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Donor Driven Innovation

Using cultural analysis to stimulate strategic change in a Canadian NGO

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Abstract

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This thesis is a study of development and international aid institutions and practices undertaken to give form and substance to international development as a cultural product. In a climate of changing policy priorities and the prospective loss of government backing for international development NGOs, this thesis uses applied cultural analysis to develop knowledge of the support network of NGO A, a British Columbian NGO. It will analyze how the world views, values, norms, and narratives that the organization believes to be important to fulfilling its mission are received and used by its donors. By looking at how an organization like NGO A tries to handle problems many NGO's are facing today in an organizational context, it may be possible to make meaningful contributions to the field of best practices that other organizations can use in their own struggle for resiliency and continuity in establishing the scope of what development work *should be* as well as making progress toward their end goals of alleviating poverty, facilitating positive social change, and building strong governance.

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1 Introduction
1.1 Establishing the Context

Increasingly, international development non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are under pressure to demonstrate performance, value for money, and efficiency in a highly competitive marketplace of philanthropy and public service. After a period of staggering expansion in the 1980's in which global trends in neoliberal governance led to the pulling back of direct government support for civil society and welfare services in favor of NGOs, the funding climate for NGOs today has changed. Assumptions about the greater efficiency, accountability, flexibility, and legitimacy of NGOs to deliver services instead of governments have met with ambiguous audit and program evaluation results. On the one hand, more direct support of countries in the Global South is expected to be channeled through direct budgetary support (cf. OECD 2000: 85). On the other hand, a trend toward foreign direct investment (FDI) that seeks to tie development dollars to business expansion is opening up NGOs to uncharted territories in the market economy to compete for project funding opportunities (Agg 2006: 9).

Today, the profile of international development as a public policy objective in Canada has dramatically changed under the leadership of Prime Minister Steven Harper's Conservative Federal government. This change is characterized by a restructuring of the Canadian government's international development priorities to match foreign policy objectives in the spirit of the Overseas Development Assistance Accountability Act of 2008, which reflects larger global trends in promoting an FDI model of development in the Global South. This study explores dilemmas of the rapidly changing global landscape of developmental work by looking at the case of NGO A. NGO A is an international development NGO based in Vancouver, British Columbia, and has been operating for nearly thirty years. Although the magnitude of the changes in Canadian international development policy that have been instituted by the Harper government are dramatic, government support for NGO A has actually been waning over time in line with international trends.

In this climate of changing policy priorities, NGO A faces the prospective loss of government backing entirely if the organization can not adapt to new mandates. There are two undesirable outcomes that NGO A may be faced with in losing government support. First, if NGO A is unsuccessful in its next grant application, it may not be able to rely on its

other institutional partners and private donors to backfill its financing gaps. The consequence of this would be that NGO A would have to significantly downsize the scope of its operations. Second, if NGO A loses public financial support, it may lose its appeal with some donors and may also find difficulty in the future in securing public support again. The consequence here is that the organization may lose some of its social and well as economic capital and fall out of sync with its current and prospective donor base.

Based on the presence of these risks, the object of this study is to use applied cultural analysis to develop knowledge of NGO A's support network and analyze how the world views, values, norms, and narratives that the organization believes to be important to fulfilling its mission are received and used by these actors in order to develop change management strategies and external communications to cope with the potential loss of government funding. The problems NGO A faces are not unique. Where the application and anthropology and ethnology in development studies has more often been focused on the "objects of development" and making better projects, this thesis is a study of development and international aid *institutions* and practices undertaken to give form and substance to international development as a cultural product. By looking at how an organization like NGO A tries to handle problems many NGO's are facing today in an organizational context, it may be possible to make meaningful contributions to the field of best practices that other organizations can use in their own struggle for resiliency and continuity in establishing the scope of what development work *should be* as well as making progress toward its end goals of alleviating poverty, facilitating positive social change, and building strong governance.

The next chapter will provide background information and a review of prior research of germane literature to this study. This is followed by a discussion of theoretical and methodological tools that were used to produce and interpret research material. The next chapter is an analysis of NGO A and its relationships with both current and prospective donors, and followed by a set of concluding remarks and recommendations for NGO A going forward.

2 Background Information and Prior Research

At the time of this study in 2011, NGO A's mission was to "to improve the lives of men and women by reducing poverty through supporting economic sustainability, increasing gender equality and promoting human rights." NGO A had its beginnings as a movement in the British Columbia Teacher's Federation - a trade union for educators in British Columbia - to network and promote "international solidarity" as a component of the ongoing work of the union. Education and trade unionism remain core components of NGO A's identity to this day. Along with its network of institutional partners and donors, such as British Columbia Teachers Federation, the British Columbia Nurses Union, and the Canadian Union of Public Employees, NGO A has historically maintained a close relationship with the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) in defining, programming, and funding international outreach and relationship building between Canada and various South American countries. These relationships have largely been focused on peer-to-peer exchanges between trade unions, improving public education, promoting gender equality, and supporting economic development projects. What follows is an exploration of NGO A's operational structure, and some preliminary insights into its organizational culture.

2.1 Operational Structure and Organizational Culture

According to staff, NGO A is a relationship-based organization that is different from other NGOs. This difference comes from NGO A's focus on achieving qualitative change in public education, gender equity, and economic development through long-term working partnerships and knowledge transfer. NGO A does not have a field presence in Latin America, having opted for periodic monitoring trips and long-distance communication as a preferred method of balancing Canadian involvement with local autonomy and ownership of development projects. NGO A will only send its own staff on short term monitoring trips that rarely last more than one week. The work that NGO A does focuses primarily on capacity building with Latin American unions and NGOs through projects that promote skill development and knowledge sharing with Canadian counterparts. This takes the form of international study trips, lecture programs, public education curriculum development for both Latin American and Canadian audiences, and financial aid in the form of grants to Latin

American partner organizations. Additionally, NGO A funds workshops on gender equality and is engaged in workplace condition advocacy for maquiladora workers.

NGO A is small operation, and all employees are members of the Canadian Union of Public Employees. The Executive Director takes responsibility for program formation and certain country files. She is also responsible for reporting and engagement with organizational stakeholders and government. There are two Program Directors. One takes responsibility for case files in education, and the other for labor rights and workplace development. An Administrative Director takes responsibility for operational tasks, media outreach, and support to the Board of Directors. The Development Director is responsible for fundraising, related transaction accounting, and reporting. An accountant comes in once per week to manage organizational finances.

NGO A manages two networks of partner organizations in Latin America and Canada. The office has a flat management structure that is built on a model of collective responsibility where each staff member is highly independent in framing and carrying out their work tasks based on their individual expertise. Daily operations are predicated on the idea of mutual dependence and need. Case work is discussed and assigned in staff meetings and there is not a clear system of direct or hierarchical accountability if somebody should fall through with a responsibility. Social relationships among staff are tight. Many take the same yoga and pilates classes several times per week. It is also quite common for everybody to sit together at lunch, playfully read out each other's horoscopes from The Globe and Mail – a national newspaper, and generally have a good time with one another. Senior staff have been working with each other for well over ten years in the same organization. In its way, the office is based just as much on friendship as it is on professional interest.

There are five general vantage points that can be taken when approaching an analysis of NGO A, which include (1) NGO A staff, (2) NGO B (3) management through the Board of Directors (4) partner relations and programming, and (5) CIDA. These operational levels are codeterminate, but have different underlying logics. I will take each of these levels in turn for exploration and analysis below.

2.1.1 NGO B

NGO B is a subsidiary wholesaler of coffee beans that is wholly owned by NGO A and is housed in the same office. NGO B started as a component of a development project to encourage direct selling of coffee beans in the Canadian market from cooperatives in Guatemala and Nicaragua in order to break negative cycles of debt and price deflation that came from working with middlemen and wholesalers.

NGO B has its own Board of Directors and is managed by one person who takes responsibility for all operations including sourcing, sales, development strategy, and marketing. NGO B also does double duty as a promotions arm for NGO A by supplying coffee for tabling events, and does cross marketing for the NGO A brand on its retail products. All of NGO B's profits flow into NGO A's general budget. NGO B is meant to run as a business in its own right, but often struggles to turn a profit and is best described as a hybrid organization where the norms of nonprofit management sometimes conflict with for-profit business practices.

2.1.2 The Board

NGO A is a federally registered charity and is obliged to elect a Board of Directors. Eligibility is restricted to those who have been members of the organization for a minimum of two months. Seats are held for two years at a time, and are not monetarily compensated. The role of the Board is to provide strategic direction for NGO A. Beneath the Board are several subcommittees, such as fundraising, employee relations, and planned giving. Interestingly enough, the strategic planning subcommittee is defunct. Each subcommittee has at least one staff member from NGO A in attendance whenever it meets. The current composition of the Board primarily reflects the profile of NGO A's Canadian development partners, with membership drawn from Canadian Union of Public Employees, the British Columbia Teacher's Federation, and the Vancouver District Labour Council, among others. Based on conversations with the current Board President, Sam Hartman, the Board has often failed to be representative of the groups that NGO A works with in Latin America. There are rarely persons of Latin American heritage on the Board, and very seldom do members have working fluency with the Spanish language. In short, the Board is mostly white, unionist, and anglophone Canadian.

2.1.3 The Canadian International Development Agency

The central role that CIDA has played in the life of NGO A requires a historical review of CIDA organizational priorities and funding practices. Within the scheme of international cooperation through CIDA, NGO A early on positioned itself early on as a solidarist NGO. CIDA's program was organized into three thematic areas: (1) Children and Youth, (2) Food Security, and (3) Sustainable Economic Growth (CIDA 2010). In addition to these thematic areas, CIDA adopted a list of twenty "focus countries" selected based on need and perceived ability to benefit from Canadian development assistance. The current relationship that NGO A has with CIDA has its origins in the blossoming of NGO subsidiarity and long term strategic engagement in development projects. This system is called "program support." Under this system, CIDA delegates active engagement in developing countries to Canadian NGOs and other organizations and requires less persistent direct oversight than what was typical of individual project funding. Program support is typically awarded in three year cycles. An organization becomes eligible for program support after "an institutional evaluation had confirmed that their management was sound and that they had a good record of accountability and of coherent, long-term, and strategic projects" (Brodhead and Pratt 1996: 97). Even though CIDA does not take a strong managerial stance in the program support scheme, it is still understood that partner NGOs must generally be in line with CIDA's strategic goals.

NGO A has operated within the scheme of program support on a model called "responsive development." In practice, this means that NGO A does not develop and deliver projects in developing nations in the way one would expect of, say, relief organizations or other charities that are known for building schools or wells. The responsive development model will be discussed in the analysis portion of this thesis. Until recently, this responsive development model was also supported by a process of review in CIDA. A permanent institutional contact for NGO A and relevant reviewing experts would provide feedback for new proposals to an existing strategic program if there was a question about whether or not CIDA funds should be dedicated to the projects. Communication among a network of experts in CIDA was open, and it was standard practice for subject matter experts to contact NGO A directly if they had questions about a proposal during a review process. Staff within NGO A

described this an "open dialogue" that allowed for stronger and more detailed analysis of how projects could be designed to accomplish long term goals.

This has gradually moved to a model where the organizational representative for NGO A at CIDA became an exclusive contact who had to act as an in-between for CIDA and NGO A. Bob Stewart, a Program Manager at NGO A, described this as a kind of "telephone" network where strong qualitative dialogue on the content of projects was being lost through second- and third-hand communication networks. Recently, there has been a high staff turnover in CIDA, so maintaining conversations about NGO A's long term program development has been difficult. Difficulty in maintaining communication with CIDA is just one problem among others, such as the changing strategic priorities of the agency.

Although NGO A already has extensive reporting requirements to CIDA, its Board of Directors, and its Canadian partner organizations, the performance goals its sets can be difficult to quantify and sell on certain audiences. For example, it may be difficult to measure progress on achieving gender equality in a Latin American country by reporting on the number of "Non-Sexist Education" workshops a partner organization has given without the benefit of strongly invested, trusting, and knowledgeable partners.

