler from watching other tourists or asking one another where alcohol was available. This had a subduing affect on the consumption of alcohol and maintained a reserved tone to the beach. This beach occasionally has a beach bonfire during peak season, but these are very relaxed and subdued affairs with acoustic guitars and campfire singsongs. In addition to these two main beaches, there are a number of smaller bays on Palau Kecil which have one or two resorts on them. These beaches are secluded and are understandably quiet and more secluded.

Palau Besar is known to be more family-orientated with higher standards of accommodation than Palau Kecil. There are four bays with accommodation, two large and two smaller, each with distinct characters. Teluk Dalam or Flora Bay is a wide bay (the name means deep bay) and is more relaxed and quiet location. Properties are mostly mid-range and family-orientated and there are more Muslim owned properties on this beach. The restaurants are all Halal and there is little alcohol sold or consumed on this beach. Only two locations at one end of the bay served alcohol and there were few examples of revealing beach wear. This beach attracts larger numbers of Muslim families and groups and has no nightlife venues.

Around the bend of this island is a smaller bay which is the site for beach camping for school and community groups. There are several small bays around this part of the island separated by small rocky outcrops. There are built steps around each outcrop, making it possible to walk around this part of the islands coast. The next smaller bay with tourist facilities is known as Tuna Bay and is also home to the Marine Park headquarters. Following the coast around is a long narrow bay with coral outcrops, known as Paradise Beach. This bay has several tourist facilities along the beach and faces the village on Palau Kecil. The beach stretches around another rocky outcrop to the final bay with facilities on this island, Teluk Puah, a sweeping bay with offshore coral and up-market facilities.

This particular bay has the most groomed appearance and workers are frequently seen sweeping and raking the sand. The resort provides wooden beach chairs and waiter service onto the beach. This bay is the most developed in terms of concentration of up-market facilities and has concrete roads or pathways surrounding the resort.

Across the island beaches, the most discussed factor regarding the character of the beaches was the sale of alcohol. Each beach seemed to decide and control how alcohol would be sold, placing their own limiting factors on consumption. For many of the western or Chinese owned bars, the consumption of alcohol was not problematic, but the excessive or late night consumption was. Many resorts would close by 10 pm, and alcohol would need to be paid for separately from food. Even on the Muslim owned resorts, there was a process of negotiation attached to the sale of alcohol. The consumption of alcohol was usually excluded from the restaurant making it *Halal* (see Figure 4.8), and sometimes there were two sections to the restaurant; one which allowed consumption of alcohol and one which did not. Islam suggests that Muslims are not allowed to profit from the sale of alcohol, however there were frequently interpretations of these guidelines which allowed for alternative practices. In some locations they allowed a non-Muslim member or worker to operate a bar, paying the wages for this individual from the profits of these sales. In other situations a non-Muslim would establish impromptu beer sales and be allowed to keep the profits. When asked why the owners would do this I was frequently told that is was a service for the tourists and tourists expect this now. One individual replied that if the tourists are staying near to the resort, rather than going elsewhere to find a bar, they are more likely to eat in the restaurant and maybe take extra excursions, such as snorkeling and snacks.

Figure 4.8: Negotiated sale of alcohol at Muslim owned properties

As part of my in-depth interviews, I asked several Muslim owners and workers to comment on their thoughts about alcohol consumption. One participant said: "Oh it's fine, it's what the tourists expect now", another said he did not have a problem with people drinking alcohol: "What you do is up to you". But despite these positive reactions, there were some indications that the sale of alcohol elicited several different reactions. There seemed to be a difference with the type of alcohol consumption, quiet and subdued consumption was not problematic and many of the Muslim establishments which sold alcohol did so in a manner which encouraged restricted consumption. Often the alcohol sale would not be obviously identified or the seller would close early. One respondent commented on the difference which is seen on the backpacker beach: "Sometimes at night you walk along the beach and they are all laid out drunk- you have (motions weaving) to walk on the beach" (Bob, personal interview). This respondent was a Muslim and an occasional drinker himself, but he was not happy with the excessive consumption seen on the backpacker beach. However he saw a positive side to this: "At least if they are here they stay away from the family beaches".

6: POPPING THE TOURIST BUBBLE

In many previous studies of tourism, research has found that there are frequently clearly defined areas for tourists that are distinct and separate from those of locals. These spaces of exclusion created for the tourist have become known as a "tourist bubble" where locals are not welcome and tourists are protected by barriers, laws and restrictions. Often the tourist bubble will be a created space for tourism which is safe, clean and fulfills all of the expectations of the tourist (Judd, 1997). These tourist bubbles will work to mask the realities of the provision of tourism, disguising support infrastructure or screening staff accommodation and relaxation areas (Judd, 1997; Urry, 2002; personal experience) In many situations a particular space of tourism emerges which excludes anyone who is not a tourist, making an unwelcome space for locals irrespective of any formalized restrictions. This creates a defined social barrier between hosts and guests whereby tourists only encounter locals in their capacity as a worker. In such situations, the tourist then creates a particular de-humanized view of the host which establishes them as something different and other from the guest.

On the Perhentian Islands the spaces for tourists and island residents seem to have developed along different lines than experienced elsewhere. Particular spaces are created from both the physical infrastructure and the types of social interactions that occur. As the individuals concerned may change, spaces are therefore constantly (re)created through these fluctuating social interactions. These changing social relations can generate spaces of exclusion for particular individuals creating inclusive and exclusive spaces (McDowell, 1999: 166). Although there are differences across the islands and in different bays, there are enough similarities island-wide to suggest that tourism here does not have such clearly defined spaces for workers and tourists. The spaces we would expect to see as tourist and worker spaces have become merged. A new middle space emerges which creates a different environment for tourism necessitating a different categorization of host and guest.

Figure 4.9: Electricity and water supply lines crossing tourist areas.

There are many physical and social factors which work together to create a different type of tourism on the islands. In contrast to experiences of tourism in other locations, most resorts on the islands are not cleaned to the standards of the groomed tourist bubble. Although many resorts will rake the sand outside of

their resorts, or sweep trash, there is not the same level of manipulation experienced at other tourist destinations. Frequently resorts will not clean-up dropped fruit, allowing it to decompose, and many allow some trash to accumulate in the "transition zones", areas which are clearly visible to tourists but less travelled. Even though nature has been modified somewhat for the tourist, there is often minimal landscaping and alteration (Archer, 1996). In these ways the tourists are not sectioned off from the real island and the resulting illusion of the tourist bubble is never created.

Support infrastructure is often clearly visible to tourists (Figure 4.9) with water storage facilities and septic systems in plain view. There will usually be a tangle of supply pipes leading into and out of the chalets supplying water and sewage disposal (many of which leak) and there is no attempt to hide these support mechanisms from view. Supply pipes for both water and diesel are often visible stretching thorough sand into the water, rupturing the perception of a perfect paradise. Kitchen areas (which are frequently open-air) will be in clear view of tourists as are disposal areas for waste. Trash pontoons located offshore are visible from the beach and when trash is boated out to the platforms this is done across the beach while tourists are present. Trash platforms in some locations are close enough to shore that tourists will frequently snorkel or canoe out to visit them.

These infrastructural realities bring the tourist face to face with the actuality of their consumption. It makes it difficult for tourists to deny the environmental impact of their presence, even if they have little awareness of the actual impact of their visit. It also illustrates the physical realities of life for host populations as the supply infrastructures also support local populations. By not hiding these support infrastructures, the tourists visiting the islands are not presented with a false illusion of paradise that is constructed elsewhere and are instead presented with the realities of supply structures that operate in small island destinations. Although to some, being reminded of their impact on a vacation trip could be viewed as negative it is the reality of the situation of being on a remote island resort. This has the potential for raising tourist awareness of

their impacts on a destination and for sharing cultural understanding regarding the daily lives of host populations.

Figure 4.10: Water storage and septic systems not hidden from tourist view

This lack of tourist bubble creates new categories and generates different relationships between workers and tourists, collapsing the binary between hosts

and guests. Areas for workers and tourists were not clearly defined in many situations meaning that tourists could either knowingly or unknowingly walk through worker spaces. In some locations workers would walk from their accommodation to the shared showers, at all times of the day wearing only a towel. Often the areas for workers to perform personal tasks, such as do their laundry, were mingled in with tourist areas and worker accommodations were frequently mixed-in with tourist accommodation, so workers would be living in the same block as tourists. Often other worker areas, such as communal eating areas, food preparation or washing facilities would be overlooked by tourists or intermingled with tourist spaces. As worker areas were not fenced off, tourists could stroll through worker accommodation areas and interact with workers in their home environment.

This serves to remind tourists of the production end of the experience they are consuming, but it also places worker activities within the spaces of tourist activities, thus humanizing them far more. On one occasion the workers were laundering tourists' clothing (although in many resorts they have washing machines, they still wash by hand in smaller locales), when the tourist witnessed this she said: "I was so embarrassed to walk by and see her crouched over a bucket washing my smalls" (personal Interview). In this instance the usual separation between service provision and consumer was breached and the tourist was confronted with the realities of the service supply.

Many workers are accompanied by their children who are often active in assisting with workplace activities. The school is located in the village and children returning from school will be delivered by boat to the parent's place of work. Quite often children will play on the beach under partial supervision while workers finish their shift or occasionally the child will join their parents at work. Smaller children especially are frequently seen at work with parents. The tourist boats are also used to transport workers home at the end of their shift bringing tourists into direct contact with the lives of those involved in the supply-side of tourism. This illustrates the worker as "real" and suspends the disbelief for tourists that they are in a rarefied, pre-scripted environment. In these situations,

the lives of the workers are incorporated into the tourist experience, not as a performance of a particular cultural representation, but through the reality of daily lived experience.

Often workers had the option to retain private space, but chose to interact publicly with tourists. In many situations workers will sit in what would usually be defined as "tourist space" when off-duty or on a break, relaxing on hammocks, beach chairs or sitting in the restaurants. This occasionally creates the sense that the spaces are "owned" by the workers rather than the tourist and it produces an exclusion zone for tourists, not for locals. These exclusion zones were not always maintained and the lines between worker and tourist were constantly in flux. The tourists would invade the space of worker; such as sitting on the wooden platforms and worker hammocks and frequently come and sit with the workers after hours, whether invited or not. In this way, the lines between workers and tourists become blurred and the interactions in the "contact zone" (Pratt, 1992) are more spontaneous. Western workers seemed less comfortable with this than local workers and felt that when they had stopped working they owed no debt or connection to the tourists. Some would complain: "does it look like I am working" or "I'm off duty, I shouldn't have to speak to him". There was a desire to define and maintain the worker space as distinct and separate from tourists and to maintain a sense of ownership and control over these areas.

In contrast to the western worker, there were never any such differences for the local worker. I asked a local worker if he minded tourists talking to him or asking him questions when he was not working, he suggested that he was never working: "Look at it, how is this work? I get to spend time here in this beautiful place, this isn't work". For this individual there was no separation between work time and personal enjoyment. He framed his experience as a worker in a different category from some of the western employees and had a more flexible perspective regarding work-time and personal time (discussed in more detail in chapter five). Another individual answered that this was part of the job: "Well, it is what you have to do, you are here for people at all time". Many others commented that they actively liked to talk to the tourists, they joked about

chatting to girls, and some said it is the best way to learn English; others said they like the tourists and liked to learn about other places in the world.

There were frequent interactions throughout the day between worker and tourists, either sitting or sharing cigarettes, chatting, or playing volleyball together. Such facilities were used more often by workers than tourists. At one resort I stayed at for a total of two months I never saw tourists playing volley ball alone; they would sometimes join in with workers, but never played alone. In contrast to experiences elsewhere, the workers are not excluded from tourist spaces, thus suggesting that the categorization which defined tourist space as separate does not apply here. This illustrates the flexibility with which the spaces of island tourism are maintained. Workers often performed tourist behaviors when off-duty such as snorkeling and swimming, playing volley ball and using canoes. Through such negotiated behavior the lines become blurred between worker and tourist.

When workers are presented as human, it becomes more difficult to view them as Other or different from the observer. This challenges the view of workers as servants and helps to create new autonomous identities for those concerned. By placing workers in new categories, tourists may be less likely to make unreasonable demands regarding service and subservience. During field research I observed many situations where tourists would complain of poor or slow service and worker "attitude" when in a location for the first time, or for one time only. However, they would not complain about the same levels of service when they were at a resort where they knew the workers on a more personal basis. The interaction between worker and tourist creates a different environment which modifies the expectations and allows individuals to understand the difficulties and/or cultural differences which apply.

This potentially can produce a bond between hosts and guests ensuring that they are seen as rational actors rather than as passive receivers of tourism. As workers redefine their positions in regards to tourists they can demand better working and living conditions. It can also empower individuals and groups to vocalize their desires and interests to local and national government regarding

development issues. The individuals on the Perhentian Islands saw themselves as empowered individuals with a right to control practices and development in their own community. Unfortunately if this empowerment is not acknowledged for island residents they remain categorized as passive receivers of tourism without the knowledge or understanding to best decide their own tourism and development issues.

7: CONCLUSION

Many visitors are drawn to the Perhentian Islands due their relative remoteness, moderate development and natural beauty. Tourism has developed slowly on the islands and remains relatively underdeveloped with small properties and low-key facilities. Tourist arrivals to the islands have steadily risen and this has led to a change in the provision of tourist facilities in response to the growing numbers and changing characteristics of the tourists. These changes vary across the islands with some bays remaining relatively unchanged, whilst others have seen significant transformation. Recent years have seen several large scale development projects established by national and regional government which are promoting an intensification of tourist facilities on the islands. This potentially threatens the sense of place of each individual bay as infrastructure becomes homogenized. These differences have allowed each bay to develop according to the desires of the local residents, meaning there is less conflict with provision of tourist facilities and desires of local residents. However, with intensification of tourist facilities following government development agendas, this may no longer be the case.

The dynamics of tourism on the islands fosters new relationships between hosts and guests. Unlike other tourist destinations, there is little separation between the facilities for tourists and those for workers and the infrastructure which supports tourism on the islands is not shielded from tourist view. This forces tourists to acknowledge the impacts of their presence on the islands, both socially and environmentally. Through this process, workers and tourists are drawn into relationships which generate new categories of understanding and

collapses binary definitions between groups. Through these interactions, the social relations of tourism can be performed in different ways. The next chapter examines how the workers on the islands understand their employment and situate themselves in relation to these new social dynamics.

Chapter Five

Economic Subjectivity: Hosts and Guests Intertwined

1: INTRODUCTION

Debates in post structuralism have highlighted the role of language and discourse in subject creation. The discursive constructs used to describe individuals and phenomena do not just describe reality but also create it, influencing our subjectivity and therefore our social relations. Subjectivity refers to how individuals understand themselves and how they formulate an understanding of self at the personal level. Whilst identifying ourselves, there is a voluntary grouping and a process of Othering: "Subjectification is simultaneously individualizing and collectivizing" (Rose, 1999: 46), therefore subjectivity can also refer to shared understandings of self. There are a number of factors which influence individual subjectivity including how one sees oneself in context of class, gender, race, age, religion, ethnicity and other social factors. Considering such multiple influencing factors, subjectivity should not be viewed as static, but rather as a constantly shifting and changing social process. This chapter focuses on how understandings of self can be influenced and shaped by the social relations and discourses surrounding economic activity.

Interest in questions of subjectivity in the context of political economy within social sciences focused initially on structural theorizations. Classical Marxism frames subjectivity primarily in terms of economic determinism; our working position defines our class position in relation to the means of production, therefore our sense of self. Any differences which may exist (such as race, gender, age etc.) are subsumed under the unifying concept of class (Smith, 1998: 84). Drawing from Marxist thought, some have examined the production of subjects through social structures and ideologies. Hardt and Negri (2001) generate an understanding of subjectivity as it is enacted through the framework of hegemonic economic activity. They draw from Marx's conceptualization of the economy to discuss how the ideologies of capitalism generate economic subjects

in order to advance the processes of capital, but focus more on the circulation of power. They highlight how systems of knowledge generation, communication and political control operate to generate subjectivities which recreate systems of economic dominance.

Many of these perspectives on subjectivity have been critiqued for failing to consider additional aspects of subjectivity such as race or gender and how these operate through social relations (hooks, 1984; McDowell, 1999).The generation of structural definitions of subjectivity fails to consider the individual and denies forms of human agency. Universal definitions silence the individual experience and deny the agency of the individual in forming their own subjectivities. Drawing from the shortfalls of the classic Marxist project, some suggest more complex conceptualizations of class processes are necessary. Laclau and Mouffe suggest that individuals are not defined solely by their positions as workers; therefore a singular, unified hegemonic understanding of class positions is flawed and ultimately ineffective (1986: 84). They conceptualize subjectivities which are constantly remade and negotiated through processes of social relations. For them, subjectivity is influenced by circulations of power in relation to economic structures, but is (re)made at the personal scale.

In an example of women working on a factory floor, Lee (1998) showed how the individual subjectivities of women workers may change in relation to their encounters with others, so their subjectivities would shift throughout a single day. The experience of these encounters would be different depending on a person's social status, age, ethnic or racial origin. To define her merely as a "worker" denies some of the more multiple social relations which influence her understanding of self in the context of her interactions and understandings of others. Similarly, Eisenstein (1994: 216, quoted in Smith, 1998: 105) describes how a black female is differently subjectified by her encounters with others depending on their own subjectivities. This signals an understanding of subjectivity which sees it as always needing to be contextualized and understood as a shifting process of social relations. Despite the shift in theory towards these perspectives, many existing studies of workers within tourism imply these

singular notions of subjectivity and project them onto host populations either consciously or unconsciously (Robinson, 1999; Butcher, 2003).

From a political perspective, theorizations which focus on singular notions of class relations fail to provide avenues for alternative practices to be imagined. Janet Hoch argues that theories of class processes should be diversified to include multiple class positions suggesting that "a bipolar class analysis, which divides the world into capitalists and proletarians, is not necessary" (2000:158) and that such categorizations leave "no conceptual space for alternatives to capitalism" (ibid). Drawing from her analysis of the complexities of self-employed individual identities, I identify the multiple subjectivities of workers and owner-operators in order to diversify our theorizations of the workplace. I suggest reading these forms of employment as outside of capitalist production allows for a more fluid definition of economic subjectivity and class relations to be generated. Although it would be possible to situate these individuals as part of the capitalist class process, I feel it is not productive or useful to do so. Many of the motivations for employment or entrepreneurial activity suggest similarities with self-employed workers, such as the desire to remain casual regarding working relationships or the option to refuse work. This would suggest a more complex set of subjectivities across and within social groups. This chapter will examine a number of these factors paying particular attention to how island workers and entrepreneurs viewed themselves in relation to their employment and tourists they encountered.

2: WORKPLACE DYNAMICS

There is a long history of studies within the social sciences examining dynamics within the workplace which can be broadly separated into those that examine waged labor and those that examine ownership or entrepreneurism. Within this categorization of waged labor are those who receive some form of compensation for their labor. Traditionally this compensation has been in the form of wages, but more recently workplace studies have been extended to identify other forms of compensation (Gibson-Graham, 2006). Alongside wages,

workers may also receive compensation such as stock options, discounts on merchandise or services, or supplied food or lodging. Such "wage garnishing" is increasingly common and has a long history in small-scale and informal types of employment. There are also situations in which workers do not receive any direct compensation, but indirectly receive some form of compensation. Many small-scale establishments employ family members who do not receive a direct wage, but receive compensation in the form of fulfilling familial obligations, or future legacy (Dahles, 1999: 13). There are also workers who receive training or qualification in exchange for their labor, or earn social capital or community status. Such extended forms of compensation for labor are particularly relevant to workers in tourism and specifically in small-scale and informal tourism. Therefore it is important for this research to extend the concept of worker to include all of these possible definitions.

Workplace studies also examine the ownership, management styles and entrepreneurialism. The term entrepreneur has a variety of interpretations which often correspond to differing political perspectives. Entrepreneurs in traditional business models are assumed to have certain characteristics: they are expected to be rational, risk taking and profit maximizing: "entrepreneurship is a well thought out shift of resources from an area of low productivity to an area of higher productivity and higher yield" (Crossley & Jamieson, 1997: 30). In this understanding, entrepreneurs are organized and calculating, and are driven by a rational profit motive. Some suggest that successful entrepreneurs must possess personal characteristics such as confidence, perception and commitment (Russell, 2006: 110) which drive them to seek out opportunity and innovate to succeed. It is these personal characteristics above social and political factors that can create favorable conditions for entrepreneurial ventures. In this way, an individual can succeed (or fail) irrespective of their socio-political situation (Morrison, Rimmington & Williams, 1999). In contrast to this, some suggest that the traits necessary in order to achieve entrepreneurial success are not "natural" traits and instead have to be learned. In examining small-scale entrepreneurs, Shaw and Williams (2000) argue that entrepreneurial activity is not natural for

many communities and they must be taught how to engage with entrepreneurialism. More specifically in the context of developing countries, Echtener (1995) identifies the methods which can be used to encourage entrepreneurial activity within tourism and highlights approaches to train individuals to seek out and capitalize upon opportunities.

Such perspectives suggest that entrepreneurial activity is a concept which has been exported to communities in order to encourage particular behaviors and ensure business success. In a study examining the application of Technical Assistance, Walker, Roberts, Jones III and Fröhling (2008) describe how local women are taught how to transform their part-time sewing into a business venture. Through "training" these women are taught to adopt particular characteristics, such as smiling and wearing clean clothing in order to ensure business success. They are told to establish calculations based on the amount of time spent working on a particular piece in order to calculate a minimum sales price. This training encourages these women to transform their practices into a model which follows a singular understanding of entrepreneur, irrespective of personal goals or cultural specifics. Such actions are frequently seen in Development practice where neo-liberal ideologies guide the policies and projects which are promoted (Cooke & Kothari, 2001; Craig & Porter, 2006) Neoliberalism applies market logic to all actions and attempts to instill particular characteristics or practices onto a population. Such techniques fail to acknowledge the multiple differences between places and peoples and instead simplify behaviors across the entire group. These categorizations can (re)create particular identities for these places and peoples, thus normalizing certain behaviors and limiting the ability to be different or acknowledge variation. In terms of economic activity, it subsumes all actions under the rubric of neoliberal capital expansion.

There are many local scale examples which question this definition of entrepreneur and highlight culturally specific differences in terms of responses to economic opportunity (Steyaert & Katz, 2004). Specifically in the case of tourism entrepreneurs, there are situations where communities do not respond in

expected ways to economic opportunity and instead choose to modify their actions based on local considerations (Belsky, 2004). In Bali the local population responded in entrepreneurial ways to the opportunities offered by backpacker tourism and adapted their economic activity to the tourist trade. In this case entrepreneurialism was initially spontaneous, but competition demanded adjustment and specialization (Long & Kindon, 1997). Although these adjustments can be thought of as a form of learning they are not the rote learning suggested; they are forms of adaptation which are culturally contingent and chosen from an availability of options. Similarly, for many within tourism, economic incentives are not the sole or primary reason for entrepreneurial activity. In a study of small-scale tourism operators within tourism in Cornwall, Williams, Shaw and Greenwood (1989) found that leisure entrepreneurs frequently cited non-economic motivations for engagement with tourism as equally important to economic motivations. They were found to have a "commitment to employees" and were motivated by lifestyle choices and desires rather than economic gain.

Defining entrepreneurship as a learned behavior also denies how cultures are dynamic and changing entities which are influenced by multiple factors. Many forms of interaction are learnt behaviors and are part of the ongoing process of cultural (re)creation. It is therefore important to contextualize changes which occur as part of the wider socio-economic interaction. In many cultures there exist different sorts of entrepreneurial activities which have an historical or cultural significance. There are many different experiences of entrepreneurship at the local level within Malaysia which relate in part to the differing cultural traditions of the Malaysian population. For Chinese Malaysians there is a cultural heritage of entrepreneurialism, likewise for Indian Malaysians although to a lesser extent (King, 1993). For Malays who are the predominant ethnicity in the northeast region there exists a cultural tradition of small-scale buying and selling of goods within a *kampong*, or the offering of rooms to travelers, historically travelling workers or others in need of temporary lodging (Stockwell, 1993). This cultural tradition is framed more as a group service and less as the work of profit

maximizing entrepreneurs as assumed by neoliberal discourses. There are similar cultural precedents within Malay society which suggest a preference for individual ownership rather than employment as a worker (Ong,1987; Kayat, 2002). Despite these examples of culturally contingent practices, entrepreneurial and economic activities are frequently subsumed under hegemonic discourses of neoliberalism.

2.1: Reclaiming Economic Activity

From a political perspective, the molding and creation of entrepreneurs is seen as essential for the expansion of neoliberal ideologies. In *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*, Harvey describes neoliberalism as: "a political project to re-establish the conditions for capital accumulation and to restore the power of economic elites," (2007:19). In this portrayal, entrepreneurial activity is an avenue to support the ultimate unevenness of neoliberalism and is therefore presented as a negative. However, this perspective rests on a particular understanding of how we frame entrepreneurship. This particular model of entrepreneurship which has been structured according to the principals of neoliberalism suggests that individuals are profit-maximizing and such perspectives guide the business decisions made.

Due to these associations, entrepreneurship then carries a negative connotation for many within leftist social theory. Gibson-Graham highlight how the Migrant Savings for Alternative Investment program (MSAI) in the Philippines has been poorly received by the "left" as it encourages entrepreneurial activity (2005: 8), a factor which is seen as being attached to neoliberal ideologies. They feel this perspective constrains those who are searching for ways to recreate forms of economic activity and subsumes all alternatives under the existing hegemonic definitions. It is more enabling to approach these attempts at different economic activity from an open perspective, allowing the possibility of new ideas to be viewed differently. There are many other types of entrepreneurial activities for which profit-maximizing for personal or business gain is not the main goal and therefore the term needs to be expanded to include these other motivations. By

focusing on a re-reading of entrepreneurship it is possible to redefine different sorts of economic activity as choices and supportive of alternative ideological goals. This is entrepreneurship reclaimed and defined in ways which do not conform to dominant economic ideologies.

Steyaert and Katz draw attention to how entrepreneurship has been historically framed as an economic activity and utilized to support particular dominant world views (2004: 186). In order to reclaim entrepreneurial activity for positive political aims, they suggest drawing attention to the social aspects surrounding the actions of entrepreneurs. There are many diverse forms of entrepreneurial activity which can be repositioned as types of social activity. Removing entrepreneurship from the realm of abstract economics and (re)placing it in the realm of daily lives creates new discourses and through this, new ways of seeing entrepreneurs as different. Specifically in the context of tourism, the classical neo-liberal definition of the profit motivated entrepreneur is disempowering and generates a passive identity for host communities. Acknowledging entrepreneurship outside of such considerations helps to establish alternative understandings for economic activity and allow different ways of social organization to be envisaged. This reclaiming does not end with entrepreneurs; it should also be extended to include many workers within tourism. The motivations for employment within tourism are varied and multiple and they should be acknowledged as such. Reframing worker motivations outside of the classical neo-liberal definitions allows for different pictures of economic activity and class positions to be created.