Over its lifespan, NGO A has experienced a range of shifting international development priorities and technical configurations in partnership with CIDA. NGO A's funding from CIDA has often come in the form of formula-based matching grants, which the organization has used to leverage support and buy-in from other donors who could see the value of their contributions multiplied through government support. These grants have typically been awarded for three year periods. In partnership with CIDA, NGO A has been able to maintain some measure of consistency in its programming and projects through time because continuing grant applications were reviewed in the context of previously completed work.

As mentioned previously, there is a very real prospect that NGO A will lose government support entirely once it reaches the end of its current grant with CIDA. The prospective loss of CIDA funding would be a crisis for NGO A, and would have an impact of CAD $ 400,000 per year, or close to half of their annual budget. This likelihood and impact of this event is quite clear based on analysis from NGO A's staff for two reasons. The first of these reasons has the do with the structure of the new government grant making process.

Under the new Federal rules, aid dollars for international development are tied to Canadian foreign policy goals. As existing funding grants to NGOs with CIDA under the old program-based system begin to expire, the Canadian government will be moving onto a public bidding process for project-only aid funding within the government's priority areas. Organizations will be responsible for delivering proposals during open bid periods which will then be evaluated by closed committees and selected for the best value and return on public investment.

According to NGO A staff, there is an understanding that no feedback will be given on rejected proposals based on the principle of creating "unfair competitive advantages" among project bidders. An organization's prior history of working with CIDA is not supposed to be taken into review during this evaluation process, so there is a fear that NGO A and other development organizations will lose the advantage of their social capital, in a sense, and aid delivery will become less nuanced and more focused on either "feel good" short-term projects such as well building and goat buying, or "self-interested" projects such as giving Canadian mining companies funds for community development to bring into their negotiations for land rights (cf. interview with Bob Stewart 2011/09/22). This is a significant break from historical programming processes that social-issue NGOs are unfamiliar with and could have difficulty adapting to. Secondly, this kind of process favors clear quantifiable outputs that are elusive if one is working in education, human rights, and gender equality as NGO A does. Prior government support of projects is not necessarily considered in reviewing applications.

2.2 Approaches to Development Studies

There are several different fields of practice that can be looked at as prior research for this study, but the areas of NGO donor relationship management and applied anthropology were chosen as the most salient areas for contextualizing the work and analysis of NGO A. Without delving into debates on the various lineages and territories of anthropology, ethnology, and applied cultural analysis, culture has an established place in development studies. As development studies has gone through its own trends and developments, Lewis (2005) argues that cultural researchers have generally taken three on different kinds of roles as they have been tapped the participate in the industry: antagonistic observers, reluctant participants, and engaged activists.

The antagonistic observer is thought to be the deliverer of critical analysis of development practices as means to exercise power. Lewis (2005) writes that the focus of "these kinds of anthropological studies has been on the so-called 'beneficiaries' of development assistance, [with generally] less work undertaken on the internal organization and workings of the aid industry itself." He goes on to make reference to researchers such as Escobar (1995), who outlined how development practice reinforces social and economic inequalities by reinforcing ways of seeing the world in categories of "First," "Second," and "Third" as examples of cultural researchers participating from this point of view. Ferguson (1990), another author in this tradition, is called out for his exploration of how development work in Lesotho was used as a means of expanding the power and influence of the state and development agencies

As reluctant participants, those who seized opportunities to act as consultants for development agencies for causes rooted in economic stresses to public funding of anthropology in university systems found their own niches in development. The consequences of this movement out of universities and into development institutions was a trend towards "a more critical, politicized anthropology [that] also opened up scope for engagement with development because it made the subject more intellectually interesting and because it gave the academic discipline of anthropology, especially at a time when university based scholarship was under pressure to demonstrate its relevance" (Lewis 2005).

As engaged activists, cultural researchers act as translators that facilitate communication between locals, project administrators, or funders. Richard Salisbury (1986)

is a noteworthy Canadian anthropologist who worked from this standpoint on multiple projects including a negotiated treaty between the James Bay Cree and the Government of Québec on the Great Whale Hydro-Electric Project in the James Bay. The result of this kind of engagement stresses "an approach which gives equal emphasis to both social and economic aspects of societal change [whereby] anthropologists have helped to counter the dominant privileging of economic development thinking" which also draws "attention to issues of Western bias in the assumptions that inform development initiatives, uncovering areas of cultural difference and highlighting the value of local knowledge" (Lewis 2005).

From these three general standpoints, culture has been woven into management practices in development studies. However, there is not a well-developed body of literature on the institutions of development and how the unseen practices that happen within private business, public bureaucracies, and NGOs frame and produce the concept of development and direct resources toward it. This is where the field of donor relationship management appears to fill in gaps for establishing useful background knowledge of the environment NGO A operates in. The field of organizational relationship management also helps stabilize a foundation for cultural analysis to build upon later on.

Focusing closely on the not for profit component of NGO A's operations, which will be shown later on in the paper to have important implications for its position in the larger context of reframing what international development is in a Canadian context, relationship management may be an instrumental practice for NGOs. Cačija (2013) writes in her review of fundraising in nonprofit environments that "fundraising has reached a marketing orientation in its development, and it can no longer be regarded as a request for money, based on the philanthropic motives, but rather as the exchange or values, which meets the donor's needs" (60). Meeting donor's needs presumes that there are appropriate practices in fundraising approaches in place that can accomplish such tasks. Sargeant (2001) developed a taxonomy of fundraising practices as either transactional, focused on pure financial needs; or, as strategic, concerned with meeting long-term goals by relationship building or developing resiliency in financing. Fundraising and relationship management activities within these areas are theorized to take place with the intent of developing control mutuality (the boundaries and levels of influence that actors have to influence each other), trust, satisfaction, and commitment (cf. Hon and Grunig 1999: 3). A key organizational objective for NGO A,

solidarity, is not included this menu of expectations for organizational relationship management for nonprofits. This will be discussed in the analytical portion of this thesis for the ways in which the concept may be reframed in light of what donors are more readily accepted to be able to expect from involvement with NGOs.

Waters (2010) describes reciprocity in acknowledging support, responsibility in diligently managing funds, and reporting as due diligence measures that demonstrate funds are being used for their intended purposes. This components of relationship management are critical to an ongoing communications strategy for nonprofits to maintain their relevance to supporters. Within this matrix of objectives, coorientation, or methods deployed in order to "understand the state of the relationship between two sides of [an] issue" is a practice suggested by Broom and Dozier (1990) to ensure that an organization and its donors are in agreement on shared issues and values (Waters 2010: 4). Coorientation comes with a set of diagnoses of organizational-donor relationships as demonstrating consensus, dissensus, false consensus, or false conflict. Waters (2010) goes on the reflect that most public relations studies of coorientation focus on one side or another of a relationship, and rarely take a critical look at how an organization's representatives factor into relationship maintenance. To apply this new vocabulary, the aim of this thesis may be reframed as an exploration of issues in coorientation between NGO A's staff, its donors, and the Canadian government.

Having reviewed general trends of cultural research being used in the course of international development through time, and of nonprofit fundraising and relationship management practices as they pertain to managing shared values between organizations and donors, the next chapter will discuss theories that will be used for the interpretation and analysis of the research generated for this thesis that may assist in testing and pushing the boundaries identified in prior research further out in engagement with NGO A. The next chapter discusses a selection of theoretical tools that may be brought to hand in order to accomplish these objectives, followed by a discussion of fieldwork methods that were used to draw down these theories into NGO A's context.

3 Theoretical Discussion

In an interview titled "Taking Bourdieu into the Field," Loïc Wacquant writes that "good social theory helps us produce new objects, detect dimensions and dissect mechanisms of the social world that we otherwise would not be able to grasp" (2002: 183). Wacquant goes on to describe "two ways of conceiving and using social theory: one is the scholastic mode in which we 'spit, polish, and clean concepts' . . . [to] produce theoretical categories as an end in themselves. The other is a generative mode, wherein we develop theory to put in to use in empirical research and to prove and expand its heuristic capacity in systematic confrontation with socio-historical reality" (ibid: 183-184). There are three theoretical resources which I found particularly useful in understanding the culture and "socio-historical reality" of NGO A: Bourdieu's framework of field, capital and habitus, the "producer and consumer" dynamic found in De Certeau's treatment of strategy and tactics, and actor-network theory. This thesis also relies on the work of Barbara Czarniawska to position cultural analysis within the scope of organizational studies and to provide traction for subsequent analysis. What follows here is a presentation of these theoretical perspectives as a foundation for later discussion about how they were employed to expand my understanding of key concepts and processes that informed NGO A's organizational identity, the environment it operated in, and points of departure for action in the future.

In *Narrating the Organization*, Barbara Czarniawska (1997) makes an argument for approaching the study of organizations with the vocabulary and concepts of ethnology, literary theory, and institutionalism. Organizations are not "black boxes," or autonomous institutions that operate according to uninteresting and programmed logic. They are complex, interconnected, and hybridized sites of daily life and cultural production in modern societies that are often overlooked and under-problematized from a cultural perspective. If we follow Czarniawska's recommendation and approach the study of organizations using cultural analysis, which draws strength from employing such a bricolage of tools and techniques to make visible the unseen and problematize that which is taken for granted, we can engage organizations in modern societies as fields and apply cultural theory in the generative mode for practical applications informed by particular histories, geographies, contributing actors, conventions, norms, values.

When culture is discussed here, it is not intended to mean exclusive national characteristics like those put forward in Huntington's (1993) "Clash of Civilizations," which theorizes global cultural categories such as "Western," "Islamic," "African," and "Orthodox" as explanatory concepts in international politics. For a number of historical reasons treated by such authors as Benedict Anderson (1991), culture seems to often be understood as the same thing as the nation. One might have a "Mexican" or an "American" approach to dealing with conflict; or, a "Saudi" or "Swedish" idea of gender relations. While national culture is a fruitful concept, is not an emergent property of "non-cultural" practices, processes, and norms underneath the nation. We have to take a very different view on culture as a fluid and scalable "shared system of symbolic resources through which we make our world meaningful" (Hall 2002: 4). Culture can be sited anywhere from the smallest household routines to the complexities of international politics We can perform culture in terms of creating it and representing it to others. Organizing concepts that a cultural analyst might use to explore culture are drawn from a range of theory for interpreting and understanding world views, values, practices, processes, and norms.

3.1 Adopting a Descriptive Language: Field, Capital, and Habitus

If an organization is opened up as a field, what tools for orientation can be used to find value-adding meaning within it? Based on a starting point where the organization is an underappreciated site of cultural production, how do we start to "see" what its inner workings are from a cultural perspective? Bourdieu's concept of "field" can be used to describe the organization and the people involved in it from two different perspectives, or realities. The first reality is "constituted by the distribution of material resources and means of appropriation of socially scarce goods and values. [T]he. . .second order [is] the form of systems of classification, the mental and bodily schemata that function as symbolic templates for the practical activities - conduct, thoughts, feelings, and judgments - of social agents" within a field or fields (Wacquant 1992: 7).

These two "realities" are coexistent and co-creating of one another. The first reality of field, consisting "of a set of objective, historical relations between positions anchored in certain forms of power (or capital)" appears, deceptively, to be the most objectively defined of the two realities if only one could see it clearly (Wacquant 1992: 16). Establishing the contours of a field is like putting on prescription lenses - what was once a blurry landscape

begins to sharpen and gain detail. However, an awareness of a field is not just a matter of being able to perceive a previously opaque reality with a higher resolution or from a different vantage point. Fields have shifting borders and are "relatively autonomous spheres of 'play' that prescribe particular values and possess their own regulative principles. These principles delimit a socially structured space in which agents struggle, depending on the position they occupy in the space, either to change or to preserve its boundaries and form" (Wacquant 1992: 17). In the act of defining a field, "the very shape and divisions...become a central stake, because to alter the distribution and relative weight of forms of capital is tantamount to modifying the structure of the field. . .any field 'presents itself as a structure of probabilities-of rewards, gains profits, or sanctions-but always implies a measure of indeterminacy'" (Bourdieu qtd. in Wacquant 1992:18). The alternative model of culture as shared symbolic resources and practices can be further developed by engaging fields as sites of play and performance where one can see the concepts and processes of "society" played out. The concept of field is useful for describing the conflict at play for NGO A regarding which actors can legitimately participate in international development work and what form that work can actually take.

Capital, or the "energy of social physics" (Bourdieu 1990: 122) allows individuals or groups to appropriate material or social resources while engaging in the "play" of a field. It is conceptualized in three general categories: economic, cultural, and social. Cultural capital comprises an evaluation of the tools that one has for the appropriation of cultural assets for personal gain, status, and mobility, and exists in three forms: embodied, objectified, and institutionalized. An embodied cultural capital manifests as a set of dispositions or mannerisms. As objectified, cultural capital is revealed in the form of cultural objects such as paintings, books, instruments, etc. that one can either own or understand through socialization or acquired knowledge. Finally, as institutionalized, cultural capital is conferred by qualification, right, or title, as with a school degree (cf. Bourdieu 1979: 3). Social capital can be defined as "the sum of the resources, actual or virtual, that accrue to an individual or a group by virtue of possessing a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition" (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1990: 119). Economic capital is the value of economic resources one has. Drawing connections between the theoretical and the applied, NGO A's' field consists of those who fund it, whether

institutional, individual, public, or private. The organization's reliance on that funding means that they are not free agents and actors and that what they can do is circumscribed by the conditions and expectations attached to their receipt of money from specified sources. Those conditions and individuals that impose them are informed by different forms of embodied and institutional capital. Similarly, the education, upbringing, work experience, gender and life histories of NGO A staff and the varieties of capital that these represent also play into maintaining the structure and boundaries of NGO A's field.

The second reality that Bourdieu forwards as a complement to field and capital is habitus. Habitus "consists of a set of historical relations 'deposited' within individual bodies in the form of mental and corporeal schemata of perception, appreciation, and action" (Wacquant 1992: 16). This which guides individual strategies for action that create "coherent and socially intelligible patterns, even though they do not follow conscious rules or aim at the premeditated goals posited by a strategist" (ibid: 25). "The relations between the social agent and the world is not that between a subject (or a consciousness) and an object, but a relation of 'ontological complicity' . . . between habitus, as the socially constituted principle of perception and appreciation , and the world which determines it" (Wacquant 1992: 20). It is is an expression of the valuation and interpretation of certain concepts informed by layers of assumptions, history, events, practices, and the social genealogies which affect the expression and expectations of how the world should work. An understanding of what drives and motivates those actors and the supporting foundation of dispositions and relationships to the world and the negotiation and practice of meaning that arise from them through discourses. The concept of habitus reveals itself as a useful concept when analyzing how staff respond to the situation of oncoming crisis as well as the actions they take in maintaining their institutional relationships. Accepting that NGO A operates within a field of activity with different actors or agents, with different varieties of capital and habitus, it is important to identify what those agents of variety of capital and habitus actually are. If NGO A relies on the values, material resources, applications of power, and language articulated by the government or by its donors, what actors or objects are important and how do actors within NGO A's network describe and relate to other actors and objects to realize the processes that allow NGO A to carry out its work? The lenses of capital and habitus focuses on people, how they act, think, and leverage their social and physical resources in

rich personal detail. They help in making sense of how individuals or groups of actors learn to act, acquire status, develop relationships, territories, and interdependencies. This kind of detail is alluring and helps to build a meaningful picture of the context and relationships that sustain NGO A.

3.2 Actor Network Theory

Most of what NGO A is and does was personally inaccessible to me through the course of this study, and I could only make assumptions from second-hand narratives about the varieties of capital and habitus of many of the actors, including notably: all of NGO A's Latin American partners, CIDA program officers, Canadian political officials, and the membership of NGO A's union institutional supporters. Actor-network theory is a frame of mind that focuses on motion and "summing up of interactions through various kinds of devices, inscriptions, forms and formulae, into a very local, very practical, very tiny locus" (Latour 1999:17). This summing up and framing of interactions as a way to reconcile dissatisfactions with "subjectivity" and "society" prompts a change in the conceptualization of social geography: "We are never led to study social order, in a displacement that would allow an observer to zoom from the global to the local and back. In the social domain there is no change of scale. It is so to speak always flat and folded" (ibid. 18). In the case of NGO A, an Actor-Network Theory approach brings into focus the connections among policy language, grant reports, board meetings, union champions, individual donors, CIDA program officers, Spanish, English, NGO A staff, Latin American partners, and any number of other people or objects might be instrumental in creating and sustaining NGO A's fields of reality by focusing on how they are present in the social physics that I was able to observe.

Actor-network theory is a means of paying attention to the circulating reference between two dissatisfactions in studies of culture, and to respect the value actors in the ways they perform and produce culture. This kind of "perspectivalism [breaks] away from a monopolistic version of truth. . . by [turning] each pair of eyes looking from its own perspective into an alternative to other eyes. And this in turn brought pluralism in its wake" (Mol 1999 : 75). Latour describes these dissatisfactions like so:

> "When social scientists concentrate on what could be called the micro level, that is face to face interactions, local sites, they quickly realize that many of the elements necessary to make sense of the situation are already in place or are coming from far away; hence, this urge to look for something else, some other level, and to concentrate on what is not directly visible in the situation but has made the situation what it is. . .But then, once this new level has been reached, a second type of dissatisfaction begins. Social scientists now feel that something is missing, that the abstraction of terms like culture

and structure, norms and values, seems too great, and that one needs to reconnect, through an opposite move, back to the flesh-and-blood local situations from which they had started" (Latour 1999: 16-17).

By focusing on descriptions from informants revealing what the dissatisfactions are in a given context, it is possible to reveal the reference and translation that happens, or is attempted, between the micro and the macro dimensions of culture. In the case of NGO A, there are certain concepts or understandings like solidarity that are "drawn down" from the macro level and translated into certain kinds of objects or speech that may be argued to have a broken reference at some point in the conversion process. This is like trying to run a formula in a spreadsheet when some of the cells that it works with have been deleted, tampered with, or are being fed into a formula in an illogical way.

Grafting together actor-network theory with Bourdieu's ideas on capital and habitus was a means draw out the benefits of two ways of understanding of the world while also treating opportunity gaps in the study itself. The preflexive element of practice that reveals itself in the theory of habitus and field is strongly dependent and conditioned by history and time. Actor-network theory helps a researcher shift focus away from received understandings of dispositions and practices informed by layers of assumptions, history, and events to maintain perspective on living culture.

3.3 Strategies and Tactics

Sunderland and Denny (2007) write that "anthropology [teaches] us to recognize the human capacity to spin, twist, turn, invent, tangle, tear, and live by, through, and between symbolic meanings in the way we look at the world and to incorporate that appreciation into our research projects" (45). By identifying discourse discrepancies between people it is possible to establish a starting point for shifting them. This is achieved by gaining an understanding of the positions of actors in order to develop methods of reframing and establishing new reference points or using received understanding and resources in novel ways. Here one can attempt to find a way to work beyond, e.g. cross-communication attributed to the interaction of different kinds of habitus and language by finding new ways to express common ideals, shared practices, and consequently create different social ontologies.

De Certeau's work in strategies and tactics will be engaged to identify spaces for action in NGO A's ongoing struggle to maintain its place in the field of international development. Strategies and tactics are described by De Certeau as "types of operations" that

have certain effects on spaces (cf. De Certeau 1984: 30). A strategy is able "to produce, tabulate, and impose spaces, when those operations take place, whereas tactics can only use, manipulate and divert these spaces" (De Certeau 1984: 30). A space is both physical and social, comprised of tangible geographies as well as social territories. A tactic reveals itself through individual actions within a set of rules or expectations established in a space by a strategy are reconciled with actual performance. Tactical actions "intervene in a field which regulates them. . .and introduce into it a way of turning it to their advantage that obeys other rules and constitutes something like a second level interwoven into the first" (De Certeau 1984: 30). One example of a foregone opportunity for tactical action with NGO A is its policy of "radio silence" in public on the topic of public policy reform. Rather than communicating and defending the values they believe in, NGO A is compliant with statute and stays quiet in order to avoid potential adverse actions that this attention might bring from the government such as potential loss of tax exempt status.

These three different ways of approaching and developing an understanding of the world will be used jointly and individually to examine different findings that surfaced over the course of the fieldwork for this project. The next chapter will discuss the means by which the ethnographic material that theory is brought to is produced. Afterword, these theoretical standpoints will be used to explore and illuminate thematic trends derived from reflection and analysis on my fieldwork and time spent with NGO A's staff and donors.

4 Methodology

"Ethnography, like cultural analysis more generally, is inductive, iterative and in a constant search for meanings. From an epistemological perspective, data are not understood as "gathered" so much as they are produced; which is to say, our questions, our presence, our assumptions, our views provide never-ending filters for the questions we ask, what we observe, and what we conclude" (Sunderland and Denny 2007: 50)

It is important to determine how the supporting knowledge that makes these concepts meaningful is created. The field of ethnography contains a wide variety of methods that have been used by cultural researchers to reach these goals, and those that I found to be particularly relevant will be introduced and discussed in this chapter. Just as important as the ethnographic process described above is reflexive knowledge of my own reasons for conducting this study. I approached NGO A because I wanted a better to understand of how international partnerships through institutions worked. I am strongly interested in strategic social policy, organizations, and the complex and confusing puzzle of global relationships, cross-border cooperation, and hybrid cultures that exist today. Although I had some perspective on global studies from prior coursework and research, I had little insight into how international cooperation and relationships through institutions really worked on a practical level. I had begun to appreciate the lived experience of internationalism by making a choice to move outside of the USA for several years, and was excited to learn more about, and possibly add value to, an organization that had an alluring mission, established networks, and a unique organizational structure.

I brought with me a unique set of experiences as a researcher to NGO A that allowed me to approach this project from a range of different perspectives. As a foreign visitor, I had no vested interest in the outcomes of Canadian political debates and my profile as an "American graduate student from a joint Swedish and Danish university program doing a study in Canada" was unusual enough to be a good conversation starter. Professionally, I was able to apprehend and position the role of unions - critically important players in NGO A's funding structure - because I have significant work experience in a unionized business environment.

This project was framed within the discipline of applied cultural analysis, which means that as a research-practitioner has to deal with two competing needs to meet the

requirements of an "academic" study in non-traditional situations while also being relevant to a client that needs timely and actionable deliverables. This balancing act can invite dissatisfaction, but the struggle to reconcile the theoretical with the applied can also be fruitful. From a fieldwork perspective, dealing with this struggle requires making methodological choices with a mind on exactly what kind of information you need before your project starts while also selecting strategies that a client unfamiliar with cultural analysis will see value in. The commissioning of a multi-year study ending in a monograph just isn't a reasonable expectation these days.

Clifford (1988) makes reference to the idea of theory as a toolkit. The same could be said of methodology, although it is given proportionately less treatment than different analytical lenses, or tools, can when used to look at research findings. It is difficult to come by resources that assist in boiling down the vast literature on methodology by criteria that facilitate selection based on relevance to achieving certain applied ends, while also allowing for flexibility when the course of a research project begins to take unexpected turns. We have to work this out as we go along with the expansion of cultural analysis outside of the university. It is a struggle, because these choices strongly determine whether or not we can balance our need for material while still being true to the objective of ethnography in asking our informants to guide and teach us about their worlds on their own terms. These conditions create pressure for ingenuity and reflexivity. To take a few examples of research needs that require the practitioner to "think-on-his-feet", here is a set of questions that find no easy answer when sorting through a methodological toolbox:

• What approach should I take if I'm not quite sure yet if need to describe general processes or do a detailed mapping of interrelationships of specific people, because I don't have a clear idea of the issues I'm working with yet?

• Am I concerned with understanding the consequences and impact of what I find for my client, or am I doing this research for information only? How would I capture relevant knowledge from my informants without being over bearing and stifling dialogue?

• How do I anticipate needing to translate findings I don't have yet in a way that can inform my clients needs while also doing justice to the complexity and confusion of culture?

Informed by this struggle, my methodological choices were driven by two information needs I had if I were to be able to achieve my objectives for NGO A. On the one hand, I

required techniques that would allow me to build meaningful context for understanding a decades-old and highly networked organization that found itself in a fast-changing environment during a compressed time span of three months. On the other, I needed a means that would allow me to identify actionable and high-level issues which cultural analysis could treat in order to bring value to NGO A at a time of change and potential crisis. These considerations led me to choose a strategy of becoming a participant observer in NGO A's daily operations to meet the first requirement, and employ a series of dynamic semi-structured interviews with donors to satisfy the second.