In order to reread economic activity for difference, practices and motivations can be viewed in different ways. Clearly it is possible to view many aspects of economic activity as part of the capitalist system of production, but it is not necessarily productive to do so. Hochschild (1983) identifies how emotional labor is an expected part of employment within the service industry, particularly for women. Similarly, in a study of service industry workers, Harriet Fraad (2000) discusses how emotional labor should be considered as part of the capitalist system of production. She highlights the requirements for many to extend

positive emotions to their customers as part of their employment. Similarly, Crang (2004) details the performative aspect of his role as a waiter, highlighting how the requirements set out in corporate guidelines shaped the performances of workers. Such studies are particularly relevant for workers within tourism as projecting a positive emotional state is often a desired and required aspect of employment. Although these studies acknowledge an important aspect of the worker requirements, the research frames such emotional labor as a draw upon the worker. Fraad's article focuses on the negative aspects; the structure needed to provide smiles or the draining aspects of emotional support and does not consider the positive aspects, such as making someone happy or emotionally secure. Just as much as we can consider the surplus extraction of emotional labor, we can likewise consider the emotional compensation received by the employee. Many workers highlight these emotional responses as a benefit of working in service industries. Prior to my academic ventures, I was a worker in tourism for over 10 years and my personal motivations for such employment hinged on such emotional returns. I considered the positive emotional rewards I received as part of my employment to be more valuable than the potential for greater economic rewards elsewhere. Focusing on these aspects of employment as alternatives to aspects related to capital gains can go some way towards rewriting an economics of difference.

2.2: Governmentality and Workplace Resistance

Studies of workplace dynamics have often highlighted the ways in which workers are controlled by those in power (Ong, 1987; Lee, 1998; Kim, 1997; Wolf, 1992). Across the Perhentian Islands there were a number of different managerial styles employed at the resorts and numerous opinions regarding working styles and professionalism. Although there were some exceptions, there were broad similarities between resorts of similar size and with comparable markets. The management styles also differed between resorts owned and operated by Malays, Chinese and Indian Malaysians and western individuals. These findings parallel those of Lee (1998) in examining workplace dynamics in

Chinese factories which were operated by managers from different origin countries. I am cautious here not to suggest a form of cultural essentialism in relation to management styles (Yeung, 2007) but there were identifiable ideological similarities in terms of how the workplace was managed and structured which related to the social backgrounds of the individuals concerned.

On the Perhentian Islands the management style of the Malay owned resorts varied between the larger and smaller resorts. The larger resorts focused on clearly defined working roles and structured control of staff. Some larger resorts had uniforms for workers, defining their working positions, and in all cases the majority of women were Muslim and observed Islamic dress codes. In smaller resorts, worker positions were less defined and individuals would frequently perform multiple tasks as needed. Across both large and small resorts, although the control of staff appeared to be rigid (clock-in cards, structured uniforms, long working hours etc.) there was a surprising sense of casualness about work. Workers would frequently be seen resting at work and during fallow periods there was no sense that work should be "found" or that time should be filled.

As a worker in one of these resorts, the approach to work I observed was casual with tasks being undertaken with humor and fun. Cleaning the chalets, although a seemingly arduous task became a game as workers had their children with them and would take opportunities to play in-between tasks. This did not seem to be a coping strategy for individuals to deal with difficult work, but rather seemed to be a different approach to task completion. The operational day for many workers was structured around the daily cycle with work starting at sun-up and generally finishing an hour or two after sundown. Most workers were scheduled to work in shifts, usually morning and evening with a longer break in the middle of the day. There were also plenty of opportunities for workers to rest and there was not the sense that they would need to appear busy. These "rests" were not hidden from management and were clearly something that was considered acceptable. Although workers were attentive to customers, there was a definite sense of casualness and slowness about work. When questioned

about this, one worker commented: "Why are they (tourists) so rushed? Aren't they here to relax?" (Noor, personal interview). This casual attitude towards work seemed to be more accepted in Malay owned resorts, but was a cause of frustration for western owners.

Chinese Malaysian owned and/or managed resorts were much more structured and organized with workers performing specific tasks. I did not have the opportunity to work at a Chinese owned resort, so observations of workplace dynamics are more limited. In interviews, Chinese owners did not verbalize any concerns over the working practices of their staff and were largely supportive of the skills of their workers. There are several possible reasons for this; managers may not have felt comfortable enough with me to raise concerns or their management style may have promoted positive support of workers. It is also likely that as with the Malay owned resorts, the owners were from the same cultural background as their workers and therefore there was less conflict over behaviors. In monitoring the actions of workers in these resorts, there was a slight difference in behavior. Workers would usually be "busy" performing some task, such as tidying or cleaning, and would rarely be seen chatting in groups or resting.

Western owned and managed resorts varied in terms of size, numbers of local employees and quality of resort. Despite these dramatic differences, there were a number of similarities in terms of management approach. Western owners often adopted very structured attempts to control and mold workers into a particular ideal worker. The aims of the western resort owners to train or structure the local workers into a particular way of behaving reveal the underlying principles of those concerned. Their viewpoints are grounded in a particular work ethic which establishes work as something arduous, which is a serious venture and not something to be enjoyed. This approach to work was frequently articulated by western resort owners when discussing how they would like workers to behave. Workers (both western and local) were frequently criticized for "having a laugh" and "not taking work seriously" suggesting that: "they get too comfortable in their positions – it means they don't treat it like a job" (Nick,

personal interview). Some western resort owners felt that Malays were lazy: "Staff here are slow, lazy, late to work, they disappear in the middle of the day- they use the excuses, headaches or stomach pain, we have to double the local staff to count for what we need" (Kate, personal interview). Many resort operators felt the local workers were not interested in earning more money or gaining more status, they offered promotions to some workers but they would refuse them as "too much trouble" (James, personal interview). Many of these findings parallel experiences of management opinions of factory workers in Malaysia (Ong, 1987) and Indonesia (Wolf, 1992).

Although the workplace dynamics varied across the resorts, there were some commonly repeated practices which suggest a tension between workers and resort owners. There were several examples of attempts to discipline and train workers to conform to a particular way of working. Many of the western resort owners spoke of teaching staff appropriate behaviors, not just in terms of particular required tasks, but how to think as workers. One theme which commonly appeared was the need to teach workers how to find work and management devised ways to keep workers busy which was applied to local and western staff. Sweeping and tidying were common as were arranging chairs and watering and trimming plants. Workers were also taught to anticipate customer needs, such as bringing items before they are asked or suggesting possible additions to orders. Part of this was an attempt to instigate "up-selling" into the workplace (which was largely unsuccessful), but in the case of non-western workers it was presented as a process of cross-cultural education. For example, non-western restaurant workers were told to assume that a request for water was automatically referring to cold water unless they requested warm (the reverse would be true for many of the Malaysian tourists) and when asked for bread to assume that butter is required (and not just plain bread). Similarly workers were told that tourists will want to be active on their holidays and arrange tours, snorkel trips or canoeing, so they should offer these to tourists before they are asked.

When discussing some of the concerns with Malaysian workers, one western resort owner responded: "Service issues are also problems, such as the food will be late, the boats will be late, they just don't have the same mentality that we do and don't think that this might annoy the customers" (Pascal, personal interview). Timekeeping by workers, both western and Malaysian, was also identified as a concern. In several resorts workers were required to clock-in and out of work and timekeeping was very structured. Managers maintained this was to ensure timely working and appropriate behavior. In other resorts which did not have such structures, owners established other methods of control: "There is also the issue of timekeeping which is a really big problem, we had to instigate fines for being late to make sure everyone turns up on time" (James, personal interview). In another resort, worker control was felt to be necessary as Malaysian workers did not know how to behave as workers: "They disappear off during the day, say things like 'I was tired, I needed the bathroom, I had upset stomach' etc."(Kate, personal interview).

In many situations workers are closely monitored and given little freedom. On many resorts, the petrol used for boats is often measured and recorded and workers are required to sign in and out for petrol used. Resort owners stress that the petrol has to be controlled and monitored in order to prevent misuse, in one situation boat drivers were found to be selling petrol for personal profit and in another they would use the boats as a personal vehicle to visit friends or have fun. In another situation, kitchen workers were taking food and drinks from the workplace: "We have to constantly keep on top of it. They use all the excuses in the book: the order was wrong, the customer changed their mind, made too much, I have to try the food as the customer asks what it is like" (Nick, personal interview). The resort owner saw this taking of food and drinks as a theft and closely monitored worker actions in an attempt to limit his losses. Although none of the workers openly spoke of the taking of food and drinks, their actions suggest that they did not see their actions in such negative terms. Rather that they viewed it as an informal perk of the job and something unproblematic.

Despite attempts to control workers, many resort owners admitted there were limits to the ability to change the behavior of the locals: "there are some things you just cannot stop them doing, like sitting on the outboard motors- I mean this is really bad, for damaging the motors and it makes the rotors sit lower in the water, and also it can be dangerous for them, but that's just how they do it here. We've told them, but you just have to accept that's how they do it" (Kate, personal interview). Another resort owner said there were problems with Malaysian workers such as: "not fully finishing work- such as leaving some things unpainted- carpentry will start well, then end before it is completed. Things get partly done here" (James, personal interview). Although this was presented as a problem, there was a certain sense of acceptance; that this was the way that island working operated.

Many western resort owners also displayed a paternalistic viewpoint regarding Malaysian officials. When speaking of tourism developers, participants frequently suggested that they were uneducated, and make poor decisions regarding projects. One participant described the Marine Park employees' lack of professionalism suggesting that they treat their job as "a bit of a jolly" and that "none of them take it seriously, it's just a job to them" (James, personal interview). James felt that the Marine Park Employees should have a personal and ethical attachment to their job. Another participant also speaking of the Marine Park employees said "They are not trained properly, they don't know what they are doing and they cause more harm than good, it's a joke really" (Nick, personal interview). These particular comments were suggestive of a lack of trust regarding the Marine Park Services, illustrating the more widely espoused idea from western owners on the islands that the local Malaysians in power were incapable of adequately managing the islands. This perspective is common within Development and parallels the familiar tropes within tourism studies suggesting that host communities lack the knowledge, training or skills to participate productively in tourism (Echtner, 1995; Scheyvens, 2002; Mowforth & Munt, 2003). In the case of the Perhentian Islands, there was a significant amount of local knowledge about tourism and the protection and maintenance of

the environment which belies this suggestion of inferior knowledge. In this particular situation it was instead the regional and national government who were ignoring these factors in favor of particular development strategies.

The differences between western and Malaysian owners and workers illustrated some of the conflicting perceptions regarding work. Many of the individuals working on the islands were drawn to employment here from the mainland, but there were also a number of individuals who were born on the islands who chose to work in tourism. Most of the taxi men and fishermen supplying resorts are from the local village. Some villagers worked as entertainment staff, playing traditional drums and performing cultural activities, but most were employed as support staff in the larger resorts (kitchen staff, cleaning staff and grounds people). In these larger resorts, workers employed in positions of higher status, such as reception staff, waiters and supervisors were all from the mainland. This suggests a hierarchy between villagers and mainland Malaysians. During interviews, numerous tensions between villagers (those born on the islands) and resort owners (both western and Malaysian) were identified. There was a perception from many that the villagers were undesirable and any thefts which occurred were rapidly attributed to them, irrespective of proof. Several individuals, both Malaysian and western, also suggested that there was a lot of drug use by villagers. One western resort owner indicated there were problems with employing villagers: "Villagers are lazy. They lack a work ethic, too much politics gossiping and back-stabbing". He explained further: "when you employ one you employ the whole family, therefore if you upset one, you upset them all and then they all leave at once" (Pascal, personal interview). Several Chinese owned resorts reported problems with employing villagers due to language skills; others suggested that villagers are rarely employed as "they don't have the working skills".

There was one dive shop very proud of the fact that they were the first dive shop in the islands and the only one operated and owned by an individual born on the islands: "we try to employ the locals when we can - some of the other dive shops just want westerners to work there, but we want to support the locals"

(Manny, personal interview). There were conflicting stories from other dive shops as to whether this was true or not, but irrespective of that there was a perception that this was not just a sellable feature of their establishment, but also that this was something which needed to be supported. Some Malaysian employees suggested that there was a rule that all resorts should employ a percentage of Malaysians, but that it was possible to get around it by hiring friends for the day when inspections are coming. I never found any evidence of this particular rule in policy documents or when discussing tourism policies with officials, and it seems unlikely that such a rule exists. This would suggest that there is a perception among many island workers that such a rule should exist and it is likely that this is drawn in part from the *bumiputera* laws which attempt to ensure equal ethnic representation in employment. Although this rule appeared to be a perception, rather than a reality, there were regulations which governed the employment of western workers. Many of the western workers did not have employment visas and had to regularly cross out of Malaysian territory to renew their visa status. I observed several occasions when immigration officials were visiting and each time the resort owners were aware of the impending visits. The information was obtained from unofficial channels, but it allowed an opportunity for workers to be "hidden" from official view. The same was true for health and safety inspections of restaurants and resort facilities.

2.3: Economic Incentives

There were several examples across the resorts of incentive schemes which were established to motivate resort staff to work. At one of the dive shops they explained how salaried boat staff were reluctant to take the maximum passenger capacity as this involved more work assisting with equipment and more concentration to control the boat. For this reason, the managers decided to restructure pay with an incentive per passenger served, with a lower set wage per day. This followed the classic neoliberal perspective that individuals were motivated by economic interests that supersede other interests. However the idea to incentivize the boat drivers did not completely work and many repeatedly

refused work when offered, irrespective of the additional economic incentive. The economic motivation was not as primary as the resort manager had supposed and there were certain times which were less popular for work, usually at the end of the day during "wind-down". Drivers would frequently be reluctant to work during this time even with increased economic incentives. When asked about this the drivers confirmed their preference for time over money: "It's the end of the day, we have been working for long hours" and "this is my time now". The time away from work was more valued in these instances than the economic gains and the individuals viewed their employment as a choice which they controlled. These perspectives seem to support the idea that many of the workers were motivated by the lifestyle gains from working on the islands rather than purely economic gains.

In another resort, individuals were offered incentives based on the number of tours they sold to guests. This is a common practice in western tourist markets and also in other South-East Asian destinations (such as Thailand), but it is uncommon in Malaysia. In this particular example, the incentive scheme did not significantly raise the number of tours sold and was eventually cancelled. These many examples of the failures of incentive schemes were a source of consternation for many resort operators. Some managers were frustrated and surprised the individuals did not want to work: "It's really annoying to have to persuade them to work, you would think they would want the money, I mean they don't get paid well, so any extra would help" (Kate, personal interview). Another manager felt that workers lacked respect for authority: "Why do they think they are here if it is not to work" (Nick, personal interview).

This reluctance to work was not just confined to workers and similar perspectives were exhibited by self-employed taxi boat drivers. During the day taxi drivers charged comparable prices across the islands, but during nighttime hours prices varied dramatically and taxi-boats were less available. Despite the potential for greater economic gain, many taxi-drivers were reluctant to operate during evening times. It was suggested that part of this reluctance is due to night navigation being more difficult for boat operation, but when personally questioned

most taxi drivers said they valued evenings for personal time. In many instances a taxi driver who was persuaded to take a passenger during the evening would be teased by his co-workers on his return. On a particular occasion a young couple desperate to get back to their resort pleaded with the off-duty taxi drivers until one was persuaded to take them to the other island. The other drivers mocked the driver on his return saying he was "chasing the money" and "always working".

These experiences highlight a difference in perspective regarding work styles and motivations for employment. A local individual who was in a position of power as manager of one of the resorts confirmed that there are tensions between the Malay way and the way of foreigners: "They (the foreigners) are too structured. Here you need a different approach to work, more flexible and more resourceful" (Abdul, personal Interview). He also felt that work was something to be enjoyed and that the western bosses did not understand this aspect of island life: "…it is no fun working somewhere that is all work, that's not what the islands are about". This perspective was also exhibited by western workers on the islands, suggesting that the difference in work ethic related less to culturally based differences and more to the individual motivations for working on the islands.

Although western resort owners would commonly discuss the lack of enthusiasm or sluggishness of local officials and workers, when faced with making improvements or repairs to their resorts, such as mending broken banisters or repainting woodwork, they would frequently react in similar ways. In many cases these changes took a long time to decide upon and would frequently be ignored. Some suggested that orders for supplies took a long time and were commonly incorrect; others suggested the expense was an issue with making improvements. When suggestions or improvements were discussed there was a reluctance to change anything and even in quiet periods changes took a long time to achieve. There was an overall lack of dynamism and a relaxed attitude towards operations. Despite the frustrations verbalized by western resort owners about local workers, they appear to consider relaxed working conditions as a

benefit of island life. As a worker, I was personally told to "slow down, stop working, you're not in London now". In other situations owners would frequently cite the slower pace of island life as a draw in contrast to life at home. This would suggest economic motivations for entrepreneurial activity and worker engagement do not solely explain decisions for economic activity.

3: MOTIVATIONS FOR ECONOMIC ACTIVITY

In order to explore how the individuals on the islands understand themselves in the context of their economic activity, this project first examined personal motivations for employment choices. Asking workers and operator-owners why they choose their employment can reveal how individuals frame themselves within the context of local social relations. It can also show how individuals see their roles within the broader context of national and/or global structures. Along with individual responses, I also observed the different ways individuals worked, how they interacted with other workers and with guests and how they behaved in the work environment. Similar studies of workplace environments have used these techniques to uncover how workers view their working positions and their relationships with their employers (Wolf, 1992; Kim, 1997).

There are multiple motivations for employment or entrepreneurial activity which can be framed outside of economic gain. Researchers exploring women's motivations for involvement in wage work revealed a number of social reasons which were motivations above and beyond economic need (Wolf, 1992; Kim, 1997; Lee, 1998; Mills, 2002). Women chose wage work as a way to escape patriarchal constraints at home, as an exercise of personal freedom or as a way to challenge socially defined gender positions. There have been several studies which have examined employment motivations, specifically within tourism which have highlighted different entrepreneurial categorizations. In a case study examining reasons for participation in tourism, Heidi Dahles uncovered multiple motivations beyond economic considerations: "To acknowledge and adequately explain this phenomena (participation in tourism), we need to focus on the

interrelationships between the interests, motivations, and desires of individual actors and the wider context wherein access to power and resources is allocated" (1999:14). Many of the individuals in this study indicated that entrepreneurial activity was a choice and that they preferred the freedom of self-ownership: "An important feature is the value small entrepreneurs attach to (the feeling of) independence and freedom" (ibid: 8). This preference superseded the desire to make money and was a motivational force for participation in the tourism market.

Field research on the Perhentian Islands highlighted many examples of similar motivations for entrepreneurial activity. During interviews, many individuals stated they preferred to manage their own employment rather than be employed by another. Some individuals indicated a preference for the freedom of self-governing irrespective of any economic considerations. One individual stated that he earned less money as a self-employed technician on the islands than he would as an employee elsewhere, but chose the islands due to the pleasant surroundings. There were many examples of cases when individual entrepreneurs would choose not to profit maximize. I experienced examples where boat drivers would choose not to carry passengers, resort owners would not book rooms and store owners would not open their shops or restaurants. Often individuals would choose not to accept work irrespective of the amount of money being offered or the potential for status improvement within the community or workplace. The behavior of workers within the workplace also contradicted the expected profit-maximizing neoliberal ideal. In some cases individuals refused promotions or "improvements" to their employment: "Why would I want to do that? It's too much work" (Manny, personal interview). This parallels Ong's experience of women workers within factories in Malaysia whereby some would refuse promotions in order to avoid uncomfortable power relations with other female workers (1987: 164) and suggests different motivations for economic activity.

Likewise some of the owners and operators of properties were less motivated by economic gain. One couple who owned and operated a business

on the islands said their motivations were based on a desire to be on the islands and enjoy island life. The laughed at the suggestion that this was a business in the traditional sense and said they did not perceive it as a money-making venture. For them it was something that they did for the love of being on the islands and not for any other reason. Another individual responded to similar questions: "This is more than just a business, this is my life. I feel for the islands and have a connection to them y' know. I couldn't go back to Australia and live like that again with all that commercialism" (Nicole, personal interview). In this way the decisions to establish a business on the islands is more closely associated with lifestyle choices. In a study of motivations for tourism entrepreneurs in Cornwall England, Williams et al (1989) discovered that the motivations for establishing tourism businesses had a close relationship with desirable lifestyle activities. Therefore: "This has led to the suggestion that tourism entrepreneurship can be seen as a form of consumption rather than production" (Shaw & Williams, 2000:136). I would argue that the same is true for the workers within tourism; employment in tourism for many is a way to consume a certain lifestyle.

Many of the workers involved in tourism on the islands explained their employment in terms outside of monetary considerations. Several of the western dive workers stated they could receive higher wages in similar professions elsewhere, but chose the islands due to the quality of the diving and surroundings. Many of the western workers had left well-paying careers to come and work on the islands and stated that they valued the experience of island life. Some indicated that their employment was a form of extended holiday and, much like travelling tourists, they avoided the trappings of structured work. Many are unwilling to make long-term commitments and prefer to remain flexible within their work situations, frequently changing workplaces or breaking verbal agreements for length of employment. In this way, they do not behave professionally as they have come primarily for an experience, rather than for employment or a career. This is common with western workers in tourism elsewhere and some suggest that the social status they gain from such

employment is a form of cultural capital which earns exchange value upon returning home (Hutnyk, 1996). Whilst for some this is doubtless the case, there are equally many who do not conform to these definitions, and instead remain motivated by alternative lifestyle choices.

Alongside the western workers, local workers exhibited motivations for employment which extend beyond economic considerations. Although some workers received higher wages than comparable employment on the mainland, the wages received did not fully explain motivations for migration to the islands for work. Due to license requirements, all boatmen and compressor operators in most resorts were Malaysian employees (there were some exceptions to this, but I suspect these were unlicensed individuals). As they were employed as technical staff, many of these individuals received a relatively high pay on the islands and some resorts provided health and dental care as salary bonus. Comparable jobs would not have been available on the mainland and these workers would more likely have been employed in factory or retail based employment. Similarly, restaurant workers on the islands make a little more money than on the mainland for comparable jobs; however the working hours on the islands are longer. One individual had said he worked in a restaurant on the mainland and his shifts there were 12 noon until 3 pm, then 6pm until 10 pm. The island working shifts in this case were 7 am until 2 pm and 6pm until close (usually around 10 or 11 pm) so even though the hours worked on the mainland were less, individuals would still talk in terms of total salary, rather than per hour salary. Therefore the comparisons for the work done were not equivalent and it is possible that working on the islands did not offer an overall higher per hour wage. To complicate the comparison between mainland and islands employment further, often workers on the islands would receive lodging and food provision in addition to wages, which was not usually the case on the mainland.

In many situations, comparable employment does not exist elsewhere; therefore comparison categories cannot be evaluated. In these cases, the decision to work within tourism can be considered more of a choice based on style of job. Many individuals when asked what type of work they had at home

indicated a similar style, helping families with small shops or general service employment. I did not encounter any individuals who were from dramatically different employment categories. Some western participants felt that the islands were a preferable place to work for locals as the mainland employment was agricultural and therefore low paid and physically demanding. However, despite speaking to numerous individuals from the mainland, I did not encounter any individual who worked within agriculture.

Within these discussions with participants, there is a deliberate underlying assumption that individuals are choosing their economic activity. But are they merely choosing tourism employment because there are no other options? Given other choices, would individuals still choose employment within tourism? In a study examining reasons for employment, King, Pizan and Milman (1995) asked respondents to choose a preferred occupation from a list containing a variety of occupations which contained one directly working in tourism (chosen by 67% of respondents). In this particular study comparable available occupations were presented, and individuals were asked to select from these. In order to identify whether working in tourism was a lifestyle choice over and above available employment options, I asked individuals to state a chosen occupation described to participants as their "perfect job". This allowed for a more diverse response from individuals although they would still be limited by their personal perceptions of ability or availability of jobs. From the participants questioned, most overwhelmingly chose tourism employment as an identified preferred career. These responses should not be extrapolated to suggest that individuals would chose this long term, or that they were satisfied with their employment, but rather that this was a choice for many motivated by specific personal goals. In this way, for many, tourism employment on the islands was a more strategic choice rather than a coerced one. Although employment in tourism is a draw for some to come to the islands or for village residents to stay on the islands, it is important not to extrapolate this for all. Many islanders have chosen to move away and work on the mainland, some for university or training and others for city life. A few families indicated that their children were working away in the city and earning high

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wages. So even though the lifestyle opportunities on the islands are a pull factor for some, they are also push factor for others.

There are numerous interconnected motivations for choosing employment in tourism. Dahles describes some of the push and pull factors in relation to tourism employment: "Although poverty and the lack of economic opportunity are reasons to leave ones community, the promise of quick money and a better future pulls people to tourist areas" (1999:33). Alongside this there is frequently the opportunity for large gratuities to be earned within tourism in many locations, where tipping can double or triple the wage of a worker. There are also opportunities for informal employment, such as tour guide or local helper which are draws for those who have language skills. Despite the potential for earnings within tourism, there were few individuals on the islands who sent money home to their families. This could be partly due to wages not being sufficiently high on the islands, or due to less family need. One individual said she was saving money to return home to help her mother and another couple said they were saving money for their wedding.

These are strong motivations for many to engage with tourism elsewhere, but within the context of Malaysia they are less applicable. Many of the individuals working on the islands were not from regions with high poverty rates, or they were not from family backgrounds with high poverty levels. In terms of the informal economic opportunities, Malaysia is not traditionally a tipping culture and therefore those working in tourist destinations frequently do not receive tips. On the rare occasions tips were left in any of the resorts, they were shared among workers or held by management to be given at the end of the year. There is also less informal employment on the islands compared to elsewhere in Southeast Asia. There are few individuals touting services or products on the beaches and it is uncommon to be offered services outside of formalized sales situations. In this way, these supplemental economic motivations for tourism employment are less of a draw for the Perhentian Islands.

Although economics was doubtless a motivating factor for some to enter tourism employment, framing the choice just in economic terms ignores other

socio-cultural motivations. One common motivation is for romantic attachment: either for casual sex, to secure future migration or for economic gain. This is not commercial sex-work per se, but a form of unofficial sexual compensation in a variety of forms framed as relationships (Cohen, 1982). In study of Jamaican tourism, Pruitt and LaFont (1995) found that the potential for economic gain from relationships with tourists was a major motivation for employment in tourism. The informal girlfriend relationship between western males and Asian women is a well documented unstructured form of economic activity (Truong, 1990; Cohen, 1982). Similarly, sexual advances towards western women are common in Southeast Asia and are often framed by the local male population as an entrepreneurial activity (Bras & Dahles, 1999: 129). Even outside of the potential economic opportunities, tourist populations, especially younger ones, have a reputation for casual sexual encounters.

Despite the experiences of sex and tourism elsewhere, there is little or no romantic mixing between tourists and locals on the Perhentian Islands. This did not seem to be from any lack of desire on the part of the local males who would frequently admire western women, but more from lack of interest from the western women. In terms of local women, there was little or no interest from local women towards western men, but some interest from western men towards local women, but this was far less commonplace than experienced elsewhere is Southeast Asia. This lack of interest could be due to perceptions regarding Islamic romantic practices or because the local men and women were not performing the act of an exotic romantic character (Bras & Dahles, 1999: 137). It would seem, at least currently, that romantic attachments are not a primary motivation for individuals to seek employment in tourism on the islands.

For many young individuals working away from home is a way to escape familial obligations and parental restrictions. There is frequently a gendered dimension to this with men having less home-based duties and behavioral boundaries than women. To gauge the extent of escape as a motivating factor, participants were asked about family life and parental controls. Many of the women indicated they had very structured lives at home and were expected to

assist with domestic family operations. Women routinely discussed life at home, but the domestic familial obligations were not perceived as restrictions, just expected parts of family life. Despite appearing contented to perform duties at home, many women admitted that they enjoyed the freedom they experienced on the islands. This freedom was framed in terms of the ability to spend time with friends and perform certain activities, such as snorkeling and walking along the beach. When not working, many of the women would spend time together socializing at their chalets, or sitting on the beach. Many of the men also indicated they were expected to perform certain tasks at home, mostly assisting with the family business in some capacity. Although this was clearly an obligation, few identified release from such obligations as a positive aspect of island life. In terms of behavioral freedoms, such as drinking alcohol or spending time with friends, many suggested that there were no differences for them. Given that many of the individuals concerned were from Kelantan State, this is unlikely to be accurate as drinking alcohol is strictly forbidden for Muslims. In the same way as women, one aspect of island life which was positively identified as a freedom was the ability to swim, snorkel or rest on the beach. Although they are away from family restrictions, there is still an aspect of control for both women and men on the islands. It is unusual for individuals to consume alcohol and there remains little social mixing between sexes. Many of the resort managers act as surrogate parents, either directly or indirectly, influencing behavior or ensuring social mores are upheld (For similar findings see Lee, 1998).