If interviews elucidate the "constructed realities that are wrapped up in the jargon of the respondent", in observation we gain a "view of the experience on which the respondent's language has constructed those realities" (Tjora, 2006, p. 430). To achieve my goal of becoming a "participant observer," I became an intern for NGO A and began to take part in the everyday operations of the office. This allowed me to participate in tabling events, the annual general meeting, and in the routine tasks that staff undertake to keep the organization going ranging from special project research, filling coffee orders, and so on. Among other things, this also allowed me to take part in cheeky rituals such as reading out one another's horoscope from The Globe and Mail. My goal was to learn the ins-and-outs of the processes and culture of NGO A to fashion "lenses, i.e. topics to focus on, or sensitizing concepts, to enhance [my] perception" of the scope and relative valuation of issues facing the organization (Tjora 2006: 431), and to expediently get a feeling for the lay of the land. As an American enrolled in a Danish/Swedish graduate program doing a study in Canada, I also had an interest in finding a way to establish a meaningful understanding of a new environment, a new country, to mitigate the effects of personal displacement.

To refer back to Tjora's (2006) review of qualitative literature on recording data from the field, mention is made of no less than ten prescriptive types of observation ranging from physical setting, informal interactions, and the time in which fieldwork takes place (432). Further mention is made of the value other authors place on recording of critical incidents, or structured observation according to a salience hierarchy where the salience of an observation "is highly subjective and depends upon the particular research context" (ibid: 432-433). This is useful to keep in mind in terms of recollecting where information came from, because when a researcher in into the character of the participant observer things just happen. It can

be just as difficult to break away from being the participant observer to write down detailed notes of what you are experiencing as it is with more traditional encounters where taking notes in front of informants "outs" the researcher at inopportune moments.

At the end of any given day, I would sit down and write out any events or discussions I thought were relevant to my research. Reflecting on how and where observations were made after the fact can be fruitful for analytical purposes, but during the event the feeling is more akin to overthinking your dance steps so much that you step of the toes of your partner. In any case, I was inspired by the idea of Clifford Geertz' (1988) "thick description," although, in retrospect much of the note taking wasn't necessarily relevant until I arrived at a point where some basic orienteering was accomplished (cf. Cyrenne 2006: 321). Wolfinger (2002: 89 ff.) explores two strategies for note taking in the use of either a salience hierarchy or a "comprehensive" style. In Tales of the Field, Van Maanen's (1988) discusses ethnographic writing as genre, with productive outputs ranging from realist, confessional, or impressionist. The notes that were produced may, or may not have, been any of these things. In the end the act of taking notes can be more valuable that meditating on the style in which it was happening because the exercise prompts interactive engagement with the research. Over time, looking back at notes and other research artifacts can also be informative reflexive study in assessing why certain events, conversations, and interactions stood out over others.

Although the intentions of a participant observer tend to be well placed in attempting to place a control on the influence that more staged methods like interviewing and focus grouping can have on research, it comes at a price. In Pratt (1986: 29), we read that there is a nexus, or a slush depending on one's opinion, among "ethnographic authority, personal experience, scientism, and originality of expression." Labaree (2002) addresses the problem of wanting to credit and present "insiderness," in this case those points of emotional or social contact that I can relate "based in part on the concept of epistemological privilege, and the possible motivations of transition from a community member to a researcher for that community" (102). Participant observation can make it difficult to pull these things apart because one loses some capacity to draw out the distinctions between everyday life, the research, and the analysis as one can do with clearly defined research events such as interviewing. Maybe I could have tried shadowing people (cf. Czarniawska 2007), although what I could have gained in the ability to organize cleaner research windows in my personal

defense if I was ever called out as "too subjective" may have been balanced with a more unguarded engagement with the everyday lives of NGO A staff.

Davies (2008) recommends that a researcher "present [an] interview as a joint exploration of the topic of the research" (121). The reason for this is because, as a general rule, it would be an oversight to assume that an informant, or informants in the case of a focus group have their views emerge on a bottom-up basis when asked to interview (cf. Fallon & Brown 2002: 196). The circumstances of the research encounter, where informants know that they are being tapped for their perspective and knowledge, can reasonably expected to influence what kind of information they share the way they phrase it. In the case of this project with NGO A, all informants that I contacted and ultimately interviewed were preselected by staff because of the roles they had in partner organizations that supported NGO A. Because these people were representatives of institutional supporters, I had to earn the trust of NGO A staff in order to obtain these contacts and to meet with them one-on-one. This ultimately affected the scope of my questions and the level of conversation I had. I essentially assumed responsibility for NGO A's image because of the way in which these meetings were arranged, and due to the financial value the relationships.

Although I would have liked to convene a group of donors in the same place, there were several reason why I did not attempt to do so. The most important of these is that I did not have a space to meet all of them aside from NGO A's office. Meeting there would not only have required me to ask high level people spread all over Vancouver to travel for my personal benefit. It is also difficult to take a decision on the appropriate place to hold a general interest focus group, and quantify how space selection may affect how people are willing to talk and whether they feel staged (cf. Stein 2006: 60, Sunderland 2007: 175). I did not believe it appropriate to create a situation where I would have been asking probing questions about NGO A's mission, values, and direction in non-neutral space that would have compromised my impartiality, as far as such a concept is valuable, as a researcher. The office is small, and does not have private conference space so I am positive that staff would have come in on the conversation at some point. I wasn't worried so much about potential manipulation of a the dialogue of a focus group by NGO A staff to turn the situation into "something else" that could be achieved through the process of consulting with this group, such as fundraising (cf. Cooke & Kothari 2001). Rather, I was not prepared to be perceived

with a high level of visibility as a potential representative of NGO A by inviting a group that only the Executive Director or Board Members would traditionally see in the same place at the same time. At times, methodological choices can be determined not only by the kind of information that can be gathered by using them so much as the social role of the researcher him- or herself.

Taking the preceding issues into consideration, I met each of these individuals at their place of work in their own offices. The interview experience offers up a promise for generating an interactive depth of meaning, but can leaves a bit to be desired when it comes to the expectation that the participants will necessarily speak from the characteristics they were recruited for. All informants that I was put in contact with ultimately met with me and we had dynamic conversations guided a set of prepared questions. As with any method, the utility is dependent upon whether or not the facilitator can pick out and direct the conversation in a meaningful way while being mindful of how situational dynamics lead to circumscribed knowledge and insight. I had intended on inviting informants to review material given to me if it was used or quoted in this thesis to make sure that I was using material they provided with the meanings they intended because of the charged atmosphere in which this study took place. For reasons related to the deferral of this thesis for several years, contact with most of the people involved in this study for this purpose would be questionable. This issue, along with reflection on the role of cultural analysis in the context of organizational evaluation and public policy will be discussed in the conclusion.

5 Analysis

In the previous chapter, ethnographic methods were discussed in order to reveal the kind of raw material that the theoretical tools of capital, habitus, actor-network theory, strategic and tactics will work upon. Over a period of several months spent as a participant observer in NGO A's office, conversations with staff and interviews with institutional donors revealed different social structures, processes, and trends. Commonalities in capital, views, and perspectives among NGO A staff seemed out of sync with their network. Major business routines and dispositions that NGO A has become accustomed to are on the verge of being disrupted, and with that disruption a new set of routines has to be explored and adopted if the organization is going to find a new normality after this event. The mood of staff regarding this change in relation to the federal government is antagonistic. In the words of Philis Wood, one of NGO A's program managers, "this government has said 'forget everything else' [that could be a priority in international development] this is what we're doing. . . in that way it's new. Previous governments had never been so brazen about dismissing everything else" (2011/09/13). Put into the context of the sea change of NGO work internationally, NGO A staff, in particular, seemed to be in a place of liminality (cf. Journet 2001). It might be said that NGO A is going through a rite of passage and finds itself in a condition of liminality because its identity and role in both the Canadian international development community and its network of trade union partners is being reformed. There is no clear idea of what the organization's post-liminal identity will be. Emotional personal responses to the onset of change appear to be framing interpretation of what the path for the organization will be moving forward.

At the time I began developing a relationship with NGO A, all of the core program staff and the Executive Director had been with the organization for over ten years and had great personal investments of time and effort in shaping NGO A into their idea of what a human rights and solidarity building operation should look like. Susan Wood, the Executive Director, started out her career in engaging with Latin America with a graduate thesis on how women's organizations used ideas of human rights to establish their goals and objectives. Bob Stewart, a Program Director, was a teacher who became involved with Latin American development work as a reporter covering civil wars in addition to land, labor, and human rights issues in the 90's. This identity rooted in human rights and solidarity appears to be

difficult for NGO A to let go of in no large part because NGO A has neither the skills to function in an environment of private sector expansion and economic development that the Canadian government is pushing, nor a knowing mentor to guide them through the transition. I don't intend to argue that a focus on human rights and empowerment through solidarity is a natural phase progressing toward private entrepreneurship. A focus on human rights is not a less "mature" way of being in the world. But, there is an issue of enhanced capabilities and access to resources that has been tied to making this change that may be understandable though this frame of mind. NGO A has latitude to determine and actively form its post-liminal identity through tactical resource management and leveraging of its social and cultural capital while acquiring capabilities it does not currently have.

Being confronted with a situation like NGO A's, one might not necessarily identify a need for reframing understanding of how the organization works or should work, and the value of applying cultural analysis within the organization may not necessarily be intuitive. From a business management standpoint, it may be more alluring to focus on improving financial performance by finding the means to backfill funding from CIDA. You might be asking: "What does NGO A's culture have to do with the looming financial troubles of the organization and the projects that it funds? ", or, "Wouldn't NGO A have been better served having a marketing or business management consultant brought in-house instead of a cultural researcher" ? The disciplines of marketing and business management can certainly demonstrate their value. What then, is the value of cultural analysis and how can it help us to deliver actionable recommendations to NGO A's management team? As Sunderland and Denny (2007) write, "cultural matters can be so familiar or so tacit that neither the research participants nor the researchers can immediately discern their existence" (48). Cultural analysis derives its value from revealing unseen dimensions and mechanisms of the social world by defamiliarizing the taken for granted and invisible so that an analyst can interpret social and symbolic meaning with people, processes, environments, and objects. "We are trying to make the cultural symbols, meanings, and practices something we can consciously think through, rather than missing them and/or simply thinking and acting through them without reflection." (Sunderland and Denny 2008: 52). By employing cultural analysis, we open ourselves up to finding new perspectives, opportunities, and knowledge about what NGO A is, how it works, and the personal and institutional relationships it has. We can

unpack the assumptions of "business-as-usual" and find pathways to creativity, innovation, and decision-making rooted in the best possible information drawn from and tailored to its unique circumstances. Changing practices in response to a crisis can take place without confronting the rationales used to make sense of new practices or to justify change. This can invite poor design in coping strategies, resistance, and half-hearted implementation of initiatives. The next sections will discuss various insights that add value to NGO A in this time of change.

5.1 The Partnership Model

Acquiring money through donations is a specialized skill, and NGO A funds a full-time staff position to work on managing donor relationships and expanding its contribution base. A query of the popular Canadian job-posting website Charityvillage.com for titles such as "Development Associate," "Donor Relations Manager," or "Gifts Development Coordinator" shows that this function is valued across Canada in the NGO and non-profit community both in the amount of money organizations are willing to pay for these skills and the number of vacant positions that are looking to be filled. This indicates that there is an appreciable amount of competition for dollars by Canadian NGOs and nonprofits.

NGO A has a semi-diversified financial base supported by two distinct types of income. One funding stream is comprised of individual donations, revolving grant aid from the federal government, and institutional support from union organizations. The second funding stream comes from earned revenue on activities such as licensing of social-issue education curricula, conducting international tours, and coffee sales through NGO B. Proportionately, most of NGO A's operations are sustained from the granting and gifting funding stream, which NGO A nurtures and maintains through what it calls its "partnership model."