Although freedom from familial obligations and restrictions was a motivator for some to accept employment on the islands, there was a greater sense of the experience of island life being a pull factor, rather than an escape from other alternatives as a push factor. Often workers had travelled to the islands with friends and many of the workers within a resort would know one another prior to employment on the islands. In one example a group of individuals working in a kitchen knew one another from the same town on the mainland and all sought employment here together. When asked why they want to work here rather than on the mainland they responded: "Here is more relaxing, different from the hectic

work in the city" (Abdul, focus group) and "It is busy there, but not so here" (Hamid, focus group). Another individual described the islands as both work and holiday: "It's a beautiful place, the work is hard, but time off is fun" (Malik, focus group) When asked whether he would leave at the end of the season, another individual responded: "why would I want to leave, this is somewhere other people choose to come, and I can live here" (Rashid, focus group). This would suggest employment choices are partly driven by place-based and lifestyle based motivations and not just economic incentives.

4: PERFORMING TOURISM

The realm of tourism is infused with sites of authenticity and performance for both hosts and guests. MacCannell (1999) suggested that tourists seek authentic experiences when they travel in order to counteract the inauthentic experiences of their own lives. He argued this led to tourism activities being staged with certain performances undertaken by host communities for the benefit of tourists. MacCannell also identified that this relationally led to a "backstage" which was the site of the true authentic life for the host community. There have been many subsequent studies which have drawn on aspects of MacCannell's conceptualization. Endensor (2001) describes how tourism is performed on stages which can be envisaged as the bounded arenas of tourist activity. The performance of tourism is guided by accepted norms of behavior for each given "stage" and for categories of participants. Enacting particular lifestyles or particular behaviors becomes part of the performance of a touristic identity for hosts and likewise for guests. This is evidenced when tourists perform activities which are not normal for them at home, such as visiting art galleries or consuming excess alcohol, or sexual permissiveness. Such activities can be seen as performing aspects of what it is to be a tourist.

For host communities, Cohen (1988) identifies how the economic draw of tourism can lead to cultural performances which are created purely for the consumption of tourists. Such inauthentic displays can devalue the cultural activity for the host community (Britton, 1991) and denigrate sites of cultural

significance and cultural artifacts (Silver, 1993; Bruner, 1996). This and other forms of cultural tourism can lead to the process of "zooification" whereby peoples and cultures are presented as something to be observed and consumed (Mowforth & Munt, 2003). Such in-authenticity (or perceived in-authenticity) within tourism has become widespread, motivating some tourists to attempt to go beyond the inauthentic staged performance and search out the real aspects of host life (Conran, 2006). This generates a conceptual duality in the eyes of tourists between the spaces of tourism and the spaces of real life for host communities.

This separation between the staged tourism and un-staged real lives fails to acknowledge the ways in which social activities make and remake individual and group subjectivities. In a study of Balinese dance, Bruner (1996) found that the displays of culture for tourists had become an accepted part of Balinese identity and were ways for the Balinese to enact their subjectivity. Dances which had been created for tourists had become an accepted part of Balinese culture and identity to the extent that: "Even the Balinese themselves are not entirely sure what is "authentic" and what is touristic," (172). This signals a more nuanced relationship between touristic activities and group and individual subjectivity. Similarly, Lacy and Douglass (2002) suggest that there are more complex connections between the displays of culture presented for tourists and the real cultures of host communities. Focusing on French and Spanish Basque areas, they highlight how the performance of cultural identities for tourists is tied to the identity construction of the Basques peoples. The performance of cultural signifiers reinforces and creates the Basque identity and solidifies cultural connections.

The differentiation between real and staged life is more changeable than these separate definitions suggest. For many individuals within destination communities, tourism becomes part of their individual identity and one of the ways in which they understand themselves. In a study of host communities in Fiji, King, Pizam and Milman (2000) discovered that residents routinely identified themselves as working in the tourist industry, irrespective of their actual levels of

involvement. Even those very indirectly involved, such as workers in shops that were occasionally visited by tourists identified themselves as individuals that were working in tourism. Endensor (2000) draws attention to the individuals who occupy a dual space, the "cultural intermediaries" who work in tourism but perform their roles on the intersections. He describes how a café owner shifts roles between what is expected as a local and what is expected from the backpacker community (78). In this example the individual fails to negotiate the dual identity as he does not gain authenticity from the tourists visiting at the same time his identity as a local is questioned. However, this description seems to assume the two identities of this individual are separate and discrete categories. In many cases this form of separation is not as clear cut as suggested and there is a reflexive relationship between these performances as enactment of the self. Rather than just being a staged performance which serves as an attractant to the tourists, they are part and parcel of what constitutes the subjectivity for the individuals concerned. Our conceptualizations of tourism communities should therefore be expanded to acknowledge the connections between tourism and subjectivity.

In addition to playing a role within communities involved in tourism, the draw of a touristic lifestyle identity can act as a motivator for some to engage with employment within tourism. These motivations appear to extend across the social groups involved in tourism, including western and local, workers and owners. When asked why they want to work on the islands, the responses from locals and western workers were often similar: "well isn't it obvious? It's like working but a holiday". Working within tourism can provide an opportunity to enact a touristic lifestyle and these individuals recreate their subjectivities into new hybrid identities which bridge the definitions of host and guest. Employment or entrepreneurial activity within tourism becomes a way to perform the identity and lifestyle of a tourist through daily activity. This is illustrated by the actions of workers in many situations. In the case of kitchen workers taking food and drinks, this can be interpreted as a way to adopt a particular lifestyle. In other situations where workers take supplies from the workplace, their actions have been

explained as a way to supplement wages or resist the control and domination of management. On the Perhentian Islands where workers are usually provided with food or drinks as part of their employment, food is not taken to supplement income and it would seem that this behavior is not a "coping strategy" as exhibited in other situations (Wolf, 1992: 128; Kim, 1997). Similarly, as there are no other supporting incidences of defiance and resistance in the workplace, it is unlikely that taking of food is a resistance to management and domination. In this situation I suggest that the taking of food and drinks appears to be more connected to social status.

In these particular cases, the type of food and drinks "liberated" tend to suggest that the taking of such items is a way for workers to bridge the gap between themselves and tourists and re-affirm their status as modern beings. In most situations the food chosen is western food and drinks, but more importantly food which has a symbolic quality as tourist food. One frequent activity was the preparation of too much fruit shake (this was the reason given when workers were caught drinking the shakes; that too much was prepared to fit in the customers' glass). However, workers would make a show of drinking the shake and would often put it in the same style glass given to tourists and drink it through a straw. They would often exaggerate the process of drinking it, briefly performing the role of the tourist (much to the amusement of other workers). These actions were not usually hidden from the employers suggesting this was not a subversive act against the management or a form of workplace resistance but rather an act of performing a different identity.

The same performance was applied to food. The meals supplied to workers as part of their employment were local style food and individuals would have no choice over food received. Occasionally workers would eat left-over food, or food which was an incorrect order and the same show of eating was performed. The workers would not choose to eat all left over or over-made food (indicating hunger was not a motivation) and undesired food was disposed of in the regular way. The foods which were eaten were foods associated with tourists and they would frequently be arranged on a plate in the style presented to

customers (such as adding a salad garnish which would not be eaten, or arranging fruit in an attractive way). Occasionally workers would buy snack items when off-duty and these would invariably be the foods which tourists would more commonly consume, such as ice-cream and french-fries. These would usually be consumed with the same amount of show illustrating how the consumption of these items was part of the performance of a different identity.

Similarly, at one establishment one of the perks for workers who were regularly on time for work was the monthly provision of a coupon to have dinner at the resort restaurant. One manager described how when workers received the coupon and went to take their meal in the restaurant they would "act-up"; they would dress nicely and behave in a parody of the tourists they were observing. The worker(s) would enjoy the performance of sitting down in the restaurant with other tourists and waving to other workers. Western workers also exhibited similar performances centered on idealized touristic identities. For them, the performance of a touristic lifestyle is enacted through performing certain touristic activities and adopting a relaxed and casual lifestyle. These examples illustrate the performative aspect of the workers' lives, and reveals a relationship between tourism and worker subjectivities.

This idea of workers seeing their employment on the islands as a way to enact the touristic lifestyle is also seen with the activities of workers on their breaks. As many staff have long working hours, in several of the resorts I was told the breaks were informal, they often have a long break for lunch, but the smaller cigarette breaks and snack breaks were more casual. Although in some locations workers were required to clock-in and out for the whole day, breaks were usually not strictly monitored. The casualness of the working conditions allowed for workers to adopt a lifestyle which imitated that of the tourist. They would frequently relax during the day, whether on breaks or not, in the same way that tourists relax. Workers would frequently sit on hammocks, beach loungers or raised beach platforms, both on breaks and whilst "working". There was more interaction between tourists and workers on the islands than experienced in more structured or formal tourist destinations and workers would often sit and chat with

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tourists. This relates to the lack of tourist bubble created on the islands and suggests a different relationship between tourists and tourism workers.

Figure 5.1: Staff relaxing on a break

At most resorts, workers are given a mid-afternoon break of two to three hours. In some places I was told this was for prayers, in others I was told it was the way shifts worked for those who have to work long hours. During this break or on days off, workers would frequently behave as tourists and engage in leisure activities. This adoption of touristic lifestyle spanned across local and western workers. In some resorts the workers would play beach volley ball during their breaks, either as groups, or along with tourists. In other resorts, off duty workers would rent or borrow snorkels and beach equipment to enjoy during their breaks. Although snorkeling was clearly a relaxing activity, a major part of the process was upon return to work, discussing what wildlife had been seen and sharing photographs with others. Workers would frequently relax on the beach, or swim during their breaks and there was often a "performance" surrounding the process of heading to the beach. One group of friends would take breaks together and spend as long preparing for the beach (which was only 100 yards away) as they would whilst on the beach. The performance of changing clothes and being seen to be "heading to the beach" was an important part of the break for them. In the

evening times, many individuals would take walks along the beach, or sit on the beach watching the stars.

Another common activity was walking from one beach to another through the "jungle trek". This was usually planned and discussed in advance, treating the walk as a major outing. The daily activities of work were usually fixed to one beach location and therefore the "escape" to another beach was treated as a novelty. On several occasions, western workers who were visiting other beaches for the first time would describe them in terms of their difference, identifying a specific sense of place with each of the beaches. These discussions mirrored those of tourists who were "discovering" places for the first time. By adopting a touristic lifestyle through employment in tourism, the workers were renegotiating their identity in the context of the social relations of the tourist trade. Drinking fruit juices and performing the same leisure activities as tourists establishes an identity for these individuals which is somewhere between a local worker and an international tourist. For the moments that they engage in these actions, they are neither worker nor tourist, but create a new social category to inhabit. This does not erase any social difference or inequality, but suggests possible ways in which groups and individuals can be understood which do not conform to the existing separate categorizations of host and guest. Acknowledging these slippages within definitions begins to establish alternative readings of communities engaged in tourism.

4.1: Hosts and Guests Intertwined

One of the enduring tropes of tourism studies is that of the "tourist bubble", suggesting that tourists are screened from the realities of life for those providing services. In such situations there is frequently little interaction between hosts and guests, with workers and local individuals occupying separate spaces from tourists. However, on the Perhentian Islands there seemed to be less evidence of a tourist bubble with the lives of tourists and workers frequently overlapping. There was a significant amount of interaction between hosts and guests and also between western and Malaysian workers. Although there are clearly social and

cultural differences, there are also similarities across the groups, suggesting that the usual definitions of hosts and guests are less appropriate. By acknowledging shared motivations and outlooks, the created binary between hosts and guests becomes destabilized and new identities and personal subjectivities are created.

In the adoption of touristic behaviors the island residents, both western and local, perform two functions. Firstly they establish themselves within the same category as the tourists, adopting their lifestyles and creating fissures within the idea of hosts and guests. Although they are at work whilst others are at leisure, the approach to the workplace prioritizes different interactions and behaviors within daily life. Secondly they challenge their own social norms confronting the established ideas of how they are expected to be and recreating subjectivities. Individuals assume different categorizations: they are not "just" workers, but they are also not tourists. In this way they create a new social space in which they can perform different identities and become something other. By creating a new categorization for economic activity, individuals actively choose which social criteria to prioritize, such as valuing free time, relaxing, enjoyment etc. Therefore engagement with employment in tourism can be seen as an expression of agency rather than passive acceptance.

For the Malaysian workers there was the sense that the behaviors adopted were choices constructed from a reasoned identification with desirable social activities. There did not seem to be any indication that the individuals were seeking activities which were attached to specifically western or modern identities. The contrary appeared to be the case, with many identifying the value of the lifestyle chosen on the islands as a specific counter to associated modern or western identities. Some identified the unpleasantness of cities, or the rushed pace of modern life, whilst others spoke of the wastefulness and distance from nature. The positive aspects identified were those which centered on touristic behaviors, such as meeting new people, finding out about other places and spending time in a beautiful location. What is then created is a type of hybrid identity which retains many of the traditional values of *kampong* society as discussed by Ong (1987) (such as not working too hard and enjoying free time)

along with the "modern" international identities of global citizens. As such, these individuals were adopting particular lifestyle choices which had been created and were defined by particular and shifting social values.

Workers from international destinations identified similar motivations for economic activity as Malaysian workers. Many suggested they had come to the islands to experience different cultures and as part of a desire to travel, working on the islands made that affordable. Others suggested that they want to live a different life than at home, describing their identity on the islands in contrast to that of home. It should be noted that the motivations from international workers are positioned within the backdrop of choice; clearly those from a higher socio-economic status at home are provided with more choices for work, in this situation the choice to fly around the world to pursue a particular sort of employment. Although the local workers do not have the same level of "choice" over employment, it is too simplistic to assume that the local workers are working in the Perhentian Islands due to lack of options. Despite the difference in terms of social status, there remained similarities across the two groups in terms of motivations for engagement with tourism. By identifying these similarities a connection between international and local workers can be acknowledged which begins to deconstruct the passive identity often extended to host workers and communities.

In addition to worker motivations, many of the owners and entrepreneurs involved in island tourism described similar motivations based on lifestyle choices. This parallels the findings from other studies examining tourism entrepreneurs which identify lifestyle choices as a motivator for engagement with tourism (Williams et. al., 1989). Entrepreneurs from both local and international sources identified motivations which were framed outside of economic gain and were more closely related to experience and enjoyment. There were a number of aspects which were frequently mentioned: many expressed an interest in meeting people from different cultures, making friends, sharing stories, and undertaking leisure activities. The physical beauty of the location and the natural environment was also commonly mentioned as a draw for relocating to or

remaining on the islands. In this way, the motivations for employment in tourism from local and international workers and entrepreneurs paralleled desires for travel expressed by many tourists (Wickens, 2002; Mowforth and Munt, 2003). Many of the tourists on the islands identified the same criteria for choosing to travel in general and specifically for travel to the islands.

By highlighting economic activity as a choice related to lifestyle motivations, a link can be established between the tourist and the tourism worker/entrepreneur. This identifies the similarities between those who produce tourism and those who consume tourism, drawing into question the binary between host and guest. These connections between workers, entrepreneurs and tourists make it possible to identify a "tourism community" which is made from all members. Although this community is fleeting, changing and imbued with power relations, acknowledging these similarities goes some way towards recognizing the contingent and reflexive relationships between producers and consumers of tourism. This establishes a more nuanced understanding of tourism communities and how they are shaped by both social relations and our understandings of economic communities.

5: CONCLUSION

How we choose to understand economic activity impacts not only our understandings of self, but also how economic activity is practiced, promoted and understood. The discourses we generate to describe and explain social life both create and affect our notions of self. Our subjectivities are influenced by our economic positions and the ways in which we perform our economic activities. Through forms of reclaiming, it is possible to change the discourses surrounding the economy and create new conceptualizations of our lives as "subjects of the economy". "Entrepreneur" as used in neo-liberal discourses can be reclaimed to acknowledge differing motivations for economic activity which do not conform to the established definitions. This can start the process of reclaiming economic activity and opening up spaces for new understandings to be generated which better represent the lives of those involved.

In traditional analyses of economic activity, workers and owners are frequently treated as separate categories. However, this research found there were numerous points of intersection and overlap between motivations for engagement in economic activity which would suggest that separate categorizations do not fully represent the conditions which exist. Highlighting these similarities draws attention to how the terrain of economic activity may be more connected in some situations. Although some owner/operators attempted to train their employees and change certain work behaviors, there was little overall success. Workers acted out their own ideas of how employment in tourism should be, not as an act of resistance, but rather as an act of performing themselves differently. Employment in tourism for many is more than just wage labor, it has become part of the way in which individuals and groups define themselves and recreate their subjectivities along particular lines.

Chapter Six

Gender and Tourism in Malaysia

1: INTRODUCTION

This chapter examines how gender and tourism influence the social relations on the Perhentian Islands. Gender impacts all aspects of social life, but there are certain situations where gender plays a more significant role in how social relations are (re)created. How gender is culturally constructed in Malaysia contrasts and overlaps with how gender is constructed within tourism, both for hosts and guests. On the Perhentian Islands these two factors influence how women organize and structure their lives along with how they view their roles both at the local and global scale. These exterior factors influence how the individual constructs an understanding of self at the personal level and how they define and construct their own subjectivities.

Data for this chapter is drawn from several different areas of research. It is important to distinguish that some of the information was given in a women-only environment and this contrasts with the responses gained in individual personal interviews as well as at the conversations conducted with men present. This difference allows for an additional level of analysis to be conducted, revealing what are "acceptable" roles for women in the presence of men by comparing responses given in different settings. It also reveals how gender norms are (re)created through the reinforcement of acceptable behavior by men and by other women, generating an acceptable ideal for women. Responses in this study are contextualized by comparing them to other research examining how gender is constructed across ethnic groups and within Malaysia.

Drawing from these social constructions, this chapter situates gender within the framework of tourism examining relationships between established gender roles and interaction with tourism. Tourism can influence the social constructions of gender in several ways: through women's employment, through the types of jobs women do, through the representation of women within tourism promotion and the interaction with women (and men) from other cultures which

may have differing gendered norms. Women's waged work can impact family relationships, cultural understandings and the status of women within the society. It has the potential to empower women, or reinforce existing gendered hierarchies. Employment within tourism has a number of unique aspects necessitating a different approach to the understandings of gender and waged work. Interaction with other cultures can influence concepts of femininity and acceptable female roles for both cultures. These factors build and layer to influence how women construct their individual subjectivities and how they understand the self as a gendered construction.

2: CATEGORIES OF GENDER

There are multiple meanings and interpretations which can be applied to the concept of gender that shift and change through time and space. The use of gender in this research refers to the specific understandings of masculinity and femininity generated from social practices. Our notions of gender (as applied to both men and women) are structured by a series of generated ideologies determining acceptable behaviors, physical presentations, images and ideas of what constitutes a particular gender (McDowell, 1999: 7). As such, gender is a shifting and multiple category which has numerous meanings in different contexts. Not only are gendered ideas culturally specific, but at the personal level, women may experience different gendered identities in different social situations. The daily interactions of social life recreate different understandings of gender which intersect with other aspects of subjectivity, such as class, race, age, sexual orientation and so on.

Some feminists have approached the idea of multiplicities of gender with caution; highlighting the potential threat such notions pose to solidarity (Rose, 1993). If there are multiple categories of woman, how can concepts of shared oppression be generated? Likewise, if feminist ventures move away from the sense of difference between men and women, then it is possible that feminism will lose the available axes for struggle. However, acknowledging multiple understandings of gender does not deny any shared oppression based on

gender or any threads of similarity which may span the gendered experience. Multiplicity within gender can highlight shared experience to strengthen political movements which seek to uncover oppression from all avenues. Highlighting the different ways gender is experienced and created draws attention to the multiple ways in which gender can be used as an exercise of power.

In addition to the created categories which establish the concept of gender and gender difference, social processes also generate specific ideas which govern the interactions between genders. Gender relations describe the socially constructed ideas of how men and women should behave towards one another and the differing social positions created for men and women. These differences influence how power is enacted based on concepts of gender and the ways in which gender can be used to oppress or limit certain behaviors. Analyses of gender relations provide an opportunity to explore how gender is used as a political tool to reinforce particular social positions for men and women.

2.1: Multi-ethnicity and Gender

To understand the ways in which gender is constructed, it is important to situate analysis within the cultural and historical context of the given society. In Malaysia there are a number of factors which influence gender roles and complicate simplified or unified understandings. As a country with a colonial past, the societal gendered constructions which exist bear a debt to this historical relationship. Similarly, Malaysia has been founded as a multi-cultural society since independence, which necessitates consideration of how cultural heritage for Malaysians of differing ethnicities influences gender constructions. Malaysia also exhibits stark contrasts between rural and urban communities which influence how gender is perceived and performed across the country. Likewise, there are significant class differences (many of which also bear a colonial legacy) which influence gendered norms. All of these differences mean that analysis of gender must be fully contextualized and broad generalizations become unusable.

The context of Malaysian multi-ethnicity ensures a diverse picture of gendered norms exist across the social groups and an equally complex

negotiation of modern practices. Although there are threads of similarity which can be drawn from gendered norms, there are also numerous culturally specific behaviors influencing particular understandings. It is important to understand the differing ethnic traditions which influence some of the aspects of Malaysian society in order to contextualize gender relations. A full exploration of the differing cultural heritages within Malaysia is beyond the scope of this chapter, but a brief overview will highlight some of the key factors as they relate to gender.

For Chinese Malaysians the tradition of patriarchy has created established norms of behavior for both men and women. In general terms, males are expected to be primary breadwinners and they bear the responsibility for carrying the family name. As such, male children are often preferred and women, though valued, are often second to receive education or family support. The Chinese cultural tradition is also influenced by Confucianism which establishes accepted behavioral roles for individuals within the societal and familial context (Kong & Yeoh, 2003: 42-3). This often prescribes certain obligations on women to provide care for children and elderly family members, as well as support for extended family networks if needed. However, when traditional ideologies meet with differing social and economic practices, they often undergo a process of change that challenges traditional gendered roles. Examining the Chinese cultural tradition, both in and out of China, recent studies have provided a deeper understanding of the changing nature of gender roles in modernizing situations (Lee, 1998). In many of these changing situations, the expected roles for women have undergone a transformation with familial responsibilities being replaced by economic support.

For Indian Malaysians the ethnic gender roles are influenced partly by a South Asian cultural tradition and partly by religion. The South Asian cultural tradition is also established on a history of patriarchy, with males receiving preference for education, inheritance and economic support (Custers, 1997). Female children are often considered an economic burden as when married they are expected to present a dowry to the husband's family. Women do not carry

the family name and are considered the "property" of the family they marry into; consequently, female children will not provide support for aging family members.

In terms of examining the cultural traditions of Indian Malaysians, it is important to identify the different role played by religion. The majority of Indian-Malaysians are Hindu (approx 80%) with the remainder being a mix of Muslim, Christian Buddhist, Sikh and other religions (data from Malaysia Bureau of Statistics). The cultural traditions for Hindus and Muslims follow distinctly different paths which influence cultural understandings of gender. Although the traditions of the Hindu faith value women as mothers and providers, there is an overlapping patriarchal cultural tradition which values males to maintain the family name. There are a number of traditions (such as *Sati* and bride burning) which may be outlawed in modern societies, but which are still practiced or supported by many families (Custers, 1997: 114). Although these traditions are unusual in Malaysia, they still influence the social organization of gender roles. Both Hindu and Muslim women are expected to follow traditions of *Purdah* which demand wearing clothing which conceals their body shape and adopting modesty in behavior. *Purdah* also establishes restrictions on the types of economic and political activities considered acceptable for women as well as guidelines for familial responsibilities. *Purdah* is interpreted and practiced in different ways across the two faiths which generate differing gender norms across and within social groups.

The Malay ethnic tradition has a number of contributing factors and equal number of variations in interpretation. What it is to *be* Malay is heavily debated and a constant source of contestation, both from Malays and non-Malays (Barnard, 2004; Reid, 2004; Ooi, 2008).There are some key threads which run through these discussions allowing a generalized picture of Malay ethnicity to be constructed. The tradition of rural *kampong* life imparts a set of communitarian values which draws from indigenous practices and influences organization of Malay life. The other main contributing factor to the Malay ethnic tradition is that of Islam (discussed in detail below). How these two aspects of Malay tradition are interpreted and practiced varies greatly across the country, with clearly defined

regional variations. Although there are vast differences across the country in terms of standards of living and multi-ethnicity, the Malay cultural tradition imparts a strong influence on the nations accepted gender roles for women.

Traditional Malay *kampong* life places more responsibility on women for reproductive activities, with most childcare being undertaken by women (Ng, 1999: 51-3). There is also a strong sense of community within the *kampong* tradition which behaves as an extended family, with individuals having a responsibility maintaining the viability and reputation of their village (Ong, 1987: 188; Ng, 1999). In rural productive work, the responsibility is equally shared among men and women, suggesting "shared and interdependent work rather than asymmetrical gender relations" (Ng, 1999: 36). *Kampong* traditions in relation to gender remain an influential force for Malays in rural locations, but have also been incorporated into much of the modern urban construction of the Malay identity (Bunnell, 1999).

2.2: Islam and Gender

By far the largest influence on gender for many Malay's is the role played by Islam. Muslim Malays make up the largest percentage of the population and although not an Islamic state, the Government of Malaysia has established Islam as the official religion of the country. There are articles within the Malaysian constitution which allows for *Shariah* law (Islamic religious laws) to be enacted at the state level, clearly establishing norms for women within society which are based on religion (Ong, 1987: 195-6). One of the most influential aspects of Islamic life for women is the interpretation of Muslim family law, which establishes rights for divorce, inheritance, polygamy and custody of children. *Shariah* law can also be extended to include prescriptions for acceptable behavior (for example not kissing in public), modest clothing and familial obligations. How this is interpreted within law at the state level establishes a differing set of conditions for women across the country.

In response to this, an organization called Sisters in Islam was founded in 1987 which aims to establish rights for women within the context of modern

Islam. They bring together concerned women, activists and scholars to fight for interpretations of the *Quaran* which establish universal rights for Muslim women and advocate equal consideration within Malaysian (and global) society. They highlight how it is male readers who have interpreted specific passages in the *Quaran* in order to limit the rights of women. They argue that these perspectives do not match with the overall tone of the *Quaran* and suggest that the spirit of the faith would extend universal rights. The organization has published books, established regional information workshops and hosted conferences which focus on the ability to merge the prescriptions of the Islamic faith with the equal and fair treatment of women. This blending of religion and politics has served to further their cause and gain more consideration by (some) clerics who would have initially dismissed their requests.

Across Malaysia there is a great variety of perspectives in relation to how the *Quaran* is interpreted at the cultural level. These tend to be manifested spatially with the north-east having the most conservative Islamic interpretations (under the political influence of the Islamic opposition party PAS) and the urban, south-west having the most liberal understanding of Islam. Interpretation of Islam has been a key political tool which has been utilized by ruling and opposing political parties in recent years (Hooker, 2004). The current Government (UNMO) takes a moderate viewpoint following *Islam Hadhari* which was introduced in 2003 by Prime Minister Badawi. This aims to blend politics with the prescriptions of Islam as a modern way of life, establishing a set of criteria for national and personal success. It is a moderate Islamic standpoint which affords some protection and rights to women and ethnic groups, but which still creates conflicts with modern governance (Ooi, 2006).