In the partnership model, Canadian and Latin American partners are matched up and encouraged to develop peer-to-peer relationships that allow for knowledge transfer and mutual professional development, thereby creating the opportunity for a circuit to be developed where there would otherwise be a one way flow of money. NGO A has a unique funding structure with its domestic development partners and has placed itself in a niche funding environment. Since its founding as a project of the British Columbia Teachers Federation, NGO A has acquired institutional support from other unions by leveraging their

own institutional capital, values such as solidarity and gender equality, and by incentivizing support through CIDA formula grants. This has allowed NGO A to limit its exposure to the open market of nonprofit and charity funds development. NGO A's Canadian development partners are direct funders of projects that NGO A administers in collaboration with Latin American counterparts.

Latin American partners are union organizations or nonprofits selected because they are self-standing, meet the subject area interest criteria of both NGO A's institutional supporters and CIDA, and have been determined capable of delivering programing. NGO A's project cycle is built on the idea of responsive development. Latin American partners develop project ideas and submit them to NGO A, which then reviews them, facilitates in further development, and provides feedback on the likelihood of being able to find funding for a project within current program priorities. If the project is accepted, a Canadian partner organization will be paired with a Latin American counterpart and their direct funding is, usually, matched with a CIDA funding ratio. Many of these projects have long term goals for qualitative social change, and rely on trust from the Canadian side that these aims are being met. You could say that, while NGO A is very clearly in the business of grant making, it is also a matchmaker and relationship facilitator.

5.2 Responsive Development

As recently mentioned, NGO A calls its process of project selection and development "responsive development." Responsive development is intended to be an inductive and grounded theory of development where the relationship between an aid giver and an aid recipient is expected to be driven by the aid recipient in terms of identifying development projects and formulating an approach to them. The aid giver provides resources and technical assistance, but only to the extent that such intervention is invited. This contrasts with a practice where aid givers act upon their own concepts of what recipients need and "deliver" without consultation to determine whether or not that aid is appropriate or practicable. Philis Wood (2011/09/13) described one of NGO A's partnerships in Nicaragua as one example. In this situation, there was an opportunity to fund vocational education courses for women. The local NGO that was ultimately responsible for organizing the education had to reframe the intent of Canadian aid by changing the scope of education from car mechanics - thought on the Canadian end to be a high wage profession with good growth opportunity - to

cosmetology and handicrafts. The reason for this being that even if the Nicaraguan women were to be trained as car mechanics, it was unlikely that they would have clientele because they did not believe that women would be received as competent in a "male profession." Responsive development, in this circumstance, was a process that mediated different perspectives on gender and work and allowed for an aid project to be tailored to local conditions. An opportunity for workforce training was averted from becoming a more complex struggle on cross-cultural feminism.

The interplay of actors and objects in a field don't just shuttle back and forth between two mutually dissatisfying ways of looking at and explaining culture, they also generate and perform co-existent realities. Anne Marie Mol (1999) writes that actor-network theory helps to reveal reality as a set of ontologies "[f]or, and this is a crucial move, if reality is done, if it is historically, culturally and materially located, then it is also multiple. Realities have become multiple" (75). The different ontologies of partnership, solidarity, and cross-border "development" wrapped up in NGO A's network of actors including staff, donors, CIDA, federal politicians, members of the public are distinct in the rationales and steps of their performance. Difficulties arise when trying to determine "what's going on" in an overall sense when trying to piece this patchwork of relationships together. In this example of a project funding workforce training in Nicaragua, there are intersecting diagnoses of what a development issue is pinned to different social ontologies.

From the side of Canadian funders, these women in Nicaragua lacked high wage yielding job skills that were locally in demand. To borrow a set of metaphors from Mol regarding the creation of realities in a medical context, this was like a laboratory diagnosis that dispassionately evaluated a problem and proposed a "rational" solution to it based on established understandings of the chemistry of workforce planning. This is a reality of economic symbolic analysis. Additionally, NGO A's involvement in this project created a reality where women's economic and social empowerment were at play based on the negotiation of work informed by gender roles in a kind of clinical evaluation that one might expect in a patient-doctor relationship, where the type of job training to be developed and given had just as much to do with treating resource distribution based on gender as the actual work itself. Finally, "responsive development" in this situation was like a pathophysiological evaluation where the Nicaraguan partners mediated the realities seen by their Canadian

partners and refocused the project as something that needed to work within the realm of what they felt was appropriate and doable for them within their own local context.

In each of these three realities, the issue of needed job skills didn't change, but the actors idea of what the reality of the situation was led to different conclusions being drawn about what the development project should be. Laboratory-like economic analysis, clinical evaluation informed by the lenses of gender and human rights as causal factors for poverty were the means that Canadian partners created realities with. NGO A's Nicaraguan partners, on the other hand, used a variety of pathophysiological review that established localization needs and boundaries to Canadian participation. These are all different ways of trying to arrive at an acceptable understanding of what all of the actors in this context were working with and how interventions could actually be expected to deliver improvements in the lives of the women who sought opportunities for job training. For any given fact, understanding, interpretation, or cultural product there can be very divergent ways in which its existence is understood, "for there they are: mutually exclusive perspectives, discrete, existing side by side, in a transparent space. . .[w]hile in the center the object of the many gazes and glances remains singular, intangible, untouched" (Mol 1999: 75). Opening up communication channels and taking seriously the needs and concerns of the Nicaraguan partners in this context, made the international development process more egalitarian by mediating economic development with local culture. As foreshadowing of later discussions of NGO A's organizational objectives of solidarity, while NGO A was responsible for carrying through mediation for project scoping, it may or may not have achieved its objectives for transnational solidarity by ultimately securing international support for courses in handicrafts and hairstyling.

By locating the source and means of creation of realities over the course of NGO A's work, it may be possible to shift from a difficult place of working with irreconcilable perspectives on how its work should be done or how people should relate to it by focusing on generative activities. To borrow once more from Mol (1999) "Talking about reality as multiple depends on another set of metaphors. Not those of perspective and construction, but rather those of intervention and performance. These suggest a reality that is done and enacted rather than observed. Rather than being seen by a diversity of watching eyes while itself remaining untouched in the center, reality is manipulated by means of various tools in the

course of a diversity of practices" (77). This will be addressed later on in light of discussion on De Certeau's "strategies and tactics."

Over the course of this project, it did not appear that support for NGO A had been strongly challenged over time within union partner organizations. There was not sufficient knowledge created over the course of this study to speak about the views of the union membership of NGO A's institutional supporters, but high-level informants from union organizations that did participate seemed to have a consensus in their belief that international solidarity is a non-starter as a core union issue. Where NGO A may find its capital assets highly regarded within union organizations, it needs to maintain perspective on how its perceived value and pull may shift even within a group thought to share "the same culture." The presence of clear high-level champions seems necessary to keep funding to NGO A coming. This insight can be just as important as the devaluation that NGO A staff sees the federal government having for their variety of international development work as a whole.

But, high-level champions can be taken for granted. This appears to have had the consequence of creating a condition of false consensus at least for some of NGO A's donor relationships. Pico Athaide, who formerly acted as a strong promoter for NGO A in his union before taking a position with United Way, reflected that it is difficult to find an identity outside of being a donor and explore what solidarity actually means. Bob Kuehn describes the position of the international solidarity program in the British Columbia Teachers Federation as relatively hidden, or out of the awareness of most of the membership. Sam Hartman, the President of the Board for NGO A, also said in an interview speaking of previous experiences in trying to situate international solidarity work into a membership newsletter that, after polling membership, an international program seemed to be generally accepted as "fluff" - a project that could be addressed after core issues such as local negotiations, grievance processes and so on had been satisfactorily taken care of. It appears to be the case, then, that NGO A's peers are less a union's membership than the union organizations' management staff and executives, which is important to keep in mind because it reveals something about the capital that NGO A has in holding onto its financial support. If inclination of staff to report in certain ways and to a more "executive" audience in a union organization doesn't transfer to the membership that pay the dues that ultimately support NGO A, there may be instrumental misunderstanding in high impact but low focus

relationship management areas. This may mean that there are social and translation gaps rooted in the capital of these different stakeholders that NGO A may want to address. NGO A staff appear to have shared experiences in their graduate school education in the areas of Latin American studies, meaningful cross border experiences, and a a tight social group focused located in a field of practice that has the time to focus on rights based concerns on a daily basis. The teachers, nurses, laborers, and so on that their funding is derived lead very different lives. It would not be unusual for there to be disjunctures in perceptions of what kids of concepts and concerns hold social value.

The problem with this arrangement for NGO A is that there does not seem to be a drive among their champions in the unions to represent the interests of international solidarity work publicly. Despite long standing relationships with Canadian partner organizations, NGO A does not have a clear mandate to speak on the topic of international solidarity work in public and has often been ambivalent in how staff have represented themselves. When the question of taking action against what all NGO A staff reported to be a turn toward bad development policy by the government arises, there is a certain fear or indeterminacy that comes up about what grounds NGO A has to take public positions. This stems from a risk that they might be seen as representing one of their partner organizations. More often than not, if a staff member has a public engagement, or is participating in a governmental hearing, it is not uncommon to speak not for NGO A, but as a member of the Canadian Union of Public Employees. If this were approached with a conceptual framework borrowed from Foucault, for the sake of argument, if your self-image as an organization is not reflected in your public profile, and you do not actively promote yourself otherwise, you become open to the coercive power of social discourses. What may have historically been a question of etiquette by NGO A in leaving union partners to take their own initiative in domestic political issues related to international solidarity work, it would now appear that this relationship is falling victim to a process where mobilization is impeded because the infrastructure of international solidarity work is actually a "high-culture" or niche activity sustained by a relatively small group of people who believe it has value. Membership support may not exist for it if it was held up to scrutiny within a portfolio of other core issues, and high-level sponsorship may even be challenged and ultimately lost.

Holding these considerations aside for the time being, the relative shelter that NGO A has been operating under among its peers has made its institutional skills in marketing and image management less strong. We may accept that NGO A's historical security is rooted in its successful maintenance of high-level relationships in the field of trade unionism in Canada. It follows that there are "systems of classification, the mental and bodily schemata that function as symbolic templates for the practical activities - conduct, thoughts, feelings, and judgments - of social agents" within this field (Wacquant 1992: 7). Actors in this field know and speak the same language, and have shared history, practices, and appreciation of the "high culture" commodities of the labor movement. This creates a situation where NGO A performs the roles expected by its strongest donor base, which is built on a culture of adversarialism rather than "win-win" compromise in the pursuit of positive social change (cf. interview with Sam Hartman 2011/10/19). It may be the case that this adversarial culture also precludes NGO A from being flexible when confronted with different world-views, objectives, or interpretations of what its role and mission are.

By looking at NGO A's donor relationships through the lens of capital, field, habitus, and actor-network theory, there are three processes which may pose particular challenges for the organization as it develops its plan of action. These are: translation gaps, intangible objectives supported by trust and passive support, and contact contamination.

5.3 Lost in Translation: Charity, Solidarity, and Entrepreneurialism

The value of NGO A's product, mission, goals, and values outside of it's clique of union leaders and social justice proponents may not always be easily accessible. As we have seen, union membership may pay for NGO A without knowing about it because the organization is relatively hidden from them because of fears of translation gaps regarding its value. Additionally, some potential donors who would likely agree with NGO A's objectives and methods may find that they cannot relate to NGO A's branding because it is constructed with an unfamiliar vocabulary, expresses different priorities, and is directed towards a niche audience. It is not necessarily received as "public." This last problem shows itself in two different ways. On the one hand, participants in NGO A's program may not have the "right set" of common experiences to interpret their participation with NGO A in the way that NGO A would like. For example, one woman who participated in one of NGO A's study trips described her experience as "helping the unfortunates" in the spirit of religious charity work.

While NGO A specifically rejects this kind of rationale in explaining and justifying its work, staff do not actively challenge it because doing so could potentially alienate donors. On the other hand, individuals engaged with NGO A because of its technical resources and marketable services in delivering aid dollars may find it difficult to divorce NGO A's technical capability from the organization's history and values. They may feel either turned-off or resistant to the idea of engaging with them. In both of these cases there is dissensus on the part of NGO A in communication with donors, but a strategy of conflict aversion is more often adopted rather than address the root causes of not seeing eye-to-eye.

The first issue area is tied to different viewpoints on what is happening in an international development encounter or donor-recipient relationships. To further expand on the example of an international peer-exchange trip organized by NGO A, there can be dramatic gestalt shifts from one participant to the next that indicate very different realities or ontologies are being created over the course of NGO A's work. This challenges the value given to efforts to make the cross-border connection on a personal level as an end in itself, because these experiences may not necessarily always reinforce the values or changes in world view that NGO A is trying to achieve. Philis Wood (2011/09/13), one of NGO A's program managers, said in an interview regarding the relationship building that happens during study visits that "once you've made that connection it stays. Meeting somebody who does the same thing that they do but in totally different circumstances" builds bridges across international and social boundaries and encourages commitment to the cause of international solidarity and development. In contrast to this, Bob Kuehn (2011/10/06), a representative of NGO A's largest union donor, offered a counter position characterizing his relationship with the Latin American community after years of solidarity work as "shallow" even though he gained "perspective" from meeting colleagues from another cultural and political background. The international encounters that NGO A arranges, in this respect, could be further nuanced in terms of either challenging thinking about economic or social justice in Canada, or building relationships with people in Latin America. In the words of Komter (2005), "the lack of direct personal responsibility and the low level of personal and emotional commitment facilitate the mobilization of large numbers of people and the rapid growth of such networks, but they reduce solidarity to the exchange or information, consciousness raising, or a simple donation (198)."

Solidarity for NGO A is a concept steeped in Canadian unionist culture that sees it as an organizing concept for approaching and achieving social change through collective action. Marion Pollack, a NGO A Board Member described solidarity as "the understanding that we are all linked together in this wonderful and crazy world. Solidarity is knowing that struggles in one part of the world directly affect people in other parts of the globe" (In NGO A - Gift of Solidarity 2011 Website). In practice, this is a concept that NGO A staff favor as a reason for motivating participation in the work that the organization does as opposed to charity, because it presumes that aid recipients and aid givers are meeting on equal footing and have a mutually beneficial relationship. It appears to be uniformly accepted by the staff of NGO A that charity is not a motivator that they feel comfortable with, but they do not appear willing to push the issue if it means opening up either a conflict situation or the possibility that they might be seen as ungrateful for support where they get it.

Charity is perhaps the most frequently "invasive concept" that staff are confronted with. In the world of NGO A, this concept of charity has two different meanings and applications. As expressed by respondents in the study that were explaining their motivations for donating time or money to NGO A, charity is a concept with strong religious roots and which connotes a feeling of obligation to take care of the needy. On the other hand, charity is also a Canadian legal concept. Under Canadian law, NGO A is chartered as a charitable organization. This designation opens up opportunities allowing for NGO A to operate with tax exempt status as a civil society organization, and creates restrictions on how it can engage with current political debates. In practice, this means that much of what was of interest to NGO A's staff during this time of change existed outside of their organization and beyond their control because of legal restrictions placed upon them to engage in policy advocacy. NGO A staff cannot publicly represent the organization in a way that could be construed as partisan without risk of losing tax exempts status, government funding, and financial inducements that could be offered to other donors to make giving to the organization more appealing. This is another contributing factor to why staff are carefully guarded about when, where, and how they act as representatives for the organization for reasons other than their relationships with union institutional donors.

What is interesting is that interviews with persons not associated with NGO A suggest that charity is a cultural value that is a highly effective motivator for people to give of

themselves, while the reception of solidarity might be mixed. The particular problem with work in the NGO world is that money requests have, without much exception, been high priority. In my interview with Marisa, this issue of what is transferred from individuals and organizations into NGOs requires closer analysis in terms of how people relate to what is being given and what they receive in return. A motivation to give to charity might be returned, for example, with the gratification of having done a noble or benevolent thing. In her characterization, however, NGOs are, for all intents and purposes, also businesses: "If there is money to be made then somebody is going to try and make it . . .it can feel offensive when you want to offer time or something like food to an NGO and you know what they really want is money" (2011/09).

It is worthwhile asking what people really get out of donating to NGO A then. Money does not necessarily carry an emotional return in the context of an NGO like NGO A. The claim on moral or ideological grounds for support through taxation is also becoming ambiguous. Where one might argue donors get back intangibles through use of the language of charitable gratitude, the only other "returns" that surfaced in interviews were that Canadians learn more about Canada's own problems with racism and poverty by seeing the situations of others (cf. interviews with Jennifer Casels, Annika Frisque, Bob Kuehn, Pico Athaide).

An additional issue area was explorable due to a relationship with an existing and unique donor named Luke Shuparski. Luke Shuparski is a corporate philanthropist who developed a relationship with NGO B, a retailing company wholly owned by NGO A. He funded a three year program valued at CAD $300,000 for improving the quality of coffee bean production in one of NGO B's supplying cooperatives in Guatemala. NGO B is payed a 12% fee for project administration, evaluation, and reporting - skills that are taken through direct collaboration with NGO A staff. Luke's project is unique because NGO A staff see one of the major selling points of working with them over the years has been matching funds from CIDA, which has been marketed as a way of "increasing the impact" of projects with their donor base. Despite what was expressed by NGO A's Executive Director that "it seems easier to sell the idea of international solidarity as a physical product (like coffee) than to convince people to donate money," the market potential of NGO A's "product" as a sellable

service is, perhaps, undervalued by them outside of their current working environment (2011/09).

Luke is not a first time charitable donor. In an October, 2011 interview, he stated that he is primarily focused on giving back the skills he has in business and economic development, with a focus on existing businesses to cultivate an "entrepreneurial culture" so that people can become self-sufficient and less dependent on receiving aid. The core of Luke's motivation is the same as NGO A, namely in capacity building. But, where NGO A might use the word like "community,""solidarity," or "equality," Luke might use "market," "entrepreneurialism" or "capital investment." When Luke decided to try and establish a program in Latin America, he first went through a period of searching on his own that ended with the realization that without Spanish language skills, or pre-existing professional and knowledge networks, it was going to cost an exceedingly high amount of money to obtain his objectives, which is why he decided to contract for grant administration services and project development. It's very likely that, regardless of the outcome of this particular project with NGO B, Luke will continue to seek out opportunities for development work. However, when asked in an interview if he would be interested developing a relationship with NGO A based on his experience with NGO B, Shuparski replied "I cannot relate to the staff at NGO A. . .I think they have their own world and priorities that doesn't really fit with what I want to accomplish personally with my participation in development" (2011/10/04).

5.4 Intangible Objectives: Trust and Passive Support

One of the ongoing conflicts within NGO A's operations is the motivation of its supporters to engage in international partnerships. Individuals who have never heard of NGO A can find it hard to understand what makes them unique, because so much of their self-presentation is about an organizational model and the social concept of solidarity, instead of what they "actually accomplish." Engaging with NGO A and its Latin American partners requires a suspension of expectations for short-term results and deliverables due to the qualitative and long term nature of their work. If, for example, a grantee in Latin America is delivering workshops on non-sexist education, you can count the number of workshops and participants, but without longitudinal data it is difficult to quantify how this activity yields long term benefits. Similarly, if a project exists for developing governance structures for a union with the aim of securing more funding and support for the local school systems, it can

also be difficult to find the red thread between Latin American partners and public policy outcomes because these activities are very complex. A conversation with Mary (2011/11/05) drove this point home during an interview where I was trying to describe what NGO A was all about: "You've had to spend a lot of time explaining their method just to arrive at the point of saying that they fund NGOs and unions in Latin America, but that's still very vague. It sounds like they basically negotiate for and send money but their [organizational] structure doesn't really make them unique from other NGOs in what they actually do."

As staff have otherwise maintained, trust in NGO A to deliver benefits and manage funds well is at the core of what makes their model work. To this end, NGO A has resisted widget counting evaluation measures because this trust has allowed them to engage in projects with a more long sighted view on change. While regular and time consuming reports are made to CIDA, other reporting to partners is tailored to attract participants to the ongoing narrative representation of progress of projects over time and not a "bottom line." However, over a long period of time, narrative reporting can have negative consequences. The first of these is the problem of not being able to speak the language of quantitative measurement very well when not given instructions about what your donor specifically needs to see. Philis Wood explained this problem when she stated that she avoids talking finances to donors because they tend to get focused on expenditures and entire presentations may become focused on dollars and cents. The second comes with the cognitive inertia that can happen in maintaining support because it takes more motivation to take a negative action to cancel a relationship than it does to continue supporting a cause because you've once bought into a narrative. Among individual donors this can take the form of "charitable amnesia" - a condition where the routinization of giving is so naturalized that one may not even pay attention to charges to charitable organizations on their credit card statements. NGO A will occasionally issue "urgent appeals" for active engagement on, for example, human rights cases, but these appeals don't appear to make waves.

5.5 Contact Contamination

Sargeant, Ford and Hudson's (2008) study on charity branding in the UK, also showed that "donors seem to begin their appraisal of [a charity] brand from the starting point that [certain] values automatically apply until they are given a specific reason to believe otherwise" (489). In the case of NGO A, an active and public counter discourse to this

negative imagery does not really exist for reasons previously discussed. International development NGOs are sometimes attributed with characteristics as a category of organizations that predispose them to be read as being unrepresentative, unaccountable, and more likely to cause harm abroad than good.

Despite NGO A's concerted presentation as an NGO that does "responsive development" by letting its Latin American partners initiate project ideas, several informants over the course of the study identified international development NGOs categorically white, anglophone, and more concerned with the status gained by working in the field of international development than the end value of their work to the developing world even among people who had done graduate work in Development Studies (cf. interview with Marisa Yupanqui 2011/09). For the sake of descriptive insight, all of NGO A's staff are white anglophones. Additionally, its Board and all of the individual donors that showed up to its Annual General Meeting were also older, white anglophones. This study did not produce material that would allow for delving into and parsing out how "white" and "anglophone" are used to distinguish between more palatable alternatives. Nor can it connect to a long history of engagement between white anglophone Canadians and the rest of the world. So, it may be best to place the ethnic profile of NGO A within the context and genealogy of the trade union environment in Canada that supports it let this question be addressed by somebody else at another time. This is one more constraint that NGO A has to contend with moving ahead.

5.6 Solidarity

Jen Kirk, NGO A's Development Officer during the time I was with NGO A, cited difficulty in understanding and communicating solidarity as an employment issue during her exit interview before she left NGO A and moved onto another organization. If language has power, and this power is derived from specified sources of cultural capital and the dynamics, meaning, and value to attached to specific words, it is important to explore how key concepts are used at NGO A. The most instrumental concept to NGO A's identity is solidarity, although it ambiguously motivates and defines the actions of the actors involved with the organization. Therefore, it warrants some theoretical discussion to figure exactly what this concept means in order to understand the unique relationships and applications that this term may have in later discussions.

In Solidarity and the Gift, Komter (2005) presents the concept of solidarity as having four different dimensions or attributes that help to distinguish its various forms and manifestations: recognition of the other, social distance, motives, and reciprocity. Komter's model works with ideal types and theoretical concepts drawn from the disciplines of sociology and anthropology, and is intended to provide interpretive lenses. As she states in her text, there can be many exceptions, cross-overs, and unanticipated realities that the model does not capture, but it may be helpful in clarifying a genealogy of practices related to community development and cohesion.