In contrast, the opposing political party, PAS takes a more conservative viewpoint of the establishment of Islam at the national level and the strict enforcement of Islamic interpretations of gender roles. In the states controlled by PAS, there have been separations of women and men in public places, legal regulations regarding headscarves and clothing and the acceptance of traditional forms of punishment (stoning of women). In these areas, billboards all show

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women wearing traditional clothing and there are frequent television shows for women promoting appropriate Muslim behavior. Acceptable behavior for women features heavily in many of the policy documents of PAS and the segregation of sexes in education and workplaces is common. Two recent high profile cases in 2010 have seen a woman caned for violating Islamic restrictions on sexual relations outside of marriage and a second woman awaiting caning for drinking beer. Although these limitations also apply to men, it is suggested that these particular cases have received national attention as they are being used as a message to Muslim women.

Religion continues to influence the politics of modern Malaysia. There is a perception from many ethnic groups that the Government of Malaysia seeks to establish more strict Islamic policies at the national level and that they wish to create an Islamic state (Martinez, 2001; Ooi, 2008). Similarly, the ethnic preference established for *bumiputera* citizens is seen to be unfair and ethnic Indian Malaysian's specifically feel they are being disadvantaged (ibid: 56). This has lead many groups to establish opposition parties, often created along lines of ethnic affiliation (Hooker, 2004). In the last general election (2008) religion was a key decider for a number of states and the perception of Islam as a forward looking religion in terms of women was crucial for many of the voters. This was the first election which saw the ruling party UNMO lose a significant majority, the largest loss since their election after independence.

The role for Islam within a modern society frequently pivots around the position of women within the society. The current government treads a fine line between modern Islamic roles for women and appeasing traditional perspectives which are commonplace in many locations. These cultural norms established by Islam have a distinct rural/urban divide which is illustrated by the choice of clothing for women. In the major cities of Kuala Lumpur and Melaka, "modern" clothing and western-style dress such as jeans and t-shirts is common. Within this western style of dress, many Muslim women wear headscarves. Despite this reality, it is uncommon to see Muslim women wearing headscarves on popular television, on billboards and within popular media (Korf, 2001). In contrast, the

north east of the peninsula and rural locations elsewhere in the country have more conservative style clothing, with the majority of Muslim women wearing headscarves, long skirts and long sleeves. In the north east, women frequently wear "traditional" style clothing which conceals their body shape and reaches to the floor. In these regions, the billboards and popular media reflect this and present an acceptable image for women framed within Islamic dress codes.

There is also a political perspective regarding Islamic dress codes. The UNMO has to balance appealing to Muslim voters against non-Muslim voters who are cautious of increased Islamic influence in state politics. Although Islamic dress codes are supported by the government, they also wish to portray a modern and multi-ethnic society. This has led to regulations for civil service employees which ban more "extreme" forms of veiling in the workplace as it was associated with "backward" Islamic perspectives (Nagata, 1994: 78). Many private workplaces have voluntarily followed this regulation leading to conflicts for some women. The right to wear full *purdah* has been challenged by some women and has become a political angle for the opposition party who claim it is violating women's rights to deny them full *purdah*. In addition, PAS also suggests that the employment of women be restricted to specific nurturing occupations in keeping with Quaranic guidelines (ibid: 79).

Malaysia today struggles to incorporate these varying religious and ethnic gender roles within modern society. Malaysian women have gained in social status since independence, in literacy, participation in employment, and representation in professional sectors. Despite these improvements, as with many other countries, women still consistently receive unequal pay and fail to be equally represented in government and management (Ng & Leng, 1999: 174). There are a number of organizations which have been established to fight for the rights of women in Malaysia, as well as representation from international women's groups within the country. One of the earliest women's organizations is the National Council of Women's Organizations (NCWO), a state organized group which promoted education programs for women. Many of the affiliated groups organize at the regional or local level and promote programs which

support "traditional" gender roles, such as teaching women to cook, create crafts or care for children (Weiss, 2006: 155). The NCWO is also criticized for having a class bias in many locations where the programs promoted serve the interests of elite women and become a middle-class meeting organization (Ng & Leng, 1999: 181). The NCWO as a coalition is also frequently ethnically biased, with member groups focusing on programs which serve the interests of ethnic groups, rather than gender issues that span ethic boundaries. Despite these criticisms, the NCWO provides an opportunity for many rural women to engage with programs outside of the home and establishes opportunities for self-expression for some women.

In addition to the NCWO, the national organization which receives the most media attention is the Joint Action Group (JAG) which was primarily established to address issues of domestic violence against women (Ng & Leng, 1999). Prior to the formation of JAG, there were numerous perspectives from the different ethnic and religious groups within Malaysia regarding the status and socially acceptable behavior for women. The rights of women were viewed to be a family or religious concern, with no formalized standard which surpassed ethnic or religious difference. This parallels most of the other NGO's within Malaysia which have religious or ethnic affiliations and frequently do not cross these boundaries (Weiss, 2006). JAG was one of the first organizations to focus on women's issues outside of ethnic or religious affiliations and suggest that minimum standards be established and enforced for all women at the state level.

2.3: Gendered Roles in a Modernizing Context

The multiple character of gender constructions within the country also generates problems for those in power. In a country which aggressively promotes modernization at the Governmental level, the ability to merge the aims of modernity with established cultural norms presents a challenge (Ong, 1987: 179-193). In situations where traditional cultural and ethnic practices conflict with modern practices, new understandings are created to allow practices to become acceptable. In some cases these are a renegotiation of practices which represent

changing desires and interests, in other situations they are orchestrated in order to allow for certain practices (often government sponsored) to be established as culturally acceptable.

When attempting to generate a "fully developed" nation, the participation of women within the workforce is a crucial aspect to ensure success. In many newly established industrial areas women are sought as workers as they are perceived as docile, nimble-fingered and as their salaries are supplemental family income, lower wages are justified (Wolf, 1992; Mills, 2002). However, there are often conflicts over women participating in the workforce, especially for rural communities. The accepted cultural view of gendered behavior influences whether many women will seek wage labor: If there is a negative association with wage work, there will be few women willing to accept employment. For many women in rural communities, participating in industries associated with modern development necessitates migration (either temporary or permanent) away from their home village. Migration also presents a series of challenges for young women.

Historically in many societies, women have been less mobile than men and migration away from home villages has been associated with immorality (Wolf, 1992; Kim, 1997; Lee, 1998; Mills, 2002). Family members may not want their daughters or siblings to migrate for fear that they would engage in unacceptable behavior and bring disrepute upon the family. Similarly, many young women are concerned that they would gain a negative reputation from migrating away to work, irrespective of their actual behavior (Kim, 1997; Lee, 1998). In order to make migration for employment culturally acceptable, control mechanisms have to be established to ensure high standards of morality are maintained. In one export possessing zone in Shenzhen in China, the factories established local networks with the home villages of the young women, ensuring that their behavior remained monitored and controlled (Lee, 1998).

Migration also presents conflicts when societal organization establishes familial roles for women. In the Chinese cultural tradition, there is an historical precedence for behaviors of young women and men within a family. Although all

family members retain a duty for family support, males have traditionally provided support in economic terms and women have been expected to provide physical support. Women are usually responsible for providing care of their siblings and elderly parents, meaning that moving away from home places women in conflict with their expected familial roles. The patriarchal system of preference also means that men receive primacy in education and economic support for migration to "better" employment. In the case of young women in China, familial obligations to provide support and assistance are replaced by the provision of money for family use: "Thus the filial Piety of working daughters was chiefly manifested in their economic contribution to the family economy" (Lee, 1998: 99). In this way, traditional cultural values are absorbed into modern employment structures to normalize the contradictions and establish an accepted cultural position for modern practices.

In a similar study, Wolf (1992) examined how the household dynamics of rural Javanese families adapted to the increasing industrialization of the region and growing numbers of women engaged in employment. Wolf challenges some previously held beliefs relating to the reasons for women accepting factory work, finding that economic motivations are not often the primary motivation for young women seeking wage labor. Many women suggested that personal desires of freedom and modern life were instigators for changing lifestyle choices. In this study, factory work also contributed to a renegotiation of the view of femininity for these women. Poorer women felt they were being robbed of their traditional femininity by being forced to work in the fields; industrial work allowed young women to retain desirable fair skin and to spend income on beauty products. Through wage work, women were restructuring the accepted behavior norms and gaining freedom from their parents. This translated to new ways of being for the women and they began to adopt different practices and gained "an air of assertiveness" (Wolf, 1992: 193). In this way, the increase in women accepting wage employment has influenced the roles of women and the structure of family life and necessitated a renegotiation of cultural norms.

Along with negotiating cultural conflicts, persuading women to migrate and/or engage in wage work necessitates generating a desirable identity for urban and working life. Whilst not limited just to women, the creation of desire and the association with the city and modern life encourages the migration of young workers to areas of employment. In Thailand, the government reacted to the need for compliant workers in urban areas with an aggressive campaign to create a culture of modernity (Mills, 2002). To encourage young women into urban employment, a culture of *thansamay* (modern) lifestyle was associated with urban life and a culture of consumption. In the Thai case, modernization has been closely linked with a particular identity for "modern" Thai women which centers on expendable income. In this way, not only does women's wage labor receive cultural approval, but modernization is in turn supported by the consumption desires of these women. By striving to achieve the idealized image of modernity, the young women workers are supporting the modernization process by working and consuming, ensuring a market for economies based on consumer goods.

Malaysia has recently focused on the importance of women within the workplace and generated prescriptions to expand the options for women to accept wage labor. The sixth Malaysia Plan included aspects which specifically addressed the role of women in national development, positioning them as a fundamental part of the modernization process (Government of Malaysia, 1995). This was a crucial movement for the government to take, specifying that women are considered equally (at least in policy terms if not in reality) in their role in modern society. Malaysia has followed the tactics of the government of Thailand and begun promoting the benefits of urban and working life to young women as a modern lifestyle. Billboards and television advertisements show young women wearing western style clothing and enjoying leisure activities all within an urban backdrop. Such advertisements are careful to occasionally include aspects of Islam within their structure, such as some women wearing headscarves, but it is presented in a hybrid, modern way. The concentration of higher education within urban areas also encourages migration and the government focus on the Multi-

Media Super corridor establishes the urban outskirts as the focus for employment in these new sectors (Bunnell, 2004). As men are already well represented within education and higher sector employment, the incorporation of young women into the modern lifestyle is an important aspect for success of the highly publicized government push towards full development by 2020.

The lifestyles offered by such promotional activities present a potential conflict for those in areas such as the north east of the peninsula where traditional gendered practices are at odds with the lifestyles presented. For some the conflict is exacerbated further by the prescriptions of Islam, establishing acceptable behavior for women centering on modesty in dress and family obligations. In these situations, women (mostly young women) are presented with a conflicted idealized identity which promotes restraint and reproductive responsibilities on one hand and modern, consumptive lifestyles on the other. For many of these women, negotiating these seemingly opposite extremes leads them to live a contested lifestyle, constantly reaffirming their identities in terms of modern life while retaining an accepted traditional cultural role (Ong, 1987: 187).

When these carefully constructed identities for urban young women are presented at the government level, it potentially impacts how rural and remote communities understand their roles within the wider scope of national identity. For young women in rural areas, finding ways to incorporate (or reject) these presented identities influences how they understand themselves and their position within society. Whilst for some this can lead to a contested existence, for many this process of negotiation forms new and hybridized subjectivities which merges these seemingly opposite societal roles. In this way, the influences from these outside or modern identities are not adopted whole scale and there is a process of assimilation and adaptation whereby some aspects are accepted and others rejected. The young women who are the primary targets of these identities are not passively receiving these prescriptions, but creating new ways to understand themselves within these multiple contexts.

Figure 6.1: Images from tourism promotional materials contrasting urban and rural identities

Along with the governmental ideologies of urban life presented as a modern ideal, rural communities frequently receive similar idealized images of individual and community identity through tourism promotion often reinforcing the gender stereotypes. Much of the governmental sponsored development focus for rural communities has been centered on the tourism industry in a variety of forms. Homestay programs have been promoted for remote rural communities (Government of Malaysia, 2006) and generation of tourism facilities for coastal

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communities incorporates both small-scale and up-scale facilities. National promotional materials utilize language and images which generate a particular understanding of the communities concerned. With rural communities in Malaysia, the cultural representations that center on idealized rural activities position these communities as the antithesis to the urban modern existence. As the current Government has a policy of rapid development and modernization, such positioning of rural communities sends particular messages to those communities regarding their place in society.
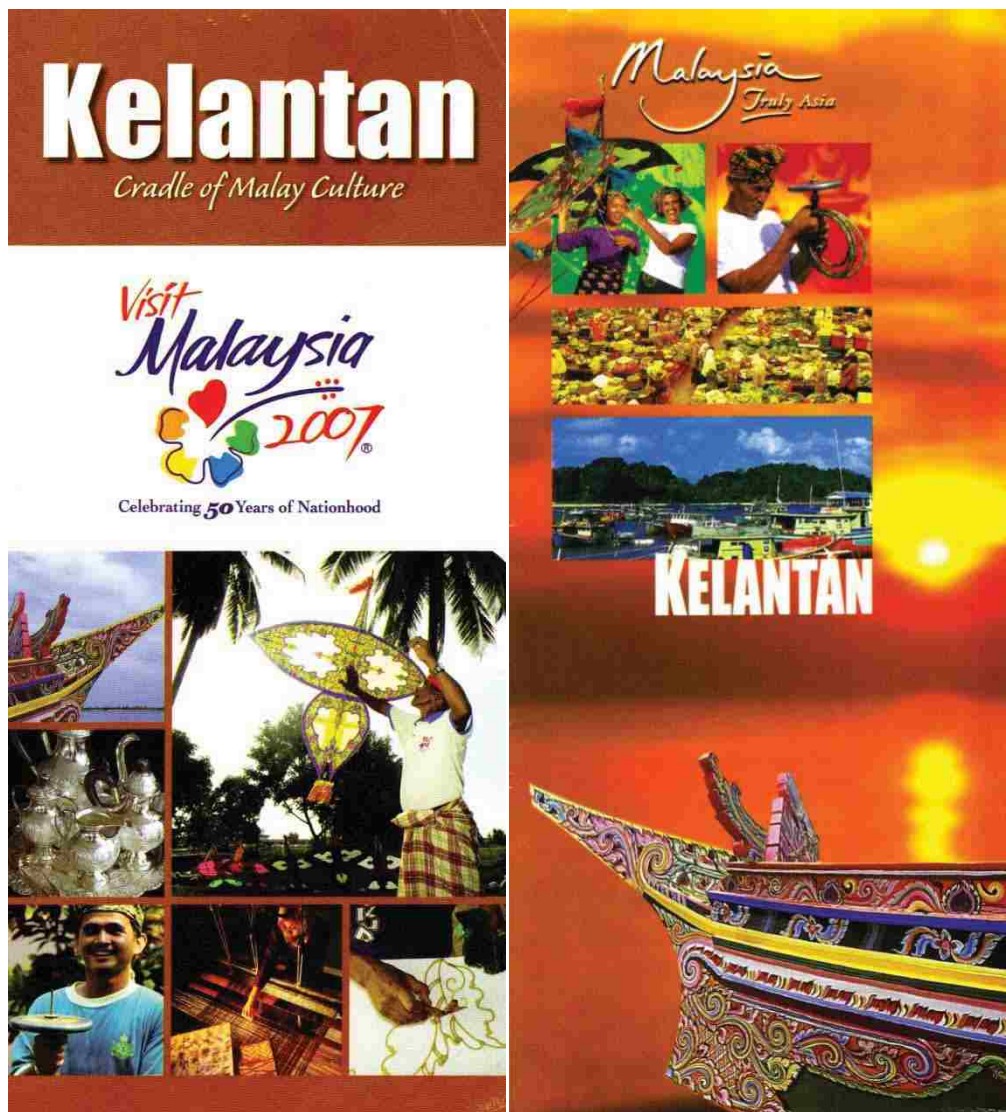
Figure 6.2: Tourism promotion materials in Kelantan focusing on aspects of traditional culture. Source Tourism Malaysia (left) and Kelantan Tourism (right).

Rural communities are frequently portrayed as traditional, thus establishing a particular set of behaviors expected for such communities (Richter, 1998: 187). In the images above, (see Figure 6.2) the communities in Kelantan are portrayed as traditional and cultural with few modern aspects visible in the image. When tourism promotional literature focuses on these aspects of rural life, they reinforce the idea of fixed and static identities for these communities and individuals (Scheyvens, 2002; Mowforth & Munt, 2003). MacCannell describes this as cultures becoming "museumized" (1976) and limiting cultural development. This can serve to limit change and adaptation within communities as they are indirectly pressured to maintain a particular traditional way of life. This can be particularly difficult for women trying to negotiate more equitable consideration within their families or communities by advocating changes to their traditional cultural roles. In Malaysia where a large number of tourists are domestic tourists, the government advertisements are commonly distributed within the country. This circulates these messages across the nation and establishes a particular identity for these citizens, both within their communities and across the wider Malaysian society.

In addition to essentialised cultural images, women are also frequently used in tourism promotional materials, often for their sex-appeal and to create a welcoming image for the destination (Marshment, 1997: 20-1). Kinnaird and Hall (1994) describe how the female as exotic has been used within promotional materials to lure tourists to particular destinations. In a similar analysis, Morgan and Prichard (1998) detail how the sexualized representation of women in tourism promotion, particularly those of different racial or ethnic groups to the target audience, creates particular expectations and identities for these women. The images represent a particular desirable identity for these women which influences the individual subjectivities of women within the host destination.

Figure 6.3: Images from the print campaign "Malaysia Truly Asia" with women representing ethnic diversity in Malaysia. Source: Tourism Malaysia.

In the case of Malaysia, the use of women as overt sex-objects is less common (although not completely absent) but images of women are commonly used within tourism promotional materials. In the most successful recent campaign, "Malaysia Truly Asia", five women were chosen as representations of the multicultural society of Malaysia, presenting a diverse but unified image for the country (see Figure 6.3). These women are dressed to represent the ethnic diversity in Malaysia: Chinese, Indian, Indigenous peoples, modern Malay and Traditional Malay. There are multiple "costumes" used throughout the campaign, each of which subtly represents individual ethnicities. These differences are cleverly nuanced and may not be immediately apparent. The women chosen look very similar facially and bodily, and their hair styles and make-up do not vary greatly. These five women become the embodiment of Malaysia's multiculturalism, and also of a national unity. The lack of major differences between these women represents the multicultural aims of the Malaysian

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government. The visuals can be read as suggesting that although ethnic differences exist within the country, they are not very pronounced and there is an identifiable unity between ethnicities, in this case represented by the similarities between the women. The use of women also provides a more acceptable image of a predominately Muslim country to tourists.

This promotional campaign raises several cultural issues in relation to Islam. Firstly, there is the gendered nature of the campaign: this use of women as promotional material would likely conflict with Islamic sentiments which discourage the objectification of women in this way. Given that the current government seeks to present itself as guided by the morals of the Islamic faith, this would seem to be a contradiction. Secondly, although the women are chosen to represent the ethnicities of Malaysia, the woman symbolizing Malay women (the Malay identity is conflated with Islam) is not wearing a headscarf. This provides a potential conflict of identity for Malay women who generally wear headscarves. As noted by Korff: "The importance of Islam as a new identity in the urban areas, contrasts with the comparative neglect of Islamic symbols in advertisements, be it on television, in magazines or on hoardings. In these advertisements, one hardly ever sees a woman with a headscarf, although today nearly all Malay women wear this and some even wear veils" (2001: 281). Consequently aspects of Islam which are codified in daily life are not represented in the mass media.

In contrast the promotional materials for the "Malaysia Truly Asia" campaign which were distributed to countries in west Asia (denoted as such by the Tourism Malaysia office) feature Islamic dress more prominently. In these documents, the five women of the campaign are presented as a secondary image and are a much smaller feature (see Figure 6.4). The primary images are of families and promote a more structured and traditional destination image for Malaysia. These images show women wearing headscarves and dressing more conservatively to illustrate the women of the target audience. Although many Muslim Malaysian women wear headscarves and conservative dress, these are the only representations of conservative Islamic dress throughout the campaign.

Figure 6.4: Images from the print campaign "Malaysia Truly Asia" distributed to West Asia. Source: Tourism Malaysia.

Through this process of generating an acceptable identity for tourists, Malaysian women are also sent a message about acceptable behavior and activities, essentially creating an ideal Malaysian woman. In the communities which engage in tourism, new hybrid subjectivities are formed and reformed as a process of constant change. Individuals in these communities find ways to address the commoditized cultural representations generated by the tourism industry with their own understandings of self from religious, cultural or national perspectives. As contact between different cultures occurs, these understandings of self become reframed and redefined in relation to the Other encountered. This is constant process which generates new ways of understanding the self and which creates new hybrid identities (Bhabha, 1994) or more accurately hybrid subjectivities. Bhabha's concept of hybridity focuses on the performative aspects of cultural interaction as a process which generates new understandings. Situated as an antithesis to the theories of global homogenization, theories of

hybridity acknowledge how new cultural formations retain echoes of different cultural aspects, whilst generating something new. For women, these new hybrid formations extend to reforming understandings of the gendered self. Interactions with differing cultural viewpoints often have more of an impact on women as the cultural differences in terms of gender behavior are often more stark for women than men, leading to greater self-reflection and inner conflict. Furthermore, when the concept of self is intimately tied to a particular cultural role, these interactions through tourism present greater challenges for women.

3: GENDER IN TOURISM

Participation in tourism raises a number of gender specific concerns. Employment in tourism can lead to cultural changes which may impact the social status of women and change household dynamics. In some situations, such employment re-inscribes existing gendered hierarchies and has furthered the subjugation of women. In others it has provided the opportunity for empowerment and improvements in social status. However, these employment dynamics are often present when women engage with any type of employment, not just tourism. Although there are some gendered impacts which are specific to tourism. In some locations the interaction between hosts and guests has caused a renegotiation of social constructions of gender and of existing gender roles. Exposure to the understandings of gender found in other cultures can instigate a reexamination of accepted gender roles within a tourism community, which can be received positively or negatively.

The dynamics of employment in the tourism industry vary somewhat from those found in other types of employment. This creates a variety of conditions, some of which are beneficial to women entering the workforce, and others that act to reinforce existing gendered inequalities. The economic importance and potential benefits of tourism for some locations has led to a re-inscription of gendered hierarchies. In a study of a community involved in tourism in the Kalahari Desert, Hitchcock and Brandenburgh discovered that there was an uneven gender bias in the provision of benefits from participation in tourism

(1990). In this study, men were more likely to benefit economically from tourism than women and they retained control of economic power. In a similar study of Balinese small entrepreneurs, it was found that although women were employed, men retained control of the business operations (Long & Kindon, 1997). In other situations, women are frequently excluded from the most profitable jobs, which are often taken by men, reinforcing existing gendered hierarchies (Levy & Lerch, 1991; Shaw & Williams, 1994, 150). In some locations the cultural practices of the location prohibit or limit women's participation in certain activities (Long & Kindon, 1997; Scheyvens, 2002: 125). In a survey of recent studies examining tourism and gender in Bali, Long and Kindon (1997) concluded that tourism reinforced existing gender stereotypes and work was segregated based on acceptable and appropriate occupations for men and women. In the case of Indonesian guide work, women are discouraged from accepting these roles as they are considered unacceptable occupations for women (Steege, Stam & Bras, 1999). Similarly in Nepal, women have been excluded from acting as Sherpas due to gendered cultural exclusions (Fisher, 1990). Gendered norms for the workplace can also be related to the scale or the style of the property. In a study also looking at Bali, small scale establishments were less gender-defined whereas up-market establishments were more gendered with men and women performing separate and defined functions (Norris reported in Long & Kindon, 1997).

In other situations the denial of work to women can be a deliberate attempt to monopolize the profits from lucrative activities and maintain control of economic power (Brohman, 1996). In a study of tourism employment in Bali, it was found that women were more frequently employed in the informal sector and therefore had less stable employment (Cukier, Norris & Wall, 1996; Bras & Dahles, 1999). In the formal sector, women are frequently paid less than men for comparable tasks and were less represented in positions of management and power (Levy & Lerch, 1991). When women are able to secure work, their employment often adds to individual pressures as they are also expected to continue domestic responsibilities alongside their waged employment (Levy &

Lerch, 1991; Stonich et al., 1995; Wilkinson & Pratiwi, 1995). It should be noted that in many of the situations discussed, the unequal employment and remuneration of women is not exclusive to the tourism industry, but is instead a symptom of the wider gender imbalance in societies.

One way that tourism performs a particular role in reinforcing gendered roles is through the types of employment undertaken by women. Within many societies certain occupations have been created as gendered (McDowell, 1999: 139) and particular tasks in the workplace may be ascribed based on gender categories (Lee et al., 1998). Within tourism, women frequently perform the same functions in employment as in domestic labor at home and their wage-work becomes an extension of the traditional gendered domestic tasks (Momsen, 1994). Employing women in domestic roles mirrors their usual responsibilities and conforms to societal gendered roles, making employment less challenging and more acceptable to many patriarchal societies. It also reinforces existing perceptions of the limits to women's capabilities and situates women in positions of subordination within the workplace. As these types of jobs frequently require and therefore supply no education or training, they serve to prevent women from advancing within society and limit their options for promotion and advancement.

When not performing domestic tasks, women employed in tourism are also often employed in positions which value their attractiveness, such as hostesses, receptionists and flight attendants. Employing women in such positions takes advantage of their sexuality as a tool to garner business (Chant, 1997: 158). It also draws upon the perception that attractive women illicit passive responses from guests, therefore minimizing complaints and confrontations. In all of these ways, tourism is re-inscribing existing gendered stereotypes and utilizing these to the advantage of capital accumulation.

Despite these negative experiences in many locations, there are also numerous constructive benefits to be gained from employment in tourism. While critiquing the existence of these inequalities is an important process, highlighting the ways in which such interaction and employment can be beneficial provides a positive avenue for social change. In a study examining tourism in Samoa,

Kinnaird and Hall (1994) challenge the idea that unevenness (in terms of gender) is inevitable in development situations. In the case of Samoa, the women involved in tourism are not just subsistence employees, but are successful entrepreneurs. In this way, re-examining how women are active in tourism employment and framing their involvement in terms of empowerment uncovers how tourism operates as a positive process of change. Women involved in tourism are not passive recipients of tourism employment, they are actively engaged in the process, selecting criteria for participation and recreating tourism through their involvement.

What makes tourism employment different than other types of employment for many women is the potential to make the workplace flexible, allowing women who would previously be excluded to participate. The informal sector of tourism provides an opportunity for women to incorporate childrearing activities within the framework of employment. Whilst this re-inscribes the existing divisions of labor and means women have additional pressure from the added workload, it is also a culturally valued practice for many women. In a study examining women workers in Bali, Dahles (1999) found that many women considered the flexibility of working in informal tourism a benefit as it allowed them to incorporate their maternal duties. This was a choice for these women as they wanted to perform these functions as mothers and valued the time spent with their children. Women in these jobs have cited the benefits of being able to work with their children and the flexible employment environment.

Wage labor also provides women with the opportunity to become financially secure, perhaps releasing them from networks of reliance within family situations (Chant 1997). Although women may be unequally remunerated for wage labor or excluded from the most profitable jobs, the ability to earn money provides one avenue for independence. Schevyens identifies employment in tourism as a way for women to secure their financial and social future through independent earning. She highlights how women are active in protecting and securing their involvement in tourism employment thereby framing tourism as an empowering process for the women concerned (1998:128). In a study of tourism

in Cyprus, many women had chosen work in tourism in order to obtain educational and vocational qualifications (Scott, 1997: 68).

In many locations, the employment of women within tourism is primarily in low-skilled and low-paid jobs with little opportunity for promotion. In response to this, a number of programs were established in the Caribbean to train women and provide opportunities for career advancement. In this situation, Momsen found that the education programs have diversified the job market and raised the number of women in positions of management (1994: 112). In a longevity study of tourism employment in Greece, Leontidou (1994) discovered that there was a change in women's involvement as the tourism industry matured. Cultural shifts within Greek society and increased education for women saw a greater percentage of women in positions of management and as property owners. A similar situation was found in Bali as island tourism developed and the status of women within the society began to change (Cukier, 1996).

Despite these changes, many women in tourism worldwide remain employed within services that mimic their domestic roles. Whilst this type of employment can be derided for reinforcing existing gender stereotypes, it can also create avenues of opportunity which help women to negotiate new roles. Domestic style employment provides women with the ability to enter the workforce in situations where they might otherwise be excluded, due to lack of education, experience or training. As domestic chores are also socially acceptable roles for women in many cultures, it also prevents social conflicts from restricting women's participation (Richter, 1997) which allows for the process of change to begin. Although this clearly highlights existing inequalities for many women, the ability to incorporate employment within existing social structures is often the only avenue open for instigating social change. Employment in tourism, as in other fields, has the potential to empower women through providing them with the ability to educate themselves and establish some control over their social situations. In the case of women workers in the Philippines, Chant (1997) suggests that employment in tourism has afforded the

women confidence and empowerment, allowing them to renegotiate their social status.

How the women themselves then react to these changes is variable. In a study of Mayan women involved in the tourist trade (Cone, 1995) there was clearly a difference in response to these interactions. One woman found the interaction with tourists as a way to escape the limitations of her cultural prescriptions. For her the cultures of the tourists were perceived favorably leading her to question her own cultural traditions. In contrast, another woman felt that the interactions with tourists reaffirmed her cultural identity and strengthened her perception of self as part of her particular culture. The cultural traditions of tourists were seen as inferior in contrast to her own historical and cultural background.

4: LOCAL CONTEXT

The Perhentian Islands are located under the administrative control of Terengganu State and island workers are predominantly drawn from neighboring Kelantan State. Kelantan has been a stronghold for PAS since 1990 and remains under the political control of the opposing party. Terengganu was briefly under the control of PAS between December 1999 and March 2004 and the battle for political control of the state in the last election was fought primarily along religious lines. UNMO aggressively promoted regional development in order to secure votes, ultimately leading to success in the 2008 election. Both these states have the largest percentages of ethnic Malays in the peninsula and Kelantan is considered the cultural birthplace of the Malay people. The importance and function of religion influences a number of factors for gendered relations on the islands. Although the multi-ethnicity of the country is represented on the islands, the right to establish laws and curtail behavior remains influenced by religious factors. Cultural norms influence the behaviors adopted and enacted at the local governmental level, reinforced by rights established at the national government level. Many of the established laws and regulations are based on religious beliefs and similarly many of the practices adopted by individual owner-

operators reflect their personal beliefs. Across the region it is more usual to see single beds in double rooms, even for married couples, and frequently many resorts would not have a double bed at all on property. There are restrictions on the consumption and sale of alcohol as well as the participation by women in certain activities, such as cultural dances, which are perceived as objectification of women (Hooker, 2004).

In order to examine how established gender roles influence and are influenced by the practice of tourism on the islands, this research examined a number of overlapping factors. Initially the bulk of data was related to employment and working activities, focusing on the division of labor and time allocation. As a deeper picture of the economic role and status of women began to emerge, I became more interested in the relationships formed between women on the islands. This presented a very different understanding of why women choose to work on the islands and how they internalize particular aspects of their employment. It also suggested connections between local and non-local women which was not initially apparent. To understand what was observed, the particular activities undertaken by women have to be culturally contextualized and examined from the understandings of the women themselves. Although a difficult task, this section attempts to approach this by using the words and descriptions of the individual women to understand how they see themselves and understand their societal positions. Although the majority of women working on the islands are Muslim, my participants included non-Muslim and non-Malaysian women to help to understand the nature and operation of gender and gendered norms on the islands. By including non-Malaysian women in this analysis, it revealed many of the existing cultural norms of the islands and highlighted many of the goals and aspirations of the women participants.

4.1: The Gendered Workplace

The first level of analysis was to examine how jobs were distributed between genders. As discussed above, previous tourism studies have discovered that women frequently perform gendered roles within the workplace

mimicking their domestic tasks. On the Perhentian Islands the distribution of employment functions was more diverse than studies have reported for elsewhere. In most situations, the regular tasks were distributed evenly between men and women, with no obvious gendered bias. There were equal numbers of individuals across the islands employed as cleaning staff, wait staff, cooks/chefs, reception and retail staff. In many cases, the employment responsibilities were fluid with functions being performed as needed by any member of staff and duties frequently changing from day to day.

There were a few notable exceptions to this. In the larger resorts, there was a greater concentration of women working in "front-of-house" and reception duties, and more men as porters and grounds-keeping staff. In these resorts employees were given clearly defined tasks and frequently wore uniforms which designated differing roles. These uniforms themselves created a gendered environment for some workers, with women's uniforms in Muslim owned resorts conforming to Islamic dress standards. This also served to re-inscribe the identity of the particular resort, sending a message of the type of tourist desired. In contrast, the uniforms in two of the newer Chinese owned resorts were the same for both men and women.

Another exception which was observed across both islands and all resorts was in relation to boats and diving equipment: all staff employed as boat drivers and in maintenance roles for boats and diving equipment were men. I was told by several individuals that this was a licensing issue, that boat drivers have to be licensed and that it was difficult (some said illegal) for women to get licenses as drivers or compressor technicians. When discussing with women whether they would want to perform these jobs, they overwhelmingly responded negatively: "Why would we want that? (laughs) That is dirty work, it is hard" (Seri) and "Only boys do those jobs" (Noor). For these women (and the men also) this particular job had been established as a male role and most women had no desire to perform these particular functions. There is an historical cultural legacy for this, as men have traditionally been employed as fishermen in this region, so the presence of this today signals a re-inscription of these existing gender definitions.

The role of the boat driver was even more gendered among younger men where the boat became a status symbol. Younger men frequently operated boats in aggressive or "macho" ways and boats became similar to operating a fast car. Several boat operators would race one-another when heading in or out from the beach, or would brag about who was the fastest driver. Through these practices, employment as a boat driver became a gender-imbued status activity which established a particular identity for the individual concerned. Similarly, the transition from helping one's father to actually operating a boat was almost a rite of passage for some young boys. One father told me how proud he was that his son was the youngest male who operated a boat to transport tourists around the islands (this boy said he was 14, but he did not look older than 10). For these particular jobs there was not a sense that there was any hierarchy between men and women, but rather that the jobs were complementary positions.

However, the islands exhibited a definite gendered hierarchy when considering positions of power. This can be broken down in terms of ownership of property and in terms of employment. For most of the larger resorts, the actual owner of the property was not present on the islands. Many were owned by companies based in Kuala Lumpur and one was part of a regional Malaysian owned chain of five hotels. Tracing ownership of these resorts was difficult, but where records were available, the owners were male. When considering the mid-size and small-scale properties, ownership becomes more complicated. The local regulations regarding the right to own property and register a business limit actual ownership by non-*bumiputera* individuals and in most cases the "owners" were actually lease holders of the property. In some situations, there were multiple stages to these leases with many being sub-leases of longer-term contracts (often very short-term). It becomes harder to assign ownership in these situations and instead the categorization relied on who was the current leaseholder/occupier.

To complicate the concept of ownership further, several individuals suggested that to register a business for a tourist license, the listed owner/leaseholder of the business had to have a Malaysian name. There was an

understanding among many non-Malaysian resort owners that their tourist licenses had been refused as they did not list a Malaysian as the owner/leaseholder. Irrespective of whether this is accurate, this potentially influenced the responses from many when asked who the owner of the property was. In many situations, separating ownership, from leaseholder from management became a complicated discussion.

Despite these difficulties, it was possible to identify several situations where women were performing the function of owner even if the complications of paperwork would not support this. Ownership (at least in this definition) of smaller properties was equally spread between men and women, with a large number of Muslim women identifying themselves as owners of their property. Most of the small shops were owned by women and ownership of the independent (not resort owned) restaurants were equally split between men and women. There were several small and mid-scale resorts where the owner was identified as a woman. In some of these cases I prompted the women to explain if the property was joint-owned with a husband or brother, but in every case they asserted their ownership of the property. Many of these women were individuals born on the islands (and would therefore have the *bumiputera* right to own property) and they would describe the history of their ownership. There were also several resorts and shops which were owned by Chinese Malaysian women and western women.

A similar story exists for management of properties, with an even split between men and women identifying themselves as property manager. In some cases, the definitions again become complicated as in some of the larger resorts there would be a difference between reception manger and general manger or resort manager and dive-shop manager. The overall picture would show women as almost equally represented as managers or supervisors (in whatever capacity). However, in some resorts, a deeper understanding was gained from speaking to others working at resorts that identified a more complex set of gendered social relations. In some resorts the women who identified themselves as owner or manager would be the wife of the actual manager and would hold

little power in terms of responsibility or decision-making. In other resorts, I was told of situations where women were temporarily performing the job of manager (adequately) while a younger, less able male would be groomed to take the job permanently. In these situations there was often frustration at the existing cultural norms which worked to give preferential treatment for men in positions of power and denied women the same opportunities.

It should be noted that in all of these situations, the inequality was noted by someone other than the woman herself. The perception of inequality seemed to be more pronounced with western individuals who felt that the existing cultural tradition of patriarchy was restricting the access of these women to better jobs. One such individual described their experience of a reception manager: "Here, Melati would be perfect for the job, her English is good and she is a good worker, but patriarchy being what it is on the islands the manager automatically assumes one of the younger boys would be best and grooms him for the position" (personal interview). In this particular situation the young woman was being denied promotion and this was assumed to be due to existing gender hierarchies. This perspective was repeated both directly and indirectly by a number of western individuals working on the islands for a variety of situations with women workers.

When I had the opportunity to discuss these situations with some of the women concerned, I received a variety of responses. One woman agreed with the analysis and felt that it was unfair that she was already doing the job and would be best but would not have the chance at promotion. She continued: "yeah- it is unfair, but that is what he (the manager) wants so what can I do? But it is OK, I am learning good things, so I can maybe use some of them" (Noor, personal interview). For other women they did not perceive their situation in the same light as was suggested by others. One woman who I was told was doing the work of a manger temporarily, but not being paid the full wage responded: "It is OK because I am not as trained as him and he has the experience. They also have problems with money (the resort), so it is a good favor I am doing" (Seri, personal interview). For her the inequality was not perceived in the same way

and was rationalized within her understanding of the structure and needs of the workplace. Her workplace was framed in the same context as a family relationship and her role within this was clearly defined. She did not see herself as a worker, but instead as part of the company and in this way she was renegotiating her worker subjectivity in her own terms.

4.2: Employment Motivations for Women

Many of the women interviewed had very strong viewpoints regarding working on the islands and had actively chosen to work there. When asked to identify their reasons for working on the islands, the responses from women generally matched those received from men. There were several key themes which consistently emerged: working in a beautiful location, freedom from family, fun lifestyle and the chance to meet westerners. Respondents described working on the islands as challenging and necessitating a varied approach to work, which made it more interesting then jobs elsewhere. It was also framed as a fun activity which was perceived less as work and more as an experience. No individuals (male or female) identified money as a motivation for employment (for a more in-depth discussion of this, please see chapter five).

The only difference in responses between men and women related to escaping familial obligations. Many of the young women interviewed suggested that coming to the islands to work allowed them to escape some of the expected obligations and behaviors of their home situation. One woman described how in her home village she would be expected to help run the family business (which was cooking for a small food stall) and here on the islands she could escape that. Another said her family had five young children at home and she enjoyed being away as she did not have to help to care for them: "I feel bad sometimes as my sister has to help, but she likes it, so it is not so bad for her". For most of these women the islands were a chance to challenge their existing family roles and choose a lifestyle (albeit briefly for some) which allowed them freedom of expression. As with situations elsewhere (Wolf, 1992; Lee, 1998; Mills, 2002) many of these young women off-set their familial obligations by sending money

home to their families. Although economic incentives were never listed as a motivation for island employment, the opportunity to send at least some money back allowed the women to present their employment as a familial good. This in turn allowed them the freedom to pursue this occupation, rather than following the obligations of family.

From a number of conversations, it became clear that economic motivations were not the primary reason for women accepting island employment. During the focus group sessions with women only, we discussed some of the reasons the women enjoyed working on the islands and why they had chosen employment here. When discussing their motivations for employment, women framed their love of the job and location as a contrast to their home lives. The home village was often described as "boring" or "ugly" and island life was described as "fun", "exciting" and "trendy". For these women, working on the islands was adopting a modern lifestyle and enacting a particular identity. Although the answers given by women were similar to those given by men, women more commonly saw working on the islands as escaping their village lives and providing them the opportunity to redefine themselves as something Other.

This was illustrated with the choice of clothing for many of the women. In this particular region of Malaysia Muslim women usually wear a full headscarf, long sleeved tunic which reaches at least to the knees over an ankle length skirt or loose pants. The Muslim women working on the islands would have a more varied and modern choice of clothing. Although most of the Muslim women wore headscarves when working, many of the younger women would remove their headscarves when off-duty. Similarly, although the style of dress was still modest, the younger women would usually wear more western clothing, or styles of dress which blended western and traditional styles. Although they were seeking a modern identity through their clothing, they were not attempting to copy the style of western women. Many women talked of the style of dress of some western women in very negative terms, feeling the revealing clothing did not look good: "Some of the girls on long-beach are all open (indicates chest),

this just looks ugly" (Aini, focus group interview). There was a sense that these young women were not offended by the western women's style of dress, but equally were not inspired by it. When asked which western women they thought looked nice, they would commonly refer to women who wore modest, but modern clothing. Often they would speak positively of western women working on the islands who were strong female role models, either mangers or property owners. Their admiration would often be framed in terms of the clothing worn by these individuals: "Sarah looks so good, she is strong and pretty y'know. I would like to be like her" (Noor, focus group interview). For these women, the clothing style of some western women was indicative of a level of power and self-confidence. To adopt a modern style of clothing indicated a modernization of the person within and was seen as an outward sign of change. In this way the women were incorporating certain elements which they choose, and rejecting others, creating their own hybrid identities.

Some of the women described the opportunity to interact with other cultures as a benefit of island life: "We get to meet people from all over the world, get to learn about different things" (Noor, focus group interview) " Back in the village we never meet anyone, but here there are lots of people" (Aini, focus group interview). Many of the women listed interactions with other cultures as a major motivator for employment on the islands. These interactions were valued by these women and were understood as part of the process of creating new modern identities for themselves. One women talked of how the girls in her village were jealous of her being on the islands, but they were too scared to come here themselves. She had therefore gained social status by working on the islands and had adopted a modern identity though her employment (for similar experiences see Mills, 2002). In interviews and during focus groups women would often refer to personal changes which have come about from working on the islands. They would describe themselves as different from their friends back in the village and talk positively about options for the future: "I want to open my own restaurant, somewhere here on the beach- maybe around the bend there. I am good with cooking, and Mohammed can speak to the tourists good" (Akmar,

personal Interview). When one woman was asked what she did during the off season she responded: "I go back to my village, but it is so boring. I visit my family, but I have to be the old me and help my mother" (Faatima, personal interview). Describing herself as the "old me" suggests that for this woman life on the islands had helped her to create a different identity which was now framed in a positive light.

4.3: Relationship Negotiation on the Islands

The employment dynamics on the islands frequently require staff to live on-premises. Although some employees return to the mainland or the village at the end of the working day, resorts had an average of 60% of their staff living in. This presents challenges for employees in relationships or with families and provides another opportunity to understand how gendered roles are established and maintained. The dynamics in this context allowed for an additional element of analysis which would not usually have been possible without additional research. It was possible to observe how couples negotiated their domestic obligations alongside their employment and familial obligations.

The flexible and changing nature of working on the islands makes it difficult to establish a norm for behavior with individual couples and families, or across the communities as a whole. There are a variety of changes making generalizations difficult, but there are a number of factors which can be observed. Instead of using time allocation studies, it is more useful to observe how couples negotiate their working responsibilities and personal relationships. With all of the couples interviewed, the domestic responsibilities were shared, if not completely equally, then mostly equally. Men would frequently clean the living accommodation (for couples who lived together) and were equally seen doing laundry. Some of the gendered stigma associated with domestic work may have been removed on the islands as the single males living on the islands also had to perform domestic functions. Food was usually provided by the resort, or cooked as a group activity.

In terms of control of money, men were more commonly in control of couples' finances, but women were in control more often than would be usual for this region. Similarly, when men were controlling the family finances, women were usually aware of the income and seemed to have some influence over spending. Most couples were both employed by a resort, so the time spent working was also evenly split. In most resorts the working responsibilities were flexible and in many cases, employment tasks were performed by both sexes simultaneously or responsibilities are shared. In some situations, off-duty partners would assist with duties in order to spend time with their partner.

The accommodation provided for married couples varied greatly (unmarried couples were not allowed to cohabit) and there were clearly class-related issues regarding accommodation status. Most of those in higher level positions were given better quality or private accommodation (although it should be noted that the dynamics of island employment means that there is never any *real* privacy). In some of the longhouses provided for worker accommodation, there were a few older couples who were allowed to share living space, but they also shared with other single individuals. These older couples seemed to perform the function of matriarch/patriarch looking after the younger individuals as if they were offspring.

Some married couples could not live together in staff housing; these were all younger couples without children. This was frequently cited as a space issue, with less available housing for two-share, and more for multiple sharing of same-sex individuals. One young woman who could not share accommodation with her husband described her situation:

> Aini: It's difficult because he is my husband and I can't be with him. Back home we are together, but not here (makes a sad face). But it is good here, so we don't mind.
> J: what if you need to spend some time alone, how do you work that out?
> Aini: Well, if we need to talk we just do it out the back on the deck, but people can still hear, so it's not private. It is difficult with the girls (who share her room) as they are young and don't understand. But I don't think it's fair. We should be able to live together.

Aini and her husband would frequently be seen walking down the beach together hand-in-hand after work, and this became their way to spend quality time together as a couple. Although I had become quite friendly with Aini and knew her quite well, she was not ready to discuss physical intimacy with me and avoided all attempts to address this aspect of their relationship. For this couple, the benefits of working on the islands outweighed the negative aspects of living in separate rooms. Aini was very outspoken and much more outgoing and less reserved than many of the other younger women. She frequently talked of how she enjoyed working on the islands and felt this was the perfect life. She was very different is her behavior from the other women and would spend time talking with boys and less time with the other women. She told me she felt the other young women at her resort were boring and she enjoyed spending time with the western women.

For Aini, the islands were a way to adopt a particular behavior which would not have been appropriate in her village (she was from a small village in the heart of rural Terrengganu). She explained that on the islands she was free to do what she wanted, but at home she had to behave a certain way and perform certain duties. How much she associated the islands with freedom became apparent when she and her husband were forced to leave the islands due to family obligations:

> Aini: We don't want to go, but there is nothing can be done. I have to go and look after my mother, and Epul will have to work.
> JS: What will he do?
> Aini: Oh, just something there. We are so sad to miss you all. I have to do this for my mother (makes sad face), but I wish we could be here.

She explained that although she has two brothers, one did not live at home and the other worked long hours. So she was expected to care for her mother who was going blind. She described how at home it was boring and she would have to perform domestic duties for her mother, which is why she would rather be on the islands. Her partner seemed equally reluctant to leave the islands, but the familial obligation was an accepted responsibility limiting their personal choices.

Observing couples with children highlighted how the child-rearing obligations were distributed within the relationship and how domestic life was incorporated with working obligations. On the islands, the duties are more evenly distributed with men frequently taking responsibility for child minding and domestic chores. During interviews, individuals suggested this would not be the case on the mainland or at home as women were frequently expected to perform the majority of domestic tasks. There are a number of reasons which could explain this difference. Firstly the dynamics of working in tourism on the islands: long hours and both parents working demands a more flexible approach to work and domestic life. In this way, the flexibility can be seen as a necessity of the demands of capital accumulation. Secondly, it could also be a function of the age of the couples, with a greater percentage of younger couples working on the islands. As Malaysia "modernizes" the viewpoints of many of the younger generation are changing away from the more traditional perspectives and they are able to incorporate more flexible gender roles. Lastly, it could be a reaction to the presence of different cultural representations from interactions with workers and tourists from other cultures. In reality it is probably a blend of these motivations which combine to create new ways of dividing domestic responsibilities for these couples.

In many situations where couples had babies or young children, they would be present with their parents at work. Several resorts had a crib at their reception area and many of the restaurants had children's areas where staff children would rest or play. On several occasions, children would accompany their parents at work, assisting with cleaning, food preparation or shop duties. Children would frequently accompany their fathers when they were driving taxi boats and when performing odd-jobs around the resorts. When discussing this, many respondents indicated that this was an educational experience for the children: "Abdul comes to help me when he is not in school, it is good for him to learn early, he will be doing this one day soon, then I can rest and go fishing (laughs)" (Sani – personal interview). For this father, having his son with him at

work was partly educational, but also seemed to be a way for a bond to be formed between father and son.

There were some situations where fathers never had their daughters accompany them at work, such as boat drivers, which suggests a re-inscribing of gendered roles across generations. However, there were also examples which showed the opposite; male children would accompany men and women performing roles traditionally defined as women's roles (for example, cooking and maid work). Similarly, female children would also assist parents in more traditional male roles, such as landscaping and helping to carry fish or supplies. This illustrates that some of the gendered norms in relation to work were being changed with these different behaviors and that these changes would be passed on to the new generation.

The responsibility for caring for children appeared to be mixed relatively equally across the sexes. Men would frequently be seen monitoring and feeding children or babies, and it was not unusual for men to share this responsibility among other male friends. This is not representative of the cultural norm in this region of Malaysia, and appears to be a peculiarity of working on the islands. It seems to be part necessity in a situation with limited childcare choices from familial networks, but also part of the difference of island life which many participants spoke of. Women particularly raised this as a positive side to island life: "Here I get to be with my husband every day as he does not go away to work, he can be with Faizal (their son) too" (personal interview).

In addition to parents sharing responsibility for childcare, there was also an extended network within many resorts which provided additional support. Many of the friends and fellow workers would take care of children and assist parents when possible by playing with or minding children. In many situations, fellow workers performed the function of extended family members, frequently assisting with child-rearing duties such as feeding, changing and minding babies and children. The work network became a valuable source of interaction for couples and many suggested that the workplace was their family. Most resorts had a relaxed attitude to the presence of children allowing for the responsibility

for care to be shared among workers. School age children were usually returned to the resort after school finished and were frequently allowed to play in and around the resorts. Children in some resorts would often play with tourists and the relationships between tourists and locals would take on new forms. This contradicts the division of tourism from everyday life and creates an environment in which hosts and guests share the space.

These support networks were not just used to fulfill work obligations, but also to allow for couples to spend time together or socializing. As such, it changes the dynamic of these support networks from being ones which allow for capitalist accumulation, to being ones which provide support at a group or community level. These support networks often spanned ethnic or religious affiliations, with many western staff assisting with child-minding on some resorts and tourists playing with local children. As a result of this extended interaction among staff and tourists, the "workplace" in many of these situations became harder to define. Rather than being a space just of work, it became a space for socialization. As such the definitions of living space/workplace and working/non-working became blurred and the relationships between workers and tourists became more complex (for more detail, see chapter five).

Living on the islands complicates domestic relationships, but provides opportunities to redefine the existing cultural gender roles. Many of the women participants indicated that the islands allow them to live a "different life" and to "be free, unlike at home". For these women, the islands allowed a renegotiation of the terms of marriage and provided opportunities for new relationships to be created between themselves and their partners. In some situations this entailed changing the expected domestic roles by sharing domestic tasks and child-rearing responsibilities. For other women it was an opportunity to redefine themselves outside of their existing cultural confines, allowing them to be more outspoken or to escape some of the familial obligations which would have been required in their home villages.

In addition to married couples, there were significant differences in behaviors exhibited by workers on the islands when negotiating their own cross-

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gender dynamics. Islamic *Shariah* law prohibits the public display of affection and Muslims are expected to behave conservatively in public. It is rare to see a public display of affection between Muslim couples, especially locally in Terengganu and Kelantan States. In contrast, it is common to see displays of physical affection between same-sex friends. With individuals who were married or dating it was possible to see subtle displays of affection. Couples would frequently touch knees or have hands very close to one another but not actually touching, finding ways to incorporate intimacy within the local social confines. In other couples there was frequently playfulness and touching as part of this, but little or no overt displays of affection. This contrasted with behavior between sexes elsewhere in the region which was much more restrained, even in areas frequented by young people (such as malls and western food establishments). Kissing was never seen with local couples.

The behavior of non-local couples working on the islands was also more restrained. Although some would display public shows of affection, there was far less obvious behavior than is frequently exhibited in other tourist destinations. Some of these restrained behaviors may be learned from the guidebooks which prescribe moderation and conservatism from visitors. Some behaviors appear to appear to be self-censorship, with individuals reacting to the social dynamics of their surroundings: as there are no other couples showing public affection this becomes a taboo behavior. Individuals are also schooled by their places of employment, which encourage western employees to be culturally sensitive in their behavior. Peer pressure also influences how western individuals behave, with each bay fostering different behaviors from western employees which matched the particular environment of each beach.

5: GENDERED CONFLICTS

Given the cultural interaction which occurs within tourism, there are frequently situations where conflict may occur that is specifically related to differences in acceptable behaviors based on gender. In exploring the relationships between gender, sexuality and space, Linda McDowell details the

social conflicts and contestations which exist on the beach. "Explicit and implicit rules and regulations about whose bodies are permitted in which spaces and the interactions between them are set into the nature and form of buildings, the spaces between them and their internal divisions" (1999: 166). In describing the beach as a space of pleasure, she describes how social norms are enacted on beaches and through these normative practices, certain individuals or groups become excluded. On the Perhentian Islands there were some situations which arose between hosts and guests in which conflicts were focused around gender, but in many cases the perception of conflict was greater than the reality. Given that the host community on the islands is predominantly Muslim, there were many situations where gender was perceived to be an issue. The guidebooks which influence understandings of place prior to tourist arrivals, commonly featured discussions regarding the prescriptions on behavior for women and the difficulties for women travelling in a predominantly Muslim country (Lonely Planet, Rough Guides, Footprint Handbooks). Local press had published a story about bikinis being banned on the islands (The Straits Times, April 29, 2002) with the majority of the guidebooks echoing the need for conservative clothing. In reality, the sense of place which each beach or bay generated served to influence the behavior of the individuals present, minimizing cultural conflict.

The "backpacker beach" (Long Beach) on Palau Kecil had mostly a younger clientele and caters to the budget traveler. On this beach it was common to see beachgoers wearing skimpy clothing and women would often sunbathe topless. The presence of such activities does not preclude any cultural conflict from such behavior, but the local response to this was organized based on the different spaces across the islands and beaches. The beaches had evolved to specialize on different types of beach activities and accordingly, the individuals working on these beaches indicated that they had chosen the particular location specifically for these attributes. The backpacker beach had much younger workers and more varied ethnic representation than other beaches and this matched the type of tourists visiting this beach.