Komter writes that "recognition of the other as a human being proves to be an essential precondition for the coming into being of patterns of exchange. Without recognition of the person and his or her identify no reciprocal exchange is possible" (2005: 195-196). The insider-outsider problematic, of belonging or being excluded from a community is a red thread that winds through cultural studies and is, for all intents and purposes, a classic concept. The reason for this is that "identity is not confined to the consciousness of one's body, the 'box of flesh and blood,' but extends as well to social consciousness" (Singer 1984: 65). The shared practices and understandings that constitute culture also follow the creation and policing of boundaries. Donnan and Haller (2000) write that "the ability and the need to draw borders have been revealed as universal anthropological constants. . ..things can be brought together only by separating them from each other. Drawing borders is thus the key to human cognition: the spatial border is 'only the crystallization or spatialization of the sole true psychological boundary" (8). The recognition component of solidarity, then, is important because "recognition as a human being" means more than the act of recognizing another person as a member of the same species, it also entails a shared value of having a set of shared experiences, history, culture, or other characteristics that make a relationship meaningful. For NGO A, the consequences of this can be relatively benign, but it impedes the organization from meetings its objectives. Referring back to the Canadian donor once asked to write a blog entry detailing her experience of participating on an international study trip who explained her participation as "helping the unfortunates," it is possible to see why charity is a concept that NGO A struggles with. Charity misses the point of NGO A's intent of conducting study trips for peer-to-peer meetings in order to build individual relationships. Rather, it turned it into something like a mission trip for this individual and reinforced a

worldview populated by certain categories of people that simply needed help from those who were better off. If you are approaching the development relationship from a standpoint of superiority and privilege, you are going to read the communities you are working with differently.

Social distance can be said to be "produced by the habitus through categories of perception and appreciation that are themselves produced by an observable social condition" (Bourdieu 1984: 101). The concept of social distance has to do with the type and quality of relationships shared by people, and often references scales developed by Emory Bogardus (1925) to determine the relative spread of distance between individuals from different social groups. The scale developed by Bogardus was heavily informed by a racial or ethnic view of culture, but it can be adapted as a meaning making concept to understand the perceptions of nearness and distance among different cultural groups. For NGO A, this is an interesting topic for several different reasons. Although the organization seeks to develop strong social ties, there are some odd inconsistencies that show through between messaging and the lived experience of the organization. For all of the solidarity building that NGO A seeks to encourage, why, for example, doesn't NGO A have tight relationships with other organizations either created by immigrant Latin Americans or expressly interested in Latin American social justice in Canada? Why is it that the majority of NGO A's donors and board members have no skill in Spanish for communicating with their partners in solidarity? And, despite the presence of a respectable number of Latin American expatiates in British Columbia, why are the people showing up to fundraising events and the organization's Annual General Meeting all "white" ?

Social distance seems to be assessable based on the actions or material support that exchanges between individuals. In anthropology, gift giving is a transitionally accepted means of expressing and maintaining social relationships. Komter (2005) may be able to provide insight into these open ended questions by focusing on the material exchange that happens between Canadian and Latin American partners. Komter writes that "the nature of the gift was related to the nature of the social relationship: the closer the distance - family, relatives - the more disinterested the gift and the less specific the expectations of return of gifts. In relations with unknown people gifts given out of motives of personal gain or self-interest are more likely" (197). Although this in itself is a culturally embedded expectation of

gift giving, the concept of social distance may play itself out in many different ways where members of a group confer selective or preferential treatment to included membership. Or, in this case, in the apparent condition where indicators of personal connection with people from another culture in terms of a shared means of communication, or reaching to connect to expressions of that culture "at home" do not appear to exist. Where donors have already been discussed as generally not having strong relationships with aid recipients within the context of their union environments, it appears that a "cultural bonding" doesn't seem to be developing strongly either. If there is a substantial exchange of money happening to unknown people, or people with whom donors could, but do not develop strong relationships, what personal gain has happened? More importantly, where does donors' continued motivation to contribute come from?

Applying Komter's (2005) thinking on the problems of unclear articulation of reciprocal exchanges as a component of solidarity building - that "complications that may occur when transactors do not share the same frame of mind with respect to each other and to the things that are transacted" (17) - this might be because NGO A has erred on not further articulating what is returned to Canadians who participate in international development. However, if they aren't happy with the framework of charitable return, then what is the alternative? And why is it then that critique against government acting in Canadian self-interest by restructuring international aid based on the expectation of reciprocal economic interest is a bad thing? Following Mauss (2000), for example, an anthropological analysis would presume that gifting and reciprocity are indivisible processes in forging or maintaining social solidarity, and that gifting is very often a self-interested act. I would suspect that what is missing from NGO A's program then, is direct engagement for capturing this energy and building commitment out of it locally, in Canada. By focusing on the local expression of a global experience, it might be possible to forge greater commitment to the project of international transfer by making the practice of solidarity tangible. While there have been instances where Latin American partners have demonstrated outside of Canadian embassies abroad in support of the British Columbia Teacher's Federation, the value of actions such as these are unclear.

The motivations behind actions may be just as instrumental in achieving the intent of solidarity and the structuring of social systems as the actions themselves. Correct

interpretation, misinterpretation, over-reading, lack of understanding, culture jamming, and other processes all feed into the actual impact that social actions have. Komter discusses motivation as manifesting in four different ways, including: expressing shared values, ensuring the return of actions or support, representing power, and preserving one's own self-interest. Motivation reveals itself to be a pain point for NGO A not only in the context of its institutional supporters, but also with reconciling the organization's position within in the field of international development work articulated by the Canadian federal government.

What NGO A's donors get out of participating in the organization's work may be a weak point in maintaining and expanding support through hard times. Value for money in lieu of reciprocity, or the expectation of return, is an instrumental concept at play in the new field of international development being articulated by the Canadian federal government by tying aid dollars to foreign policy objectives. Reciprocity, the final dimension of solidarity discussed by Komter (2005), has to to with the taxonomy of social transactions as either gifts or sacrifices and the expectations of return that are attached to these transactions. Reciprocity is not considered to occur just because of people's calculating rationality. Social needs, individual interests, and economics can all be managed through material exchange, so transactions in solidarity should be analyzed using different lenses to reveal what may be happening in these different fields. It may be that there are opportunities for strategic relationship management that could mitigate these issues which NGO A is not currently taking advantage of (cf. Waters 2010: 2). If NGO A's network of institutional and individual donors in Canada are more of a closed network with "shallow" social connections to their Latin American partners, can NGO A staff leverage their capital as pro union, progressive, human rights, gender, and education focused to strengthen the local experience of international solidarity ? Can they make it more satisfying in its strategic intent of promoting and expanding on certain values rather than mixed as it appears to be in practice (cf. Andreasen and Kotler 2008) ? It may be worth the time to analyze whether or not there are additional opportunities that NGO A as an organization can realize in increasing its visibility and presence in the everyday lives of its donor base.

Nearly all the staff of NGO A have a deep personal experience that connects them to working in Latin America, and many of them are, in fact "married" to the work they do, having spouses from the region. The depth of relationships as a component of international

development work are highly important, because the closer the relationship to the "culture" of Latin America gets to family and further away from "vocational solidarity," the greater the commitment to the cause and the greater awareness that there seems to be of the cause.

While NGO A does periodically host special event donor receptions and fundraising dinners, there may be more that it can do by enhancing alternative communication avenues by the increase the frequency and scope of outreach. NGO A's twitter account, for example, is largely used as a news conduit and there is a high level of reposting of stories from other organizations and is an "outbound" communications conduit. While there is much to be learned about using social media and hashtag campaigns for relationship management generally, utilizing them as additional interactive tools to encourage participation and a communication circuit with the organization to improve the quality of the relationship holds promise. Additionally, NGO A may find that by targeting outreach in areas with larger donors that it has not previously touched such as sending out personalized communication for life events such as birthdays, illnesses, anniversaries or major accomplishments where it is understood as appropriate for organizations to reach out and build relationships (cf. Matheny 1999). Locating and enhancing the real social strengths of NGO A, as opposed to other NGOs in the same line of work, will allow them to push their strengths in potentially providing narrative connectivity.

5.7 Strategies, Tactics, and Serving Up "Realness"

Focusing of relationship maintenance and improvement may be vital for NGO A to protect its core identify as an organization. However, NGO A still finds itself in an environment where the scope of its chosen activities means that it is in a minority position in its struggle over ideas and priorities with the Canadian government. While NGO A is in a minority position, it may not be subordinate because false conflict can exist between these two approaches to development work. It is therefore important to try and discern the root cause of perceived dissensus, because such knowledge facilitates better decision making.

If, as NGO A staff and board members appear to believe, NGO A is in a position of subordination in relation to the new paradigm of international development, that means that some of its resources may best be dedicated to engaging in mitigating the impact of more powerful actors. If, according to Latour, power and domination are "the final result of a process and not a reservoir, a stock, or a capital" (Latour qtd. in Rumming 2009), imminent

crisis for NGO A does not have to be a foregone conclusion in their struggle. Rather, NGO A can be an active shaper in its own future if it employs the appropriate tactics from its perceived position of subordination (cf. de Certeau 1984) if they have better knowledge of exactly where they stand and engage in those conceptual areas that have the highest impact and bearing on the progress of their work. To that end, mapping out the field of what is controllable and reachable in terms of future strategic action in this study is important. Jackson (2005: x) writes that our "capacity for being is constrained by external conditions and ingrained habits, it is equally true that these limiting conditions are shaped by the ways in which we respond to them." One may approach this project with the idea that NGO A can actively shape its future positively by its choice of tactics to adapt to a program of government retrenchment and strengthen their own position.

The strategic initiative that is operating in Canada's international development community is being formed by the language of policy, and "the language and the writing of policy and research on policy function as a type of power. Often the primary aim of policy language is to persuade rather than inform, yet rarely is it subject to critical scrutiny" (Apthorpe 1997: 43). The persuasive legitimacy of authority may be just as important as the brute force that encourages compliance and the mood of the space that power holders seek to create. There are two different methods that I believe hold potential for engaging this power imbalance and subverting it: "Realness," and tactical manipulation.

Realness is a concept drawn from queer studies that captures the performances that "queer people deploy to avoid or survive phobic violence" (Bailey 2011 : 377). This concept describes the way a queer person can represent him or herself in a certain social category. Being "real" requires "adherence to certain performances, self-presentations, and embodiments that are believed to capture the authenticity of particular…identities" (ibid. 377). This concept obtained wide distribution in the queer community through the 1990 documentary on ballroom communities *Paris is Burning*. A ball is an event where members of different "houses," or communities of gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, and queer people, compete against one another to model and perform in different categories that "critiques and revises dominant notions of gender, sexuality, family and community" (ibid. 367). Categories in a ball run the gamut. In a recent ball a selection included walks like: "Female Figure Face ("for boys in drag who are so beautiful they make real girls look like a

dude,"), Female Figure Sex Siren; Butch Queen Twister ("you come out dressed like a thug boy but then you vogue fem, like a girl") and Trans vs. Butch." (Bernstein 2012).

Previously, it was suggested that NGO A may be stuck in a liminal space because it didn't have the skills, resources, or language to participate in the international development community of practice that values private sector expansion and economic development over NGO A's own human rights based program. This position is attributable to the varieties of capital that NGO A staff have, but this doesn't determine its entire future. Absent the Board of Directors making a resolution to change the scope of the organization's work and staffing to better match changed public policy priorities, it may be possible for them to "serve up some realness" by studying the words, self-presentation, acts, and values of the powerful actors in its field and shaping itself into what these actors need to see in order to be accepted. Professional voice, message, and persona can be adjusted by acquiring the ability to deploy markers of other varieties of capital and habitus. This may mean learning to speak "economic growth," financials, and entrepreneurialism while wearing the three piece suit necessary to perform in the categories of "Economic Development Figure Face" (for NGOs that play the economic development portfolio manager so well they make real business analysts look like a college freshman), or "Big Money Twister" (you come out looking like a hard core player looking to expand the nation's strategic assets and then you vogue rebel, like a human rights hero). Although a reach, these might be engaging ways to think about culture-jamming and representing the work that NGO A wants to accomplish in a way that won't challenge those with power and resources enough to be pushed out of the competition for funds.

Interestingly, De Certeau's work on strategies and tactics calls out *la perruque* ("the wig) as a means by which individuals bend the strategic designs or intent of physical and social spaces to suit their own needs. Strategy is the ability "to produce, tabulate, and impose spaces, when those operations take place, whereas tactics can only use, manipulate and divert these spaces" (De Certeau 1984: 30). Tactics are the individual actions within a set of rules or expectations established by strategy are reconciled with actual performance, NGO A may even be able to find complementary methods to "realness" by conscripting the language of power and using it for their own purposes to enhance their profile. "Growth through business," "capacity building," "entrepreneurialism," "enabling self-sufficiency," are concepts that carry weight in the world that NGO A doesn't currently have to tools and

knowledge to participate in, but they don't have to work at cross purposes with what they necessarily want to accomplish in terms of strengthening international relationships, expanding educational access, mediating gender-based inequalities, or improving the working conditions of maquiladora workers (and perhaps the products therefrom). If tactical actions "intervene in a field which regulates them. . .and introduce into it a way of turning it to their advantage that obeys other rules and constitutes something like a second level interwoven into the first" (De Certeau 1984: 30), finding ways to bend dominant policy language and intent to suit NGO A's purposes appears doable if only enough effort was put into it. NGO A's relationship with Luke Shuparski, the "reluctant donor," shows that pulling this off may not be too difficult because NGO A already has a stock of valuable skills and services it can put on the market.