It was very difficult to gauge a response from local residents to the choice of clothing (or lack of clothing) displayed on Long Beach. As a westerner and a woman it is likely that the responses received would have been tempered based on these factors, but despite this the responses received suggest less of a cultural conflict than initially assumed. The responses from men and women varied as did the responses from different age brackets. The younger men I asked about the topless sunbathing were generally indifferent, and frequently smiled and were embarrassed or made jokes to cover their discomfort. The older men were similarly neutral, but were more serious and measured in their responses. One individual was asked what he thought of topless sunbathing, (as we passed one woman on the beach) he responded: "That is your culture, it is normal and OK for you so…. (shrugs)" (Bob, personal interview). His response was indifferent and seemed to suggest an acceptance of differing cultural values which is not reported in general understanding. The response was more serious in tone and he did not joke or smile. Another older man who owned a resort said he felt it was OK as this was normal for this beach, but he felt it would not be appropriate in a location (such as one of the other beaches) where there were children. In general, most men on Long Beach responded indifferently or positively, with the overall sense that the choice is an individual one.

In contrast, the responses from women on Long Beach regarding topless sunbathing or skimpy clothing seemed to be more related to how women looked. When asked what they thought of topless sunbathing, many young women responded that they thought it looked "ugly" or "unseemly". These were Malaysian women, both Muslim and not, who wore modern clothing (such as jeans and fitted t-shirts) and bikinis themselves. They did not suggest that it should be restricted, but felt that the women were less attractive because of their choice of clothing. When asked if they go topless or would go topless, they mostly responded no, although two women said they might consider it. The older women on Long Beach responded in similar ways, although slightly more forcefully. Whilst they were not obviously disapproving, there was a sense that they were less accepting than the younger women.

When discussing topless sunbathing with individuals on other beaches, there was more of a negative response from both men and women. Many responded that they were glad this was not happening on their beach and that the place for that is Long Beach. When asked what they didn't like, some said it just "wasn't nice" and others avoided the question. Although many individuals were reluctant to verbalize their concerns, many responded with negative facial expressions or gestures. The responses away from Long Beach were relatively uniform across the beaches, between men and women, and across age groups. Although it was unusual to observe topless sunbathing (or very skimpy bikinis) on other beaches, it did occasionally occur. When it did, there were usually subtle responses from beach residents which indicated their disapproval. I observed one occasion when a woman decided to sunbath topless and although no one directly confronted her, there was clearly some discomfort or annoyance among beach staff regarding her behavior. In most observed cases, island residents would respond by staring, making it clear that this was unusual behavior and the women concerned would often cover up fairly rapidly.

The backpacker beach was also home to a larger percentage of transgender or cross-dressing individuals than encountered elsewhere in Malaysia. Although I did not manage to speak with all individuals, of the four interviewed, three were from Malaysia and one was from Thailand. While there is an openly discussed and socially accepted transgender and/or cross-dressing cultural tradition in Thailand (*Katoey*), in Malaysian society these identities and life choices are not commonly seen. Although none of the individuals indicated this, it is likely that the individuals from Malaysia may face discrimination in their home locations and seek the lifestyle of the beach as an opportunity to adopt this behavior. When interviewed, two of the individuals Jon and Serena said they were drawn to work here because of the exciting nightlife and beautiful islands. Neither mentioned a more relaxed attitude, but it is likely that the proximity to western tourists and liberal viewpoints made this particular beach more attractive.

In contrast to the backpacker beach, one bay, Teluk Dalam, has a higher concentration of Muslim-owned properties at one end of the bay and has a reputation as a more conservative location. The guests staying on this bay varied throughout the season, but there would frequently be a higher percentage of Muslim families staying in these resorts. Both men and women here would commonly wear either traditional Malaysian clothing or observe Islamic prescriptions for female clothing. Even though this beach would have western and non-Muslim tourists, it was rare to see topless sunbathing and unusual to see bikinis. Most individuals (including westerners) preferred more modest clothing and physical activities were accordingly more restrained. On this beach it was usual for Muslim women to swim in full clothing and headscarf or veil and beach socialization would often be segregated by sex. The other end of the bay was dominated by an up-market Chinese owned resort, which changed the character of the beach in this location. These two beaches (Long Beach and Teluk Dalam) represent the extremes of beach environments for the islands. The remaining beaches were generally more mixed on all counts and behaviors of tourists were correspondingly more multiple. In this way, the potential conflicts over gender behaviors were avoided by the voluntary segregation of groups.

6: CONCLUSION

This chapter has mapped out some of the theoretical terrain surrounding concepts of gender and applied them to the social relations of tourism on the Perhentian Islands. As there are multiple experiences of gender and each must be culturally and historically situated, these "findings" are only partial and incomplete. This research found a number of situations where commonly held notions of gender relation divisions were not found to be evident and new understandings of how gender operates could be generated. Gendered workplace dynamics paralleled those found in other tourism studies with some interesting twists. Although women were less represented in positions of power, illustrating a hierarchical gendered inequality, women were evenly represented in positions of middle management.

In terms of the gendered divisions of tasks in the workplace, there was less of a distinction than found elsewhere in tourism studies. Men and women equally performed tasks which are usually gendered in the workplace, such as domestic and kitchen work. Similarly, in many situations (although not all) men and women worked together, creating a sense of a shared workplace environment. For several couples who were married and living on the islands, the division of labor was shared, with responsibility for cleaning the "home" and childcare being shared. The presence of children at workplaces also changed the way that men and women behaved towards children. Care for and engagement with children was not created as the role of women, but the responsibility was shared.

For many of the women working on the Perhentian Islands, tourism was an avenue for generating a new sense of self and it functioned as a positive motivator for employment in tourism. There were aspects of empowerment through the process of work, along with the opportunity to recreate their roles outside of the gendered norms of home life. Connections emerged between western women and Malaysian women which transcended cultural difference and highlighted shared similarities. Although there were some cultural conflicts which circulated around gendered identities, these were often less widespread than assumed. The fact that gendered conflicts were expected illustrates how the constructions of gender vary socially and how Other cultures may be created through gendered categories. In many cases, there was a negotiation of space which allowed for different activities to be accommodated.

Chapter Seven

Development, Change and Social Action

1: INTRODUCTION

Given the wide-ranging nature of concepts of betterment, there are understandably many different viewpoints regarding notions of acceptable development and forms of progress. Following from the discussion of development as a concept in chapter two, this chapter explores some of the experiences and perceptions of development on the part of island residents and how changes are accepted or resisted by those associated with tourism on the Perhentian Islands. Development can be measured in a number of ways; improvements in infrastructure, economics, social conditions, economic equality or political democracy. What constitutes improvement and betterment is culturally contingent and varies within communities and across social groups. In most situations, development strategies are often formalized by national or regional government bodies to focus on particular goals and establish time-based deadlines.

Tourism has a particularly fraught connection with development. In many situations tourism promotion brings development to communities in the form of infrastructure improvements, economic development or structured employment. Similarly, tourism often brings communities into interaction with individuals who may have differing levels of social and/or economic development, or differing viewpoints on the development process. Forms of development to support the tourism industry may not be desired or accepted by local communities, or there may be internal conflict within communities over forms of appropriate development (Lankford, 1994). Often, infrastructure developments focus on improvements for the tourism industry, rather than improvements for host communities (McKercher, 1993). In some situations the developments promoted by investors for economic potential may conflict with the desired experiences of tourists, leading to the failure of promoted ventures. In many cases tourism development is clustered in key locations with the social, environmental and

economic costs and/or benefits being unevenly distributed. Therefore the externalities of the tourism industry are borne by the destination communities, rather than the tourist communities (Britton, 1982; McClaren, 1998; Munt and Mowforth, 2003).

2: PERCEPTIONS OF DEVELOPMENT

Given the variety of social backgrounds of island residents, it is not surprising that there were numerous opinions regarding acceptable types of development. The individual understandings and definitions of what constitutes development also varied. To contextualize responses, it is important to understand what is meant by development, but this is difficult to ascertain. When asked directly, "What is development?" many participants found the concept difficult to assimilate. For many island residents, development was described through the changes to the physical infrastructure, rather than changes in standards of living. When asked if development was "good or bad" most responded positively to development as an idea, but negatively to specific examples of changes in the physical infrastructure of the islands. When discussing development in more abstract terms, improvements in standards of living and social status were mentioned, but they were verbalized as being connected to the changes to the physical infrastructure. As these complications made it confusing to speak of development on the larger, abstract scale, the participants were asked to discuss development on the personal scale. To understand how island residents value and measure development, participants were asked about what they aim for in their own lives and what they would like to see for the future of the islands. This technique situates personal and social goals for development in the context of changes to the islands.

2.1: Development and Change

A common way for individuals to verbalize their understandings of development was through narratives of change (see chapter four). One individual (Bob) was from the mainland and had been working on the islands for over 20

years. He was involved in construction management and as such had a vested interest in the continued development of the islands. At the time of interview, he was working on a high profile project to expand and update one of the existing resorts. Despite the professional benefits Bob received from construction, he exhibited concern over the scale and extent of island development. He detailed the dramatic changes he had witnessed during the time he had spent on the islands. Comparing the changes he commented: "there never used to be any big resorts here, it was just a few fishermen huts" (Bob, personal Interview). When asked whether he felt development was a good or bad thing for the islands, he seemed conflicted. He acknowledged the positive aspects in terms of providing jobs for local people and allowing others to enjoy the beautiful islands, but he was concerned about the extent of change on the islands.

Bob contrasted the tourism on the Perhentian Islands with the tourism in Thailand, suggesting that there was a difference between the extent and style of development between the two locations. His comments revealed some of the perceptions of the negative aspects of tourism on the islands. He felt the Perhentian Islands were better than Thailand as they had a lower crime rate: "Occasionally people come and take some of the tourists stuff but very little" (Bob, personal interview). The low crime rate against tourists on the islands is well reported in guidebooks and repeatedly mentioned as a comparison between the Perhentian Islands and elsewhere. Actual rates of crime are difficult to obtain as the police service want to protect the reputation of tourism on the islands, but many resort owners and island residents supported this perception. During my time on the islands I was only aware of two thefts from tourists, one of which was suspected to be from a fellow tourist. Despite this perception and personal experience of low crime rates, recent personal conversations with island residents have suggested that the crime rate is increasing.

When comparing the islands with some of the negative aspects of backpacker tourism in Thailand Bob expressed concern about the types of tourists the islands were attracting. He suggested there was local concern from some regarding the use of alcohol and drugs: "Problem is there are drugs

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sometimes on Long Beach and everyone is drinking". Although Bob was a Muslim, he told me that he would sometimes enjoy a drink after work, so for him the concern was less about the act of drinking and drug taking from a religious or ethical perspective, but more about the way this behavior was changing the islands. The perception of drug-use on Long Beach was widely circulated among island residents and tourists. I observed some marijuana smoking by tourists on Long Beach, but the extent of drug use was much less than elsewhere in backpacker destinations. In addition, several resort owners suggested that the village had a problem with heroin use among younger males, but I was never able to confirm these statements.

Similar perspectives regarding the change of the islands and the drinking of alcohol were expressed by some of the other residents interviewed. A worker at one of the resorts suggested that the use of alcohol by tourists was changing the character of the islands: "people do not want to just sit and relax on the beach anymore; it is all about drinking and partying. That's not what the islands are about" (Julia, personal interview). This suggests there was a conflict between some residents and the style of tourism which was currently being pursued. There were more locations which established bar-style establishments and offered music or events such as beach bonfires or barbeques. Although this indicated a change in terms of the supply of alcohol, there was still a difference in the extent of the "party" atmosphere when compared to other South East Asian locations.

In terms of alcohol, a compromise appeared to have been reached. Although Muslim traders are not allowed to profit from the sale of alcohol, and Halal restaurants must be alcohol free, there were a number of interpretations of this with the local traders. One property which was owned by a Muslim had recently allowed young non-Muslim staff members to sell beer on the beach from a cooler. I was curious whether this conflicted with any Islamic guidelines, but he explained that the seller was not a Muslim, so that was OK. As long as the resort was not profiting from the sale of alcohol, then he considered it was acceptable: "They (the individuals concerned) are just making some extra money, but it is not

going to the resort" (Kalim, personal interview). He also explained that some tourists want to drink and by offering beer to tourists, they would stay at this end of the beach and it would stop them going elsewhere for food and snacks. The restaurant remained alcohol-free and the design of the resort meant there was a clear separation between the restaurant and the area where beer was sold.

2.2: Over-development

Many of the local residents were concerned about "over-development" and specifically the intensification of tourism on the islands. Although use of the term "development" was unusual among participants and tourists, the term over-development was frequently mentioned. Throughout the interviews and focus groups there were several key areas of concern which were discussed as signifiers of over-development on the islands. Many residents were critical of the new concrete jetties which were built in 2008 as part of the high profile regional development plan instigated by the Malaysian government. The jetties were built on several of the island beaches and it was understandable that discussions of development would focus on these recent changes. Before the jetties were built, due to shallow water the larger boats from the mainland would wait off shore and be met by smaller taxi-boats to ferry passengers to shore. Passengers would then get off the boat at the beach, often getting their feet wet. Once the jetties were operational, the taxi-boats did not need to meet the larger boats as passengers could disembark onto the jetty and the taxi-boat operators consequently lost the income they obtained from this service.

I discussed the jetty with one of these local taxi boat men and asked him if he felt the jetty was a good idea. He initially responded positively to questions about the jetty, which was a common response from those within the tourist industry when interacting with westerners. When prompted, he confirmed that the local taxi men lost the chance to make the 2 RM (approximately $0.60) to transfer each person from the bigger taxi to the shore. This corresponded to a significant income which supported the taxi boat men throughout the season. Although he was losing this income, he still responded in a positive way

commenting that it was bad for taxi drivers, but good for customers. His first reaction was to assume that I was asking from the perspective of tourists and he responded in regards to this being a positive thing for them. When I suggested that perhaps his customers could better afford 2 RM and it was more of a loss for the taxi drivers, he nodded in semi-agreement but was uncomfortable with the conversation. We then discussed the aesthetics of the jetty and island tourism in general. I asked if he thought the jetty was attractive, again he initially responded in a positive manner, but then laughed and shook his head. His subtle responses throughout the discussion indicated that perhaps he was less happy about the pier than he revealed.

Other residents were less supportive of the jetty. One beach vendor who operated snorkel boats and a beach café responded in very negative terms:

> Malik: This is stupid to build it here - why do they think they need it? We don't even use it for most of the year, they just tore up the reef to put this in for what (shrugs)?
> JS: So do you feel the jetty will enhance tourism?
> Malik: No, why would it? I mean look at what they are doing. There used to be a beautiful view from here across the bay, now look at it. And they ruin the reef, so when there is no more reef, the tourists won't come. I cannot take people out on the boats anymore, there are places where the reef is no good for snorkeling, but they don't care (government). It's just all about this (motions a sign for money).

Despite the views of this beach vendor, the change to the beach aesthetics was localized, with the concrete jetty on Long Beach impacting one end of the beach only. On Teluk Aur, the jetty was more visually intrusive, but again only impacted one end of the beach (see Figure 7.1). Some residents felt this jetty was necessary as the bay has lots of rocks which damage boats, whereas others said that the existing jetty is too tall to be used most of the time and is only used when the tide is high, which is when they actually need to use it the least.

Local knowledge suggested that the jetties had been poorly built; several individuals cited examples of the steps deteriorating on jetties after a short time. Many said there was no maintenance of past structures and that they were built with poor construction techniques due to government contractors finding the cheapest methods. They also suggested that they were positioned in incorrect

locations as they were in areas which received the maximum wave action in monsoon season. Several also suggested that the traditional wooden structures were more appropriate as they are less rigid and can withstand the monsoon waves better than fixed structures. There was a suggestion that the new jetty at Panjung Pasir will only be usable for a small amount of time during the year. It could not be used when the waves were high as this is too dangerous for smaller boats which would get smashed against the concrete. One participant showed me his boat which he said was recently damaged in the high waves by hitting the pier. Others talked of how it could be used only in the monsoon season for big supply boats to bring goods in as this is when the water is deep enough for use with big boats; while others suggested it could only be used in the high season, peak tourist time, when there were no waves.

There was a perception across the islands that the jetties are disliked by the tourists, but in reality, most tourists had very little negative association with the jetties. The individuals who indicated a dislike for the jetties were all return visitors and the dislike was probably associated with a similar negative perception of development on the islands. Several of these long-term island visitors suggested that the jetties were an indication of change and over-development on the islands. The dislike of the jetties by local residents and long-term visitors was perhaps more associated with the perception of the impact to tourism overall; the jetties have become symbols of change to the islands. It is not the jetties per se which are disliked, but rather what they represent in terms of changes to the structure of tourism and indications of a different sort of clientele.

Fig 7.1: Teluk Aur before and after the concrete jetty

One focus group conducted with western workers who were island residents centered on understandings of change and island tourism. The participants were asked to discuss where they see the islands progressing in the future:

> Tom: Bigger jetties, bigger boats, more people bigger resorts,
> Mike: Perhentian Islands is not like Bangkok where you can take a bunch of flights from Europe for 500 Euros, touch down and be in Asia, it's kind of hard to get here, its complicated.
> Nicole: But still, they like build new jetties, it just means they are just preparing for more tourists, I mean like….

Sally: But will they come though, or is it just a sort of...
Mike: If it's cheap enough then they will come and if it's easy enough they will come.
Sally: Yeah if it's easy enough but that's, I think that's sort of the clue. It has to be easy...
Tom: Which is why they build the jetty…
Sally: Well ....yeah... yeah that's true.

For many in the group, the islands were on the cusp of over-development and it was clear to them that the direction of future island tourism would be towards intensification of facilities. One group member responded:

> I think generally in tourism, there are some backpackers who discover a nice secluded place and then its more propaganda and you come there one or two years later and there's building nice shops and resorts, big resorts and you go there another two years later and they've built a big one or three big ones and most places that are like maybe small islands they just can't take so many people. That's it (Marcus, focus group).

Throughout the discussion such perspectives continued to circulate with numerous examples of these occurrences elsewhere. Despite the overwhelming negativity, there was an undercurrent of positivity from some members of the group suggesting that some did not want to believe that the islands would head into this direction. As the discussion continued, members argued that perhaps there would be programs established to maintain the islands as a small-scale location or perhaps the owner-operators on the island would prevent this sort of development, but some maintained the perception that the islands were set on a course for mass-tourism.

Along with the new jetties, there was a new concrete shop which was in the process of being built on Pasir Panjung (see Figure 7.2). This facility was built using government funding and would have multiple store-spaces under one roof and space would be leased to traders. Funding for this project had been applied for in 2004, approval was granted in 2006 and construction was underway in 2008. The Star newspaper reported that local residents had opposed the proposed building, but it had been approved anyway as this was the only remaining space available for construction on the beach (Hui, 2008). When asked about this particular project, a regional tourist official responded: "This

building will provide cleaner and safer facilities for the tourists and it is better for the beach vendors" (personal interview). He also told me it would have better electricity supply and be able to store frozen food more safely. The two-story building was constructed in front of existing properties, completely screening them from passing beach traffic. This had caused some vendors to close their shops and had led to a loss of business for others. One store owner described the plan for the shop: "They want to sell us the space back; they say it is more modern" (Fatimah, personal interview). For this vender, the multi-space shop offered no benefits and she felt that it was a government attempt to take more money from island residents. At the time of research the building was still under construction so it was not possible to gauge the success or failure of this venture.

Many beach residents and tourists had negative opinions towards the shop, suggesting it was out of character with the beach, ugly, or a waste of money. I could not find any individuals on the islands who had positive perspectives regarding this facility. One island resident was very vocal about the intensification of development on the beach:

> I'm from the islands, I was born here, so I know what tourists want, they don't want concrete on the holiday, I tell you, six years ago there was no concrete, all chalets were made from the jungle, with local materials. Simple. They don't care, they come and they ask where is cheap, they just want somewhere to (mimes putting bag down) sleep and go, so they don't care (Nom, personal interview).

This individual was proud of his local heritage and confident in his opinions regarding tourist development. His opinions regarding the desires of tourists were mirrored by many of the tourists currently visiting the islands. This illustrates the government strategy of development was focusing on a different tourist market than was currently visiting the islands. Much of the recent government attention for tourism development has focused on high-profile and up-market developments, along with the intensification of facilities, whereas the existing tourists and island residents indicate a dislike of such developments. It is likely that the development strategy for the islands mirrors the aims of the government for the country as a whole, namely full development by 2020.

Figure 7.2: Construction of concrete shop in front of existing properties

Another commonly cited concern regarding island overdevelopment was the size of the newer resorts, some of which had over 100 rooms. Most of the earlier resorts were much smaller with an average of 20 rooms, and those which had grown larger had done so over time. Many residents indicated that the size of the newer resorts was not in keeping with the style of tourism on the islands. One resort owner commented on the new 100 room resort which was built on Teluk Aur: "It has been completely redone, they have air-conditioning and TVs in all the rooms". Whether or not the resort had these facilities remained unclear,

but there was a perception that the resort was significantly more "up-market" than existing resorts (note; this resort was incomplete at time of research). When discussing the new resort, this particular owner was not concerned for a loss of business, but rather due to a perceived change in tourism: "They won't take business away from me, people will still come here because we offer the real Perhentian experience, not all that (gesturing to the resort)" (Sam, personal interview). In contrast, another resort owner on the same bay felt that the new up-market resort would be a form of competition that would help them to improve their resort and this would be better overall for tourists (Kalim, personal interview). These differences illustrate the varying perspectives across the islands regarding island development and change.

During many of the focus groups and interviews, conversation circulated around discussions of change in negative terms. For many the past was preferable and phrases such as "unspoiled paradise" and "pristine" were used to describe the earlier years of island tourism. These were contrasted with words like "degradation", "ruined", "spoiled" and "over-developed" which were used to describe the current situation for the islands. For some participants the changes would be described in terms of changes to the environment or to the physical make-up of the islands. Most felt that tourism was responsible for many of the changes described and suggested that tourism development was harming the future sustainability of the islands. Throughout the conversations, many suggested that the islands were over-developed and had changed.

Despite the negative descriptions of change, some participants still described the islands in terms of comparisons with more intensively developed locations: "There's still like no roads here y'know and for quite a lot of people it's like a massive culture shock to come somewhere like this and have everything so ....undeveloped" (Mick, personal interview). Often, an individual would illustrate negative aspects of over-development such as trash or large resorts, and later in the same conversation describe the islands as paradise or undamaged in comparison to other locations. This duality of perspectives suggests a conflict in terms of how the islands are viewed, that the individuals concerned were

conflicted in how to react to the development of the islands. This gave the sense that many retained a positive view for the islands' future and that the discussed over-development could be prevented.

3: DEVELOPMENT AS A POLITICAL TOOL

Particular development strategies are frequently used by national and regional governments to support particular political agendas. In the case of Malaysia, the national government is currently undertaking a national strategy to become fully developed by 2020 (Government of Malaysia, 2001). The successive New Economic Policies established by the government have aimed to reduce poverty and create conditions for social equality within economic development (Hart, 1994). The focus within policy documents is to promote key areas of development for targeted purposes and to concentrate facilities (Bunnell, 1999). The country has experienced major infrastructural improvements in core areas, leading to a bifurcation of the country. In terms of tourism promotion, government policy documents detail a commitment to an intensification of tourism focusing on conference and shopping facilities (urban) and ways to utilize tourism to promote the strategies of social equality. Despite the intention for social equality, these policy documents do not specify any collaborative action with local actors.

In recent years, development on the islands has been used as a political strategy for both ruling and opposing parties. As discussed in Chapter one (9-11) the islands were under the political control of PAS between 1999-2004, during which time the regional government placed limits on certain developments and denied applications for expansion. In order to establish a contrast to this limitation, when the regional government reverted back to the ruling coalition party, they began to approve new construction and generate integrated development plans. This strategy continued and intensified as they approached re-election in 2008. Many residents suggested that the new jetties and the development schemes were a ploy to encourage voter support.

Many island residents felt that islands were being developed in order to promote the current government by creating flagship tourist destinations. The previous Prime Minister, Mahathir was responsible for a (successful) high profile project to intensively develop his home island (Langkawi) and several residents suggested the current government was seeking similar for the Perhentian Islands. One focus group respondent described how the government is using tourism promotion to enhance their image:

> I think the government has a policy whereby they want to attract the big spenders, y'know and so with the whole *bumi* thing and everything y'know. I think they are trying that. They do want to attract these people obviously because they are the government they want make more money, they want to make this thing like all posh and luxurious and it makes them look good (Tom, focus group).

There was general agreement across the group with this sentiment and a sense that the government was steering development policy for the islands. Many felt that the government cared more about reputation and high profile projects than the practicalities for the islands. This perspective was echoed by a number of participants in numerous different contexts: "Malaysia style is for big and visible development projects with little interest in the reality of whether the projects are necessary or desired by the local population. To be seen as developed is the most important thing" (Sam, personal interview). For many island residents, development itself was not particularly disliked, but there was a negative association attached to the government and development projects they established. There was significant anti-government sentiment from many island residents and they felt that decisions were made based on government agendas rather than what was desired by local residents.

Some suggested that the government needed to play a more involved role in promoting specific types of development which would enhance and support the islands. This contrasted with the perspective of some who wanted the government to limit their interference in island politics. One participant who was well educated in marine science and environmental consultancy responded:

I think it's like the authorities, if they like limit the amount of stuff that can actually be built in an area…if they say right these are the set amount you can build each year or if you build, there's restrictions on what you can and can't do. Sort of like with septic tanks and things, they've got to be at a certain standard before you're allowed to use them, putting regulations like that to actually prevent leaching of detergent and human wastes and other kinds of waste from the resorts themselves from going straight into the ocean. (Mark, personal interview)

In this example the regulation of island development would prevent overdevelopment if there was adequate monitoring and enforcement. It was difficult to ascertain if any regulations regarding property construction and septic systems did exist (see below) but there was a definite contrast between island residents who wanted less government involvement and those who felt more regulations would be beneficial.

3.1: Islam and Development

Although not an Islamic state, article three of the Malaysian federal constitution establishes Islam as the official religion of the state. Many of the principles of Islam guide policy-making and therefore have a direct and indirect impact on aspects of economic development. This relationship between development and Islam in contemporary Malaysia is detailed by Hooker (2004) by tracing the use of particular concepts from political parties. Many traditional Islamic perspectives oppose grand scale development projects because of their association with western/modern life. She notes how in order to advance development in Malaysia, politicians had to blend modernization projects with concepts which were acceptable to Islamic perspectives. In the context of the ruling political party, Islam is framed as a moral code which can unite the country and guide acceptable development.

The current push towards full development by 2020 was established and promoted by former Prime Minister Mahathir. Throughout the 22 years he held office he was an ardent supporter of modernization and development, but espoused self-sufficiency in development (Ooi, 2006; Weiss, 2006). The style of development proposed by Mahathir attempts to blend development and

technological advances with Islamic/religious values to build a strong society. Development was frequently framed by Mahathir as a path to freedom and self-reliance from outside influences, which appealed to the more traditional Islamic perspectives (Hooker, 2004: 165). The current Malaysian government has continued to utilize this particular interpretation of Islam in their development and modernization agenda, although arguable less successfully, (Ooi, 2008). In contrast to the ruling coalition party, PAS is opposed to the modernist perspectives of UNMO and seek a more inward focused development policy (Nagata, 1994: 70). The PAS perspective espouses development which centers on community oriented projects, such as building mosques and schools and applies limits on international investment. PAS has historically supported the strengthening of *bumiputera*-oriented policies and has opposed the privatization of public utilities (Hilley, 2001: 194-6).

Although little researched, there is the potential for forms of Islamic development to be framed as alternative development which is locally relevant. In the context of Malaysia, Choudhury (1996) sketches out how Islamic life practices can be applied to development principles in order to make the process more socially and environmentally responsible. He claims: "In the *Islamic politico-economic framework*, sustainability as a *process of interactions* between purely economic and social goals becomes the object of attainment" (Choudhury, 1996: 151, italics in original). In this argument the processes of development in Islam are interlinked with human development and social equality to create stable and sustainable development. Choudhury identifies five key *Shariah* principles which (should) influence development: just ends, creativity, felicity, purpose and certainty (ibid: 151). These principles guide behavior at the personal level and the organization of social and economic development in order to achieve an integrated and successful society. In terms of the application of these, they are framed as principles which would guide development towards more moral ends.

In the context of the Perhentian Islands, the relationship between Islamic perspectives and development is a little more complex. Although many of the island residents are not Muslim, the development policies of the government are

influenced by Islamic viewpoints which in turn potentially influence island development. At the personal level, a large percentage of the workers and property owners are Muslim, and it is possible that their life choices are influenced in some capacity by the guidelines of their faith. Although it is difficult to identify the sources of influence for particular behaviors, it is possible to draw some conclusions from group behaviors. Across the islands, there is a sense that residents support limited development on the islands and would prefer to retain small-scale operations. Similarly, with the style of tourism, intensified and "western" forms of development are less popular. Although forms of social organization are limited, there is evidence of communitarian approaches towards business organization.

4: DEVELOPMENT AND THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

There is a growing awareness of environmental concerns in Malaysia and specifically with reference to the Perhentian Islands. The islands were the first location in Malaysia to receive a wind turbine to generate electricity along with solar panels which was jointly funded by the government and an electricity supply company. There are several ongoing programs involving public and private partnership which aim to gather data and educate individuals. A program organized in conjunction with Universiti Putra Malaysia's (UPM) Faculty of Environmental Studies and international company Bayer Group has visited the islands since 2006 conducting a series of programs which aims to teach students (and locals) about environmental concerns. There is also a program called the Sustainable Islands Program, a collaboration between NGOs Wild Asia and Malaysia Reef Check which organizes education group projects to evaluate environmental conditions. There are also numerous educational tourist trips and study tours which focus on similar issues allowing individuals the opportunity to conduct volunteer work as part of their vacation or study.

Quantitative evaluations of the environmental impact of tourism development on the islands are difficult as there are few if any baseline studies against which to compare conditions. There have been a few studies conducted

recently by academic and private organizations (Yap & Kahoru, 2001; Coral Cay, 2005; Reefcheck Malaysia, 2008) in order to collect data, but there are no studies which establish conditions prior to tourism development on the islands. In addition, it is not possible to separate the environmental impacts from infrastructural improvements to the local village (such as the school, hospital and Mosque) from those of tourism development. Although tourism has possibly increased the number of village inhabitants, a direct correlation between improvements and tourism is not appropriate. There are also activities unrelated to tourism which impact the natural environment. An increase in fishing in the surrounding waters has an indirect environmental impact by altering the marine ecology of the surrounding areas. Construction of petroleum refining facilities and industrial development on the mainland can impact the islands by increasing the turbidity of the water. More generally, levels of air pollution in surrounding areas can impact the reproduction or food supply for plants and animals on the islands. Given the issues with quantitative evaluations of environmental impacts, this research qualitatively evaluated impacts by observing physical conditions and establishing local perceptions of environmental concerns. It also situated these viewpoints alongside those of tourists comparing the perceptions of environmental concerns.

4.1: Observations of Impacts

Many of the impacts to the natural environment can be observed, if not evaluated scientifically. Previous studies have identified small island destinations as particularly vulnerable to environmental impacts from tourism (Bird, 1989; Gossling, 2003). Studies elsewhere identified a number of areas which are of particular concern: trash, construction, sewage disposal and water usage (Mathieson & Wall, 1982; Butcher, 1991; Buckley, 1994; McLaren, 1998). An increase in the numbers of tourists visiting a destination generates more waste which must be disposed of. The disposal methods chosen can have their own environmental impacts; landfills create leacheates which can impact water and soil and incineration generates ash and air pollution. Added to this, poor disposal

methods are particularly problematic for marine environments as a number of marine animals can be impacted by certain types of trash. Prior to tourism on the islands, local residents dealt with their waste through small scale burning and localized composting of decomposable materials. Most of the waste generated was from natural sources on the islands as other materials would need to be imported from the mainland. In more recent years, the lifestyles of village residents have changed and more products are imported which are difficult to dispose of (village resident, personal interview).

In order to deal with the trash generated by tourists, the islands operate a trash removal service which collects trash from centralized points and disposes of it on the mainland. This is a mandatory service and there is a fee for this which is billed to each of the resorts. It was not clear whether there was a difference in amount for the size of the resort; each resort operator when asked about this was not sure. Some resorts said they were billed through their tourist license. It was suggested that if you do not pay the trash fee, you do not get your license to operate. In an article discussing the issue of environmental degradation on the islands, State Commercial, Industry and Environment Committee chairman Toh Chin Yaw stated: "…many of the operators are refusing to pay the maintenance fees and continued to indiscriminately throw their garbage into the sea" (The Star, 2009, June 15). The trash collection service is only operated during peak season, usually around mid-February to mid September; it cannot operate during monsoon season or bad weather as the waves are too high. The trash generated during the off-season is considerably less due to the limited number of tourists on the islands, but what is generated is usually burned. The difficulty comes when the service stops operating, but tourists are still arriving or workers are still on the islands. In these situations some resorts will ferry their trash back to the mainland, others bury or burn it behind their resorts. At the start of the 2008 season there were numerous examples of partly buried and partly burned trash piles at many of the resorts. Even during peak season when trash is routinely collected, a number of the kitchen areas on resorts would burn their waste

materials and several staff living quarters would burn trash rather than dispose of it in trash cans.

The trash is collected offshore on floating pontoons which prevents the concentration of pests around the trash and also removes an unsightly and unpleasant problem from the islands. Small boats will leave a resort loaded with trash to deposit on the pontoons and return empty, leading a number of tourists to believe the trash is dumped at sea. There are a number of problems identified by many islands residents with these trash pontoons. One of the key problems was the lack of schedule for the service. One resort owner commented:

> The beginning and end schedules for the trash boats are not known, they just don't tell us when it starts or if they do it is usually wrong. The platforms are often full at the start of monsoon; you can see the trash bags out there in lines, just following the lines of the waves. Sometimes this can also happen in peak season if there is wave action. It's pretty awful (Andy, personal interview).

Figure 7.3: Trash pontoons located offshore

Additionally, some of the trash barges are in a poor state of repair and sections may be falling apart which means that the bags fall from the platform and end up in the water. There were several examples of black bags being found washed-up on the beach which had receipts or paperwork linking them to particular resorts. The platforms are also not collected as regularly as needed, leading to some being piled higher than sensible for the particular platform. Many participants suggested that the trash pontoons needed improving and told stories of trash falling from pontoons and being washed into coral reefs or onto beaches. When asked about the trash falling from the pontoons, many western participants

blamed the local workers: "They don't know how to stack it properly; they just dumped it on there when it was full" (Andy, personal interview). Another described how some of the workers had thrown the bags on and missed, but had not attempted to retrieve them. Around many of the resorts there is no frequent collection of trash from outside guest quarters or staff quarters. There was evidence of trash piled up outside staff quarters for several weeks, which would subsequently be washed away during heavy rains. There is often no removal of natural waste, such as fruit dropped from trees or droppings from monkeys. There were also large amounts of waste at the back of many resorts; broken tiles, mirrors, toilets, wood etc., which was not tidied away or disposed of. In other locations there were areas which seemed to be operating as open trash dumps or impromptu dumping areas.

Figure 7.4: Beach clean-up with tourist volunteers

Whilst on the islands I participated in several beach clean-ups where we would target a particular beach and collect and dispose of trash. This allowed me to observe both the type of trash being generated and the perceptions of tourists when conducting beach clean-ups. The material on the beaches indicated several sources for the trash. There were very large light bulbs of particular shapes which are used by the fishing boats, along with empty engine oil bottles. There were also fluorescent light bulbs which could have been from the marine

park department or from a larger tourist resort (very few locations use these fluorescent tubes, they were seen only at the larger resorts). There were several bags which had clearly fallen from the platform and washed ashore. They had identifiable resort paperwork along with kitchen and guestroom waste which was in advanced stage of decomposition, indicating they had fallen from the pontoon some time ago. The beach also had lots of empty water bottles which could have been washed up from any location; most were the type sold on the islands and mainland to tourists.

Figure 7.5: Trash bags washed up onto beach

One of the beaches that was regularly in need of cleaning was known as the government beach. This location had a primitive campsite which could be used by locals and schools and was close to one of the docking points for fishing boats. Although there was frequently a lot of trash on this beach, much of it was piled up in particular areas; either showing that people had attempted to control the trash or if there had been a trash receptacle perhaps they would have used it. At the other end of the beach there was a trash bag which was being used, but there was no indication of who would remove it when it was full. There was less direct tourist trash here than from other sites, more evidence of local branded products and remains from commercial fishing traffic. There were also items which could have been discarded by locals, fishermen or resorts, such as a TV,

an old gas cylinder and large plastic tubs. Several of the resort owners felt that the trash from many of the beaches was left behind after locals camp on the beaches. Although there was a considerable amount of trash left behind from what were clearly beach camp episodes at several locations, there was evidence of trash from other sources. There were lots of the individual sachets of butter and jam used by many resorts, along with international brand shampoo and sun cream bottles.

Figure 7.6: Impromptu trash dump from multiple sources

Despite the evidence of mixed source trash, many of the tourists would observe trash on beaches or in the water and suggest that the trash was due to a local lack of consideration for trash disposal. Among those who participated in the beach clean-ups there was an over-riding perception that the trash was generated by locals, rather than tourists. Initially, when asked where they think the trash comes from, most thought the mainland was the source, suggesting poor trash control practices meant the trash washes ashore on the islands from the mainland. Once on the beach, seeing the trash, they felt overwhelmingly that it was local rubbish, some of the items were pointed to that could not float and therefore must be from local sources. One participant asked why locals would want to "spoil such a beautiful location, why can't they appreciate it like we do" (beach clean participant), others were much more vocal stating it was "disgusting

that they do this". These sentiments suggest paternalistic perspectives regarding the ability of local peoples to adequately maintain their environment and a perceived superiority on behalf of the western individuals. Among the majority who had negative perspectives regarding locals, there were a few who felt that islanders would know how to take care of their islands and that this was their livelihood so they had an impetus to protect it. However, the majority felt that the trash was coming from local sources, the mainland or from passing boats.

The focus upon the locals as a source of the trash was also extended when the source of trash was clearly of tourist origin. Although tourists may have been the source, it was suggested that the disposal methods were the responsibility of the locals. The local failure to adequately deal with the waste was perceived as a lack of consideration and knowledge, rather than a physical difficulty resulting from large numbers of tourists. In this way, the tourists absolve themselves of the guilt of "spoiling" the natural beauty and instead transfer the responsibility to others. This allows for the continuation of tourism activities without the need to address the potential long term consequences of these activities.

Figure 7.7: Beach sand bagged for use in construction

In many cases there were direct physical environmental impacts from the construction of more formalized projects. As importing construction grade sand is expensive, many contractors will remove sand from beaches in order to mix concrete for projects and there was evidence of half-filled bags on several beaches (see Figure 7.7). One participant described what had occurred on one of the beaches:

> They have dug deep trenches behind the resort, they needed the sand for building (I expressed shock). Oh this is the normal resource for local building materials; they take the sand from above the high tide line. It isn't normally a problem, that's what they all do, but they needed so much sand. That was the problem (Kalim, personal interview).

This removal of sand has a dual impact on the environment. Firstly the removal of sand has a negative impact on the shore line, destabilizing tree roots and allowing more silt and debris to enter the shallower coastal waters. This in turn smothers the corals preventing photosynthesis and leading to deterioration of the reefs. On the particular beach where the above resort was located, there were several trees with sand eroded from around their roots and some which had fallen (see Figure 7.3). Although the reason for this destabilization could not be confirmed, the local residents believed that the trees had fallen in the monsoon after the resort had been built. Secondly it has an indirect impact as the concrete built with this type of beach sand is weaker and more easily eroded. This then leads to faster breakdown of the built structures and the subsequent physical pollution from this degradation, followed by the need to remove more sand to replace the structures in a few years time. This short-sightedness of island construction was understood by many local residents, but it was felt that the government contractors are encouraged to find the cheapest methods possible, not necessarily the most reliable. Several individuals told me of projects which had been constructed in this manner and subsequently collapsed or been eroded during the winter monsoon. One of the smaller jetties at the end of Teluk Aur had a date stamp in the concrete of 2002, but in 2005 was already in disrepair. Another small concrete jetty which was built in 2005 was crumbling and was replaced by a larger structure in 2007.

Figure 7.8: Exposed tree roots and downed trees due to sand erosion

Although many of the projects were government sponsored projects, there were also some locally generated projects which used equally short-term measures. Many suggested that the difficulty of obtaining materials and skilled workmen to perform the required projects lead to these shortcomings. Even the simplest supplies had to be ordered from the mainland, at minimum taking several days, and frequently the orders would be mixed-up and the wrong materials received. This meant that many necessary upgrades or fixes were not completed. One example was a situation in one resort where hanging hooks would have improved the service for customers and protected equipment, but this was not completed as it became difficult to order the materials. Another individual suggested reason for the shortsightedness of resort owners was the structure of property ownership and leases on the islands. Due to government restrictions established in the Malaysian constitution, only *bumiputera* can own land on the islands, which is then leased or sub-leased to the resort owners. Therefore property ownership is frequently organized based on short-term leases, often lasting just a year. This means that for many resort owners, large and costly improvements are not undertaken for fear of losing the lease the following year. Many of the smaller properties recounted stories of leases being

refused or sold to higher bidders after improvements had been made. Therefore there is very little incentive to invest money in improvements to the properties or their supporting infrastructure. This then adds to the short-term viewpoint of many island residents and the "make-do" short term solutions to property problems.

Figure 7.9: Leaking septic system

Another area of environmental concern for small island destinations is the treatment of sewage. There is no centralized sewage treatment system on the Perhentian Islands and resorts have their own septic tanks to control wastes. Many of these are basic systems which are common in small-island and rural locations, described as having "slow-seep" systems which allow for the natural decomposition of wastes and the gradual seepage into the soil (rather than having to pump to empty tanks). Some of the larger resorts had more sophisticated measuring and monitoring systems to control the waste. In many of the resorts, I observed examples of the tanks overflowing and seeping waste material into the surrounding soil. As the soil is largely sand, the seepage can spread across areas quickly and is difficult to contain. When discussing these issues with owners and maintenance staff I was told the problem is common during the busy season when the size of the tanks cannot support the number of

tourists. I was also told that during rainy season the amount of water in the soil also leads to tank and pipe overflows.

Many of the resort operators were concerned about the sewage system and suggested that there needs to be a better system to cope with the amount of waste. Many of the western owners felt that there were no regulations governing the sewage system and that this has led to deterioration in the condition of the reef: "You can see there has been nutrient overload in the water; you can see that from all the algae growing on the coral and everything" (Julia, personal interview). This perspective was repeated by many and later reported in a widely circulated newspaper article (Hui, 2008). In response to these claims, the State Commercial, Industry and Environment Committee chairman Toh Chin Yaw said "They are blaming us for not centralising the sewage system and garbage collection without realising that it is too costly for the state government to do that" (The Star, 2009, June 15). It was felt that the burden of cost for improving sewage facilities should be shared with resort owners, but that they would refuse to pay. Although there is evidence of algae and eutrophication in some area beaches, without baseline studies and regular monitoring it is difficult to evaluate changes in water conditions or identify the particular source for the changes.

In addition to the disposal of sewage, nutrients can also enter the water system from water disposal from other sources. Several of the resorts do not have advanced systems for the disposal of water from washing and showers: "Some of these operators are taking the easy way out by diverting all types of wastes from their chalets direct into the sea" (Yaw quoted in The Star, 2009, June 15). Many of the smaller resorts have water disposal pipes which lead directly from the cabins onto waste ground or straight out underneath the cabin. Given the flow of water, these areas are often gullied and detergents and water washes out towards the ocean. This can be problematic during periods of high occupancy rates or during times of low rainfall when there is not the volume of water to dilute the potential pollutants.

Tourism also pressures small island destinations in the supply of freshwater which is often limited. There was a water treatment plant on Palau

Besar, but I received varying answers over who received supplies from here. Many of the resorts had water storage tanks and indicated that they had their own wells for water supply. Several respondents advised me that water will occasionally run-out during high season, and I personally experienced times when the water supply would slow or stop. There are efforts in place to limit the use of freshwater. Although most of the newer resorts have flush systems, many of the older resorts with shared facilities maintain *mandi* style bathrooms which use less water. Many of the resorts only have cold-water showers, which has the indirect result of limiting one's time in the shower.

Although there was a high consumption of packaged products, there were few opportunities for recycling on the islands. Given the off-shore location, all material to be recycled would need to be transported off of the islands and any recycling efforts would therefore need to be funded in some capacity. Elsewhere in Malaysia there are recycling collection points and recycling facilities, but these are concentrated in the southern part of the peninsula. From observations across the islands, there is a high proportion of material discarded as waste which could be recycled. A large amount of waste is generated from plastic water bottles which is troublesome as plastic recycling is complex, polluting and not cost effective due to the low amounts of recoverable material. There are also large numbers of aluminum beverage cans which can be recycled. A few resorts operated a recycling service for cans which are taken to the mainland where they are sold for cash, but there were still many which were discarded.

In addition to recycling, there are opportunities to reduce the amount of waste generated. Some resorts encourage the refilling of water bottles from larger re-usable water butts. This is cheaper for the tourist and reduces the amount of plastic water bottles used. One of the problems with this is that the water from the larger butts is not cold, something many of the tourists commented on. There are also several resorts that use small plastic containers for spreads and jams and individual portions of butter. Many resorts commented that this was what tourists required and that alternatives would be unworkable. When discussions circulated around these options for change, many of the resort

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owners were resistant to ideas suggesting they would simply not work. There was an unwillingness to try alternatives and the perception that the islands would need to find a way to manage waste, rather than limit the generation of it.

4.2: Perceptions of Environmental Impacts

One of the subjects commonly discussed by island residents and tourists was the condition and future of the coral reef. As snorkeling and scuba diving is a major draw for tourists (and workers) to the islands, it is unsurprising that the coral reef would receive this attention. Many of the individuals discussed examples of the reef showing signs of stress from tourism: "There's a lot of places, if you see areas covered with algae you know that there's some kind of outflow pipe nearby because it provides the nutrients that algae need to grow in an area like that" (Mark, personal interview). Others commented on patches of coral which were broken or areas which had undergone stress and showed signs of bleaching. When asked why they feel these things had occurred, most pointed to tourism as a cause: "You build stuff, you have runoff with concrete and all sorts of shit which runs into the water which has been a problem in many locations where they have built too much too fast and they just don't take care of the waste" (Sally, personal interview). These perspectives were common among westerners who identified the negative aspects of tourism on the islands.

This level of awareness regarding the environmental impacts of tourism raises questions of culpability on the part of tourists and workers. If tourists are aware that their activities are in part causing the deterioration of the locations they visit, how do they negotiate their part in this destruction? I discussed island development with several tourists and workers who were tourists elsewhere and asked them to describe how they see the connection with tourism. Some suggested that tourists care about where they visit and cited examples of responsible tourism and choices made to limit impacts from tourism. However, some also pointed out that tourists do not have to live with the consequences of their travel: "Quite often people who go away abroad on holiday from Europe will go somewhere one year and go a (sic) completely different the next year, maybe

to a newer set of islands which haven't been developed as much, but they never really get to see the long term effects of what happens" (Nick, focus group). In this way he highlighted how tourists are usually screened from the results of their consumption, even if they are initially confronted by it.

Many tourists and workers felt that the majority of visitors to the islands did not want up-market and over-developed facilities. They suggested that there would be a long-term future market for small-scale and budget scale tourism. However, there were several situations where the behavior of tourists brought this into question. Many tourists during interviews would express a desire to protect the environment and limit their impact, but would also discuss the primitive nature of facilities as being a negative aspect of tourism on the islands. There are increasing numbers of individuals who desire electricity supply to be available continuously for 24 hours and who request warm water showers for rooms. On one occasion there was a jet-ski group who appeared at one beach in violation of the Marine Park regulations (they were allowed to do this as they were locally important individuals). Despite the status of these individuals, most local residents overwhelmingly responded in negative ways to this violation of the Marine Park rule. Several were angry and specifically noted that jet-skis were not appropriate for the islands. In contrast, whilst observing the activities on the beach, there were numerous western tourists who approached the group and asked if they could rent the jet-skis. I overheard several commenting that this would be a great thing to be able to do on the beach. This would suggest that there are as many tourists who would welcome more up-market and intensive development on the islands.

5: SOCIAL ORGANIZATION AND COMMUNITY POWER

Despite all of these multiple viewpoints regarding island developments, one trope which dominated conversations was in relation to the lack of consultation over development issues and the perceived lack of local power to influence decision making. McLaren (1998) identifies this as a common problem for local communities who frequently lack power when deciding their involvement

in tourism. In a study of residents in Melaka, Cartier (1997) found that the Malaysian government ignored local desires in favor of national tourism development goals. On the Perhentian Islands many of the discussions focused on the recently constructed jetties and concrete shop. Island residents overwhelmingly felt that they had little power to resist government projects and that decisions were made by national and regional governments on their behalf. Residents were not informed or consulted about development projects and felt they had little power against central government.

Most individuals I spoke to said they had no knowledge that the jetties would be built until the construction crews arrived: "They don't even tell us its coming. Just one day they turn up with machines and begin building. I'm sure some people know but we never did" (Abdul, personal interview). Some individuals said they had heard some rumors, but nothing definite and certainly no consultation with local actors. Many also suggested that there were frequently rumors which circulated around the islands making it difficult to know anything for certain. When asked if there was any local resistance to the projects, participants frequently discussed their lack of knowledge and control as limiting factors for influencing decision-making.

> JS: Did you know it was going to be built?
> Kamal: No, this is a government project; we cannot say anything about government projects
> JS: You didn't know?
> Kamal: No, they just build it. We all say we don't want it but they build it anyway.

Many of the residents discussed how government bodies were not easily available and did not readily listen to the perspectives of local individuals. Some also highlighted the difficulties of organizing protests against government projects: "There are some people who try to work against it, but they have difficulties. They can't go to the newspapers cause they are all censored, if you say anything against the government you could be in trouble" (Kalim, personal interview). From many of the residents, there is a sense of frustration and disempowerment as they are not represented or consulted by local government.

There was also a widespread perception that some resorts that were owned by those with influence in local government received favorable treatment and were able to violate regulations without repercussions. Many of the participants identified key elite actors who were felt to have more influence and control over island politics and developments due to their economic influence. In terms of ownership, approximately 40% of properties were owned by individuals or companies who were described by others to be elites. Some resort ownership companies had multiple properties on the islands and others were regional companies with affiliations on the mainland or on neighboring islands. Although this indicates a different scale to island economics, it should be noted that none of the companies represented on the islands (at this time) were from internationally owned companies. This is different from the tourism economies found in many other locations where international ownership is common and locations experience significant economic leakages.

There was a very paternalistic perspective from many of the western workers and owners in relation to the local Malaysian officials and their abilities. One western individual who was a long-term island resident commented on the perceived shortcomings:

> They need to employ professional people at the Marine Park center to follow the rules; actually they need more professional people everywhere. Nothing ever happens. They are all too busy talking and not doing, they have the attitude of "we'll be ok". They have no long term view; it's too short-sighted (Jonathon, focus group).

This perspective was repeated by a number of participants in relation to those in positions of power within Malaysia. Government bodies were commonly described to be inefficient, bureaucratic and slow-moving. Similarly, many western owners and workers described local individuals in terms of lacking education, knowledge and expertise. There were several situations where individuals suggested that the locals were not taking things seriously, did not have the training or skills, and often just did not care.

> And with regards to like the local fishermen, especially the local people, they haven't got the grasp of like the science and things that we do… They don't really understand the sort of big picture that we do. It's kinda

hard to make them believe that what we're trying to tell them is actually gonna benefit them in the future (Sam, personal interview).

This parallels the perspectives of many who organize environmental projects for the islands as most feature education as a pivotal point for their programs. In addition, many tourists felt that educating local individuals was essential as they need to be "taught how to care for their islands" (personal interview).

In many of the interviews and informal discussions with western individuals, the local populations were frequently referred to though the use of the word "they". This usage suggests an understanding of difference between the western and local individuals which conflicts with other expressions of commonality. The local populations are all subsumed under the moniker of they irrespective of local difference or similarity. The use of they was frequently attributed to local populations when their behaviors were considered undesirable by western individuals and it often carried a negative connotation. This illustrates a paternalistic and superior perspective regarding local populations and their ability to manage and control the islands. There is an underlying assumption within many of the discussions that the local communities are inferior in their abilities in contrast to the western individuals speaking.

There was also a sharp contrast between local and western views in relation to the Marine Park Service. Some local individuals felt that the Marine Park was operating a good service and were protecting the reef. One local individual suggested that previously there was no regulation and the established rules have shown improvement. All visitors to the islands pay a fee to the Marine Park which supports conservation and protection activities. During the period of this research, new buoys had been established to prevent boats from anchoring on coral, and lines had been established protecting areas of the reefs from boat traffic. Although most were largely supportive, some local individuals identified the short-comings of the Marine Park Service, but most felt this was due to limited resources:

> The reason they cannot do enough is lack of budget, there is no money from the government. It is not due to lack of interest, they want to help, but

their hands are tied (asked if he feels they are properly trained). Oh yes, they are trained to the highest standards, all of the staff are university educated, they study the marine environment, but many times they do not have enough money to do it (Manny, personal Interview).

Many of the tourists interviewed were surprised at the newly established buoys and the high standards of the snorkeling areas. The exception to this was some of the long-term return visitors to the islands who indicated that they had observed deterioration over the reef over the years.

The responses from western owners were commonly much more negative. Many suggested that the Marine Park Service were poorly educated and lacked commitment: "they do not know their jobs", "treat it like fun", "don't have qualifications" and so on. Many felt that the Marine Park Service were ineffective as they did not enforce the regulations established.

…the Marine Park has been created here, but they don't enforce any of the sanctions, I mean on the sign. But the Marine Park authorities don't sort of take control. We saw the guys down at Highmark resort (name changed) pulling in a fishing net late at night. It's sort of, there are rules which are meant to be associated with it but none of them are actually enforced anyway. There's no sort of strict fines or punishments for people actually breaking those sort of rules (Mark, focus group).

When the Marine Park Service organized conservation activities, several of the western operators refused to attend, claiming that the projects would ultimately be conducted in an unsatisfactory manner. One operator felt that the Marine Park Service would get publicity from his volunteer work which he did not want to support. Another discussion circulated around the building of artificial reefs from plastic piping, which was an attempt to repair some of the reef damage which had occurred through tourism activities. I was told the artificial reefs would remain under-colonized and would look like trash.

In tourism, the seasonal and casual nature of employment is frequently a barrier to social organization amongst workers or entrepreneurs. In a study of Balinese entrepreneurs, Dahles found that despite the potential for benefits, small entrepreneurs were reluctant to organize themselves into structured collaborative units (1999: 31). Instead, they rely heavily on social networks to

ensure success, and that these networks are more important than formalized organizations (1999: 33). A similar situation was found on the Perhentian Islands where entrepreneurs in similar categories were not interested in formalized organization. The reluctance seemed to be less in relation to perceptions of competition, or of lack of solidarity, but more from a feeling that organization was unnecessary. Some of the western owned resorts had attempted to organize a collaborative unit to agree upon rates for diving courses or rooms, but they had garnered little interest in this among locally-owned resorts. Another resort owner commented: "The trouble is there is no community spirit. No cooperation between the dive centers" (Anna, personal interview). Other western resort owners echoed this sentiment stating there was little interaction between operators. The beaches were described as "separate" and some suggested that competition between resorts was a barrier to group organization.

Despite the perspectives of the western operators, there was evidence of social organization and cooperation between island residents. These forms of cooperation were not unified across the islands and not structured in formalized manner, but they provided an opportunity for forms of social solidarity. There were numerous examples of informal social networks which established and maintained group interests. Across the islands, there was not much variation in the taxi rates, with many rates being the same or very similar. However there was not a formalized agreement between taxi drivers and many suggested that this similarity of rates was something which naturally occurred. I suggested to one group of taxi-drivers that it would be very easy for one person to undercut others and thus secure more work, but they found this an unlikely proposition.

There were also situations where one restaurant would have an item on the menu which would be cooked by a neighboring restaurant. The waiters explained that this was easier for the restaurants to organize rather than them both cooking the same foods. In other situations, boat staff from one resort transported tourists to another resort and resorts would loan equipment and supplies for neighboring facilities. Resort owners would commonly recommend another resort if they did not have what customers requested, either for room

facilities, food or tours. Although these recommendations often reflected personal connections, they were not based upon formalized affiliations between resorts. Although there was doubtless competition for business between resorts, this did not have the same intensity as experienced in other tourist destinations. For example, when travelling to the off-shore islands in Thailand, it is common for resorts representatives to travel on the boats or meet the boats in order to promote resorts and secure bookings. This did not happen on the Perhentian Islands and there was less pressure on tourists to choose one resort over another.

There were also examples of burgeoning formalized social organization across island communities. The construction of the jetties had led to frustration from some local residents and garnered interest in group organization. One of the local beach vendors described how they had organized a petition which was signed by locals and tourists attempting to halt construction of the jetty on one of the beaches:

> Kairul: I tell you – when they build this jetty they were like boom, boom every day, really loud and it shook the beach -the tourists were all annoyed and would say 'I'm staying here for a week', then after one day, they move somewhere else. They don't want that noise when they are on the beach, they want to relax and swim not have all (bang bang bang on counter) all day. What they did last year they got a petition, they got all the tourists, we had 1,000 of them sign and write what they didn't like. They wrote about the noise and how ugly it is, 1,000 of them.
> JS: So what happened to it?
> Kairul: They sent it to the government, but nothing happened, we still have the jetty. But you see they are the government, they have all the power. We don't have any power- we are just small people

The petition was started by several resort owners on the beach and had attempted to use the power of tourist opinions to sway government decisions. Although ultimately unsuccessful, the process of generating a petition revealed underlying group networks and the potential for strengthening social ties across the islands and between island residents and tourists. Whilst this is a positive sign that there were forms of formal organization among island residents, the failure of the venture solidified many of the residents' negative views over power

to influence government. The words of this resident illustrate the feeling of hopelessness from island residents in the face of the actions of the government. Many individuals have clear ideas of how they want their islands to develop and what aspects are disliked, but they feel they have little or no influence over the decisions of governments and actions of developers. Despite these attempts at social organization, the local residents felt disempowered by the lack of interest from regional or national government.

6: CONCLUSION

There are a number of viewpoints regarding acceptable forms of development on the Perhentian Islands which reflects the multi-ethnic make-up of the community. Across the individuals and groups who participated in research, there were threads of similarity which emerged from these differing perspectives. There was an underlying sense that island residents preferred small-scale developments and were dissatisfied with many of the changes which were occurring on the islands. Even within the larger resorts, many of the workers voiced displeasure at intensification of tourism development on the islands. Often this was directed against the newest development, or the expansion of another development, but there was an underlying perception that the islands were on the cusp of overdevelopment. This is a concern given that many tourists specifically seek the illusion (if not the reality) of an unspoiled paradise island. If the push towards further intensification of tourism persists, it is possible that the islands may lose their existing market.

The large government sponsored projects provided a target for anti-development sentiments from islands residents and tourists. Criticism from island residents stemmed from two key areas: firstly, the projects themselves were unpopular and felt by many to be unnecessary. They were frequently presented as illustrations of the overdevelopment of tourism on the islands and it was felt that they did not "fit" with island tourism. Projects were criticized for their poor construction methods, lack of adequate planning and inappropriate use of government funds. Secondly, the projects were unpopular as symbolic

representations of government hegemony. Island residents were frustrated at the lack of consultation prior to construction and their overall lack of control over island developments. These government projects were daily reminders of their lack of power and influence over island politics and their presence potentially performed a disempowering function as a reminder of their lack of control.

This frustration with lack of power and influence over island development was in some cases redirected towards forms of social organization. There were numerous examples of existing community cooperation and forms of informal social organization. Although in their infancy, these processes of organization fostered a sense of community power and could potentially be directed towards more sustainable community endeavors. Many residents demonstrated an interest in citizen participation in planning and organization for island development. Although the government had not extended the offer to participate in planning, there was evidence that some community members would welcome involvement in the process. However, the failures of community protests and the powerlessness exhibited by some island residents could threaten the ability to generate different ways of being. In addition to being on the cusp of overdevelopment, the islands can also be seen as being on the cusp of a process of social change.

Chapter Eight
Concluding Thoughts

1: REVIEWING RESEARCH

As tourism expands in scope and scale it becomes ever more important to examine how tourism operates as a social process. With increased participation in both the production and consumption of tourism, more lives become influenced by the ways in which tourism is practiced and understood. In addition to impacts via direct participation, tourism also influences cultures and peoples through indirect means. The images and textual representations of cultures in tourism promotion materials, guidebooks and travel narrative help to shape understandings of Other cultures. In many situations cultures have been constructed as different, unique or traditional in order to capitalize upon market advantage (Morgan & Pritchard, 1998; Cohen, 1988; Mercille, 2005). This generates particular understandings of peoples and places which influence interactions between cultures. Relationally, these constructions also influence understandings of self through the generation of social norms and categories of difference. By influencing social norms, these processes generate understandings of self for people who are not directly involved in tourism production or consumption. Therefore tourism influences social relations both directly and indirectly though influencing our understandings of self and Others.

For the communities involved in the production of tourism, it is the everyday practices of tourism which shape and influence their lives. Through the lived experiences of tourism, individuals and groups experience and (re)create their subjectivity through the social processes of tourism. As noted by Endensor: "Tourism is a process which involves the ongoing reconstruction of praxis and space in shared contexts" (2001: 60). Highlighting the shared generation of these spaces of tourism acknowledges the inter-dependent relationships between producers and consumers within tourism communities. This challenges the concept of a producer community impacted *by* tourism and suggests a more reflexive understanding of the social processes of tourism. This also serves to

extend the analysis of tourism to include all those involved in the daily process of tourism production and consumption. On the Perhentian Islands, the ways that tourism was practiced suggests alternative conceptualizations of the ways that tourism operates as a social practice. These research draws attention to the particular understandings of tourism which circulate through and around the tourism communities on the islands. It is through these understandings that the discourses of tourism are generated and identities and subjectivities are made and remade in the context of everyday life.

This research highlights the multiple character of tourism and how discursive constructs about communities engaged in tourism generate particular understandings. These understandings are always multiple and shifting, reflecting the changing nature of social life. Through examining tourism practice this research seeks to rewrite the understandings of tourism communities and generate alternative ways of viewing participation in tourism. This research contributes to the wider knowledge within post-development, highlighting alternative ways of viewing economic activity outside of dominant development (and economic) paradigms. By focusing on the many motivations and practices which exist outside of dominant hegemonic descriptions, individuals and communities can be freed from the confines of limited economic descriptions allowing for alternatives ways of being.

This research also contributes to critical tourism theory, attempting to rewrite understandings of tourism outside of existing understandings. It challenges many of the established binaries and categorizations within traditional tourism literature (such as host and guest, worker and owner etc.) and focuses on similarities and connections. Through highlighting the different motivations for engagement with tourism production, this research challenges the existing understandings of tourism communities as passive recipients of tourism and instead draws attention to the active participation of producer communities. In this way, the conditions for engagement with tourism are rewritten, not just for the Perhentian islands, but for tourism communities elsewhere. The agency of the individual is reclaimed and economic choices can be framed outside of existing

understandings. This recognizes the potential power of the producer communities and destabilizes the conceptual power of dominant economic narratives.

1.1: Tourism Economies

As part of the process of generating new understandings of producer communities involved in tourism, this research sought to destabilize understandings of economic activity. The process of rethinking is a deliberate attempt to reframe forms of economic activity allowing for the creation of individual and group subjectivities under alternative paradigms. The tourism workers who participated in this research identified multiple motivations for employment in tourism which suggested new understandings of tourism economies. Employment in tourism was identified as a choice and many acknowledged motivations which were associated with a desire for a particular lifestyle. In several cases, negative aspects of employment (such as single-sex accommodation or room sharing) were accepted as working on the islands was a preference. Many island residents travelled in order to accept employment here and both western workers and Malaysian workers identified similar motivations for island employment. This challenges the passive notion of communities involved in tourism which suggests they are selecting employment in tourism through lack of choice or due to the potential for greater economic gain.

The everyday activities of tourism workers suggest that the motivations for engaging with island tourism are not guided solely (or even mostly) by economic gain. Individuals (both workers and entrepreneurs) would refuse promotions, decline additional work or fail to be motivated by economic incentives or punishments. Attempts to shape and mold workers into economically motivated individuals were largely unsuccessful and many owners would have to adjust their business practices to align with island workers desires. This suggests that the motivations for employment and entrepreneurial activity in tourism on the islands are drawn from other factors alongside economic motivations. This was a cause of frustration for some owners, but interestingly they also failed to display

the same profit maximizing motivations experienced elsewhere in tourism destinations. Many owners would not operate following structured business practices and they would similarly identify alternative motivations for business. The narratives used to describe working and business activities illustrated alternative factors which guided decisions to accept work or establish a business on the islands.

The comments from western owners suggested a conflict in terms of the realities of tourism on the islands. Both western and Malaysian workers were criticized for their lack of work ethic and their casual attitude. Given the long working hours, relatively low rates of pay and limited long-term prospects for many of the jobs on the islands, they are unlikely to attract individuals with ambitions beyond the islands. The draw for working on the islands is the exact same casual and relaxed attitude which workers are expected to deny. Many of the owners would negatively identify some of the relaxed attitudes of workers, only to then perform the same approach towards work themselves. The motivations for employment on the islands were driven by the desire to adopt a particular working style and free-time and casualness were valued aspects of island life.

Through working on the islands, individuals were enacting a touristic lifestyle which valued the same activities and freedoms as tourists. This was illustrated by the behaviors of workers and owners as they mimicked the relaxed pace of life and the freedom from commitments. Many would act as tourists during breaks and days off, relaxing on the beach or performing tourist behaviors. The language used to describe life on the islands emphasized the value of relaxation and meeting and interacting with different cultures. These descriptions paralleled the motivations for travel commonly identified by tourists and circulated between workers, owners and tourists as part of a shared experience. Workers and tourists would share pictures of animals and plants they had seen and often share stories of other locations which they had visited. For Malaysian workers, sharing stories of village life and experiences of the islands connected them to western workers and tourists. These acted to (partly) bridge

cultural differences and perform the function of creating shared understanding. These connections did not wholly erase difference or remove the power dynamics between those at leisure and those at work, but these experiences briefly suggest different relations of encounter for tourism communities.

Through these interactions, island residents expanded their performance of a touristic lifestyle and incorporated identifications of self. These daily acts of performing described how they viewed themselves in relation to island tourism. The performance of a touristic lifestyle was part and parcel of how island residents understood their subjectivity. Through these behaviors, they create new identifications for themselves which are located in a third social space, neither tourists nor workers. This fluid definition recreates understandings of tourism communities within a different framework. These touristic performances were seen with Malaysian and western workers, owners and managers, suggesting a connection which ties members of tourism communities together. Although from disparate backgrounds and with different future paths, the individuals involved in island tourism share these similarities of motivation. This would suggest a more complex understanding of communities involved in tourism could be generated which acknowledges these similarities. This could help to collapse the binary categorizations which generate understandings of host communities as passive recipients of tourism, and reclaim agency for those involved.

1.2: Discourses of Tourism

The discourses of tourism which circulated around the islands were multiple and changing. Without wishing to erase this multiplicity, there were several key points around which multiple opinions frequently coalesced. Discussions would frequently circulate around perceived failings and where there was the potential for improvement. For many western owners, managers and workers, the discourses circulated around the shortcomings of the Malaysian authorities and some of the Malaysian workers. There was a perception that there was a lack of consideration for island tourism and island residents were not motivated to preserve the natural environment and control development

practices. There was also a sense that those in positions of power lacked experience or adequate scientific knowledge. These discourses generate particular understandings about the Malaysian community which are steeped in western perceptions of superiority. There was an assumption that western types of knowledge were more valuable and accurate and forms of local knowledge were frequently dismissed. For Malaysian owners, managers and workers, the discourses followed similar tracks, but focused more on the hegemonic behavior of the government and the lack of consultation regarding island developments. Many identified situations where construction had occurred near their properties and there had been no consultation with islands residents. Some participants discussed how developers did not know what was good for the islands and lacked specific local knowledge.

Throughout the discussions from both western and Malaysian participants, there was a sense that island residents wanted to be involved in island politics. The perception expressed by some that islanders were indifferent to island development was not borne out in discussions. Community members were deeply committed to involvement in the development and future of their islands, evidenced by their interest in generating petitions and resisting developments. There were numerous examples of pro-active suggestions for community policies and interaction with generating ideas to find solutions to problems. Many individuals expressed detailed and reasoned arguments for various aspects of community planning and future infrastructure improvements for the islands. Some illustrated detailed local knowledge of environmental ecosystems, tourism markets and tourist expectations. All of this belies the claims that more education and training is needed. Instead, the island community needs ways to exercise their ideas and participate in tourism planning.

Despite articulating a commitment to limited island development, there were numerous examples of the discourses of development which circulated throughout the island communities. Discussions commonly circulated around potential improvements to the physical infrastructure of the islands, such as a centralized sewage treatment facility, modern methods of trash disposal and

more monitoring and control of water quality. These were frequently described as "improvements", revealing the underlying linear developmental understandings of many island residents. These perspectives of development as a process of change were expressed by both western individuals and Malaysians (tourists, workers and entrepreneurs). Each of the environmental concerns identified had an associated technical solution which related to an intensification of the islands' infrastructure. Throughout the discussions, the option of changing the existing operational procedures in order to work within the existing infrastructural limitations (such as using less water, limiting numbers of tourists or generating less waste) was less commonly suggested. Limiting growth was less accepted and it was widely assumed by those who discussed the changes that these adjustments to the island infrastructure would be improvements. Although some related development in negative terms, specifically in relation to overdevelopment, the link between the necessary infrastructural improvements and the symbolic representations of development was not made.

1.3: Gendered Relations

There were a number of ways that gender operated within tourism on the islands. Many of the tourists and western workers had preconceptions regarding the status of women in Malaysia and the acceptance of western women on the islands. These understandings were in part informed by guidebook descriptions and traveler narratives which circulated about the islands. This influenced how westerners (both men and women) interacted with and understood women on the islands. Many identified perceived examples of oppression, restriction and patriarchy which limited women's behaviors. Few were willing to reflect on the Malaysian women's understandings of their own social positions or how their preconceptions were reinforcing these understandings of powerlessness.

Employment in tourism has provided many Malaysian women with the opportunity to challenge existing gender relations within their lives. In contrast to village life, many couples on the islands shared their domestic responsibilities and tasks were less segregated by gender. In many of the resorts, workers and

owners would have their children with them at work, which changed the workplace dynamic. The resort space became an extended family and the responsibility for childcare was shared among family members and resort workers. This re-categorized some of the existing understandings of gendered domestic tasks which would usually have been experienced in *kampong* life. Several women identified how securing a wage meant that they gained status within domestic relationships, giving them the opportunity to exercise control over decision-making.

Many women described working on the islands as an exercise of freedom which allowed them to act differently. This was partly a release from familial obligations of *kampong* life, and partly the opportunity to enact a different lifestyle. Many described being a "different person" on the islands and depicted island life in terms of fun and excitement. Many Malaysian women formed relationships with western women, drawing inspiration from their perceived strength and confidence. The presence of different gendered understandings influenced the behavior of both men and women and helped to recreate new gendered norms. These also performed a reflexive function in some situations, influencing the understandings of self for western women in the context of the valuation systems of Malaysian women.

2: COMMUNITY RELEVANCE/FURTHER RESEARCH

One of the motivations for this project was to make the research relevant to the tourism communities of the islands. This was attempted through incorporating aspects of the participatory action research in the field process which sought to generate results. Through the process of research, individuals and groups are made aware of their own subjectivities and the process of questioning oneself can raise awareness and influence personal understandings (Nast, 1994; McKay, 2002). This means that the research process can be instrumental in bringing about personal change and can act as a motivator for exploring understandings of self: therefore the researcher has a duty to ensure the process is open in order to protect the research subjects (McKay, 2002;

Cameron, 2005). Field processes focused on this potential for change and structured discussions towards possibilities rather than failures.

In addition to the potential for subjective change, this project also aimed to generate connections and/or reinforce existing connections between communities. This intention was drawn from the initial discussions with some residents during pre-research and the aims of participatory action research which seeks to instigate social change. It is also guided by the ideas of a community economy collective as suggested by Gibson-Graham which establishes forms of organization as a source of community power. However, during field research it became clear that was not necessarily something which all or many members of the communities themselves sought. Although some participants (mostly western resort owners) indicated that they sought more formalized community organization, most seemed to feel that the informal networks which existed precluded the need for more formalized social organization. This suggests I had misread the dynamics of social organization on the islands and assumed certain characteristics for participants. Walker et al (2008) found similar assumptions made by NGO projects in Oaxaca, Mexico where projects were organized to be communitarian in nature: "It is curious that this assumed (but unorthodox) model of business organization (and of development) is applied to the poor, in this case to predominantly rural people, often Indigenous, and often women, as if this population is somehow naturally suited to a more cooperative mode of economic life" (536).

In the case of the Perhentian Islands, it was not that cooperation between community members did not exist, but rather it was the *formalization* of these relationships which was not popular. There was an overall support of group activities and collaboration between some resorts and individuals, but a sense that formalizing these connections was unwelcome. The socio-political history of Malaysia has not established formalized organization as a normalized community practice. Meredith Weiss (2006) traces the history of civil society in Malaysia and identifies how forms of organization have been negatively associated with ethnic preference, religious affiliations or organized political parties. There are few

examples of social organization or NGOs which are not tied to these affiliations. As such, the establishment of organized social cooperation does not have a locally relevant historical precedent. When community organization was suggested, many residents were resistant to codifying forms of cooperation. It would seem that for many island residents, forms of organization were negatively associated with the hegemonic control displayed by the government.

There was also a more practical element to the research which aimed to highlight aspects which might help islands residents to enact their own choices over island tourism. I wanted to identify what (if anything) would be useful for local residents from this research. The aim was partly to incorporate these elements into research and partly to generate ideas which could be enacted by the local community themselves. The process of identifying possible solutions and producing and circulating ideas from within the community and without can encourage future community organization and/or collaboration. One frequent request was for English language training, which was incorporated as part of the research process. In addition, I donated materials to support learning, such as an English-Malay dictionary and notebooks with key words to help with basic language skills. Many indicated practical aspects, such as envelopes and stamps in order to write letters of complaint, or pre-prepared petitions. These requests would be difficult to support continuously, but establishing the idea of a community resource which could be organized in this way opens up avenues for further community organization.

An idea for community resources which was generated by western workers during a focus group was a document which contained a list of phone numbers and addresses which identified the particular government agencies responsible for specific aspects of island infrastructure (such as water pollution, solid waste, development etc.). Knowing who to approach in order to make complaints or suggestions is a key aspect of social empowerment which has yet to be formalized on the islands. Generating a paper list is the simplest form of organization for this information, but it would need to be maintained to in order to keep details current and distributed on the islands. A more long term solution

would be a website which could be updated by community members regularly; this could also serve as a social network site and community resource for sharing information and posting requests. Members could share information regarding complaints which had been made, or requests for information, or they could post stories of tactics of resistance which had been successful. There are potential problems with this idea as some island residents do not have access to the internet or sufficient skills to perform updates, which could potentially lead to an imbalance of representation. There are also concerns over censorship and freedom of speech in Malaysia in relation to criticisms of the government.

Another suggestion was to provide information and training to Malaysian workers detailing why preservation and environmental regulation was necessary. This was suggested as a way to help support claims made and generate convincing arguments for change. In addition, information regarding opinions of tourists and motivations for visiting the islands could help generate arguments. Some recommended encouraging tourists to write letters of complaint or make suggestions to regional tourist authorities. All of these suggestions were circulated among island residents and problems and concerns were highlighted and discussed. Hopefully this process will generate results and lead to changes which are locally generated and supported.

As with many projects, the writing stage of research reveals numerous avenues for further study. I am committed to exploring ways to continue rewriting the discourses of tourism from a number of different perspectives. More directly there are two key areas I would like to explore in greater detail in further research projects. The first relates to the role of Islam as an alternative development strategy. Several participants suggested that some Islamic ideals advocate limited development and a focus on more local ownership. In the context of Malaysia, this is further complicated by *bumiputera* preferences established by national government. As there are a number of high-profile tourism development schemes in predominantly Muslim countries, it would be interesting to examine the possibilities of this perspective. Secondly, I would be interested in how forms of community organization could intersect with tourist motivations in order to

strengthen community representation and participation in development and planning. Specifically, how are communities transitioning from different styles of tourism to more locally-led and grass-roots styles, perhaps from mass tourism to small-scale tourism?

3: LEAVING THE ISLANDS

At the conclusion of the final stage of field research I had to leave the islands in two senses; I was physically leaving the islands, but also emotionally leaving the islands. In terms of the physical actuality of leaving, I was glad to be away from some of the more tedious aspects of field research, such as insects in my bed and limited food choices, and glad to be heading back to family, but I was also sorry to leave the beautiful location and the relaxed pace of life. In terms of emotionally leaving the islands, this has been harder to negotiate and my attachment to the islands has changed during the course of writing up research. The rhythms of life on the islands were different to those I am familiar with at home: at home I may go for several days not meeting anyone outside of my family, whereas on the islands each resort or beach becomes a large extended family. I could not go through a day without speaking to someone and at several times during research I was part of a much larger team (group, family) which can obviously be frustrating and challenging at times, but it also generates a sense of belonging which is comforting. I did not realize how these interactions had impacted me until I returned home and began to miss these human connections.

This sense of belonging is reinforced through the rhythms of daily life whereby workers tend to stay close to the beach on which they work. After a short while, the resorts, workers and strip of shops and restaurants on "your" beach become familiar. Initially I found this very claustrophobic and limiting, but I soon recognized the rationale for these behaviors. Venturing to other beaches presents challenges: having to carry water and essential items, how to conceal money, where to find a clean bathroom, etc. all of which make a day wander to another beach seem pointless when you can sit in front of your "own" beach. In the evening it is even more complicated: you must carry a torch, clean bathrooms

are even harder to find and you could potentially get bitten or stung by wildlife. Walking across the islands using the jungle trek at night became a major planned event, often undertaken as a group activity. Likewise, travelling between the islands was often a major undertaking and represented a significant expense to pay for boat transportation, especially at night. In addition to the practicalities and expense, the dynamics of place on each beach means that you are no longer on "your own turf" and although sometimes exciting, this can also be unsettling. It was more common for workers to congregate at a local restaurant or sit on someone's balcony for socializing.

The limited movement between beaches becomes a normal part of island behavior, so much so that some island residents did not know what restaurants or properties were on neighboring beaches. This practice of staying in and around the resort where you work becomes part of the process of making it a home. The workers claim the space in which they live and generate their own sense of place. Although this shifts and changes, group behaviors solidify social and spatial norms thus creating distinct differences between beach spaces and resorts. Travelling to another beach although an adventure means a journey outside of your "comfort zone"; returning back to your beach means returning to your home space. When island residents spoke of the differences between "their" beaches and other beaches, they were invoking this sense of difference which circulated around the social actions which generated beach spaces. They were also suggesting an ownership and attachment to a particular place. In this way, the sense of place for the islands is formed through the everyday actions of those involved in tourism.

At a personal level, I left the islands with a conflicted sense of closure. I don't feel I know everything about island tourism, but I also feel that there is not much more for me to know. It began to seem as if each new piece of information reinforced what I was expecting anyway; there seemed to be fewer surprises and more predictable responses. I also get the strange impression that the islanders didn't seem to know much about island tourism either. Not that they do not know how to practice island tourism, but there seemed to be lots of confusion and

contradiction regarding regulations and practices. Many seemed unsure and even those who have a long history on the islands seem to have contradictory stories of "how it is". This at first was difficult to understand, but I began to realize that this was because the "facts" I was seeking were not relevant to the daily lives of those concerned. One person might advise me that a regulation exists; another would say that it did not. Corroborating the existence of the regulation with government officials was not important, as these different responses illustrated that for some, regulations did not exist. It might be that an individual did not know about a regulation, did not choose to follow a regulation, or was not penalized by authorities for failing to follow a regulation.

Communication on the islands tends to flow in a similar way to the game "Chinese whispers" with facts being changed a little as the story circulates, and many of the original facts are not actual facts to begin with. The nature of residency and employment on the islands also complicates absolute knowledge as many of the islands residents are part-time residents or may be here for a few seasons before moving on. There are also changes to the island infrastructure which complicate comparisons of change over time. A resort may have changed its name several times and there may be no knowledge of it under a particular name or using a particular description (such as the blue roof which may have changed, or next door to a restaurant which may have gone, or another resort which may have changed names). Even the guidebooks which commit this circulating knowledge to print are frequently inaccurate. Many of the names of resorts and locations on maps were not regularly updated in republished editions, and often names and other aspects would change before a guidebook makes it into print. As such, it became difficult to map and trace the history of change on the islands in any absolute sense, and instead the research focused on experiences of change. These fluid and changing experiences of island tourism illustrate how there are multiple ways of experiencing and understanding island tourism.

This research has focused on ways of understanding how tourism operates to influence social relations on the Perhentian Islands. Through

generating new descriptions and understandings of the individuals involved in tourism, I hope to begin to create alternative discourses of island tourism. These understandings should be constantly changing and updating as the tourism communities on the islands interact with and change their relationships with tourism. What the future is for the islands and how they change is less important than how the island communities incorporate these changes into their everyday lives. Hopefully the discourses of tourism will continue to be rewritten for the Perhentian Islands and elsewhere.

Appendix A

Malay words and abbreviations used in text:

adat   customary sayings, practices and law

bumiputera "sons of the soil", legal definition of Malay-Muslims who enjoy special rights under the Malaysian constitution.

kampong   village.

Shariah   Islamic behavior guidelines.

purdah   preventing men from seeing women, usually associated with veiled dress codes.

UMNO   United Malay National Organization

PAS   Party Islam Malaysia

Appendix B

Questions asked during property surveys:

What is the name of your property?
What is the location of your property?
　　　Close to sea?
　　　Behind another property?
How many rooms does your property have?
　　　What sort of rooms? Doubles? Dorm rooms?
Do rooms in your property have air conditioning?
What are the hours electricity is available to guests?
Do your rooms have en-suite bathrooms?
　　　How many?
Do your rooms have flushing toilets?
What is the price of a room in your property?
Does your property have a restaurant on site?
　　　Breakfast? Lunch? Dinner?
Does your property have a dive shop on site?
Do you offer tours to guests?
Does your property have a gift shop?
What are your busiest months?
Do you close your property in the off-season?
What is the room capacity of your property?
How many employees do you have?
How many of them are full-time – how many are casual workers?
Do you employ members of your family?
　　　How many?
　　　What connections?
How often do you get supplies from the mainland?
Do you own other properties or have part-ownership in other properties?
　　　Which and where?
Are you planning on developing your property further?
　　　What sort of developments, improvements?
Other: (e.g. do you have wifi, TVs in the room, offer any other services to guests?)

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