NGO A appears to have a number of high-level risks in addition to the prospective loss of public funding through CIDA. These included a pool of potential donors that is smaller than it could be because the organization's values and the language which it uses to express them are deeply embedded in a specific, perhaps idealized, union culture. Additionally, the institutional donors that are instrumental to NGO A's development model appear to have difficulty finding traction with the concept of solidarity in an international context, and this may have just as much to do with NGO A's strategic communications and relationship management practices as it does with the social needs involved with cultivating solidarity in general. If NGO A is excluded from public funding in the future, knowing of the tendency of staff to remain silent on organizational advocacy in the public sphere, it will be in a subordinate position that may require deploying creative tactics and coping mechanisms in order to both preserve its core identify and gain access to the resources available in the new system and priorities being established in Canada for international development work. As an interrelated issue portfolio, the potential negative impacts of these risks make it difficult to reach to the work that NGO A and its Latin American partners actually perform. The next chapter will discuss recommendations of possible actions that may be beneficial for treating the problems identified over the course of the analysis.

6 Conclusion

NGO A is highly focused on its ability to maintain programming and to continue support for its Latin American partners in the future. NGO A staff already had some awareness of the challenges that I explored in this thesis regarding gift giving, the conflict between charity and solidarity as a giving model, and the partnership structure. Although NGO A has been very successful in securing funding for projects on behalf of its Latin American partners in the past, its current method of promoting development though transnational solidarity in the fields of education, labor, and gender equality is not likely to be pragmatic moving forward without some adjustments. In fact, there may be a strong case for questioning the value of what is at stake for loss in the exchange between NGO A's Canadian and Latin American partners with the prospect of funding retrenchment from the federal government.

The problems discovered in of course of research with NGO A are slightly more complex than the changing priorities that arise with the ebb and flow of politics. Canadian public policy on international aid being more closely connected to serving the strategic economic and political interests of Canada has supplanted a policy of development that focuses on international development work for alleviating poverty, strengthening human rights, and improving quality of life as an aims in themselves. Charity and voluntary philanthropy are categorically being promoted in place of state sponsored projects in favor, at least according to the analysis of NGO A staff, of projects with clearer functional return such as development incentives tied to negotiating access to mining contracts for Canadian companies. This shifting of NGOs like NGO A into the role of deliverers of FDI appears to be both an efficiency measure and ideological shift to promote a culture of entrepreneurship and market driven development.

Within NGO A, one staff member described the changes to the program of international development under the Harper government as being "corporate, a lot more arrogant and self centered, a lot more about Canada's interests abroad" (interview with Philis Wood 2011/09/13). I couldn't say that the research from this study would support the conclusion that arrogance and self-centeredness are expanding public motivators in Canada. On the contrary, the federal government's administrative changes are modeled on a public

works process that is designed, in theory, to target the best projects, the best organizations capable of delivering them, be auditable, and be able to demonstrate value for money. Compare this with the narrative that revealed itself through my interviews with individual donors and representatives from NGO A's Canadian partner organizations that indicated that the concept of international solidarity is not necessarily as meaningful and compelling as it is for NGO A staff. Given that NGO A speaks an unfamiliar language of social priorities that is not easily understood by the general public, and that NGOs as a category of organizations sometimes carry a prejudicial burden of being unrepresentative and unaccountable, the problematics addressed over the course of this thesis begin to assume more substance.

Within this framework, the Canadian federal governments may gain advantages in controlling social movements through funding maneuvers and legal regulations. Not only is the issue one of defining social values, it is one of the distribution of capital and power through the enrolling of people and institutions in a new strategic view of how the government and the public sphere should operate. Policy here represents "not so much a political discourse or as an instrument for forging large-scale collective social identities, but rather as a form of power which works upon the individual's sense of self. . .united by a common concern to analyze the processes by which new norms of conduct - often actively engineered and promoted by government and organizations - comes to be adopted and internalized by individuals" (Shore and Wright 1997: 29). Policy becomes a set of tools that frame and set limits to what is possible to do from both and individual and an organizational perspective. NGO A staff and board members must learn how to either engage with this this new strategic position, or learn how to tactically manipulate it for its own advantage while addressing relationship management with its non-governmental partners.

The path forward for NGO A could be interpreted as a route winding through issues arising from organizational adaptations to a new public management processes. The project justification, bidding, and accountability measures that this requires is more typically seen in public service contract administration or capital projects management and have steep learning curves. Alternatively, if NGO A loses government support and choses not to pursue it again, the organization faces an equally tortuous path in navigating uncertain terrain with its other institutional and individual donors in order to improve the quality of its relationships and set itself on firm foundations for the future. The choice to engage cultural analysis in this

institutional evaluation of NGO A was taken because the issues facing the organization in each of these two scenarios are not exclusively matters of business process adjustment, but are arguably rooted within changing norms of what Canada's social obligations are, how NGO A's membership justifies their engagement in international development, and acceptable standards of evaluation social outcomes of both public and private investment. Drawing on the work of Richard Salisbury (1976), a prominent Canadian anthropologist who worked on mediating development policy between the Canadian government and First Nations tribes, "to understand and to change any social situation requires a knowledge not only of the internal dynamics of the situation but also of the nature of the macrosystem which provides parameters for the situation. An anthropologist who confines himself to attempting to change only one aspect -- the macrosystem or the microsystem -- is ignoring this finding, at his peril" (271). To this end my hope is that this thesis had adequately problematized gaps in NGO A's organizational knowledge so that staff and board members can be better prepared to act to make necessary changes in order to keep the organization viable. What follows is a set of recommendations for further analysis and action by NGO A's Board of Directors, Executive Director.

6.1 Recommendations

(1) Clarify what the goal of solidarity is, and the means the NGO A should employ to develop it.

Solidarity is not a bad goal to have as an organizational objective. However, in NGO A's world, solidarity appears to be more of an abstraction that a tangible experience its key non-governmental supporters. Solidarity is a concept that requires an understanding of who belongs to your community and what expectations exist and are created by fostering closer ties, and may take many different forms considering the diverse situations of its donors. Where NGO A staff are highly engaged and have remarkable longevity in terms of the number of years they have worked with NGO A, the social depth of peer-to-peer connections between Canadian union development partners and their Latin American counterparts is questionable as more than a relationship of professional enrichment. An inability to "feel" solidarity may invite donors to fall back on alternative meaning making such a using the language and values of charity to justify or make sense of what is happening by working with NGO A.

What might be received as a Marxist goal of worker organizations from different parts of the world uniting in their shared condition as workers in the struggle for social justice may be compelling enough to keep champions from union organizations from making an effort to cancel the relationship. However, the very localized support that NGO A has in partner organizations, knowing that union membership may consider international solidarity a "fluff" issue, is cause for thought on figuring out how to expand buy-in and connect international solidarity to the strategic objectives of these union organizations.

(2) Focus on high-level individual relationship management with partners

Institutional union partners have the greatest value to NGO A in terms of financial viability and organizational credibility. However, one of NGO A's greatest problems as an organization is knowing when and where it can be visible and to whom. The conventional response of staff to organizational threats originating from the government by not speaking in public as a representative of NGO A might be read as stealth. In this sense NGO A staff seek to protect the organization by hiding it away from formal and public spaces, and directing presentations away for tender topics if they must be in the spotlight. Stealth is a "processes [that] requires knowledge about cultural geography...The relation between the visibility and the invisibility is always a social one, defined by relations between people. And if informal space is a social construction, it is also political. Formal, and thus visible, space is often created through the political sphere and since informal space is intertwined with the formal, informal space is deeply political" (Ristilammi 2006: 91). Relying on informal spaces by trusting that established organizational relationships are reliable enough to carry the organization through turbulence is a gamble, and the likelihood of positive outcomes can be enhanced through mitigation strategies.

If visibility presents more risk than NGO A can tolerate, it may focus more on one-on-one relationship management with high level sponsors. Čačija (2013) refers to two methods of approaching fund raising and relationship management: the transactional approach and the strategic approach. A transactional approach focuses on filling immediate needs, while a strategic approach is based on a long-term plan that braids together multiple fundraising projects (60). Developing comprehensive stakeholder analyses for sponsors to know what is important for them to hear and know about the projects they fund may also be crucial to

making these relationships stronger through time. Additionally, NGO A may find that through the process of developing stakeholder analyses that it finds opportunities to more diligently manage institutional relationships by connecting the champions of their work to other people that have influence in keeping institutional support alive. A blanket objective of cross-border solidarity may not be appropriate or meaningful for all donors. A Canadian teachers union, for example, alludes to a different mix of cultural capital, interests, and a network of competing interests than a CEO or a retiree who became committed to ideas of social justice in the 60's. Finding tailored points of personal contact as a component of solidifying commitment and giving are not so well treated in the organizational outreach of NGO A. Targeting specific individual relationships, despite fears among staff that this can border on manipulation, may be a way for NGO A to not only make the experience of being a donor more meaningful and alluring, it may also foster stronger commitment over time. This may facilitate making donors more active, positively expand visibility, and maybe even promote growth.

(3) Evaluate which of NGO A's technical capabilities and resources that are marketable and find ways to market to the entrepreneurial and business minded.

The first two recommendations here are more directly focused on existing opportunities within NGO A's partnership model. This recommendation seeks to provide some guidance on directing NGO A in more unfamiliar territories. NGO A may not be used to having to actively market its skills, network, and capabilities outside of its current program management. Focusing on the skills that it has such as Spanish language, detailed knowledge of Latin American governments and their politics, program portfolio management, and the capacity to connect to a wide network of NGOs and professional organizations may help to bring focus to what opportunities exist for NGO A to engage in rather than focusing exclusively on the threats facing the organization. Similarly, NGO A does not necessarily work at cross purposes to what more business minded and "entrepreneurial" donors and institutions may want to accomplish by engaging in international development work. Barbara Czarinawska (2012) writes that within "interactions and negotiations, there is a continuous struggle to stabilize a given translation, against various efforts to destabilize it. If the forces of stabilization win, an idea becomes an object, and an actor-network is created" (244). She goes on to write that "this means that actors, their identities, actions, patterns, and the

connections between all of them can be presented to the outside as one collective actor, an actor-network. When the forces of stabilization lose, the object falls to pieces, and the network character of the actor-network is revealed" (ibid).

It is one thing to guard one's position against a dominating force, but that does not mean that change and rearticulation of one's values and objectives informed by shifts in national culture and priorities would be a bad choice. NGO A may focus on using the language on entrepreneurship and the momentum of capacity building, social finance, and impact investment that is building up in Canada as alternative means to realize its objectives (cf. Economic and Social Investment Canada 2014). Referring back to their "reluctant donor" Luke Shuparski, NGO A can offer valuable services without letting cultural misunderstandings get in the way of the work that they want to deliver. While this would require learning the language, manners, and dispositions of a very different world that NGO A is accustomed to in order to attract greater participation in its work, that does not mean that it has to lose its core identity. Well thought tactics can allow NGO A to situate itself in a stable ecosystem and continue making the progress it desires.

(4) Open Communication Channels

Over the course of this thesis two different kinds of problems were identified for NGO A. These red threads are relationship management with its institutional and individual donors, and the changing course of public policy for international development. The previous recommendations speak to paths that NGO A may follow in an effort to make the best of its changed circumstances without attempting to pursue activities that might change its situation. Being in a position of having no vested interests with any of the competing priorities that were examined in this thesis, pragmatically speaking, it may not be such a terrible occurrence that the federal policy on international development has taken the turn that it has because it has helped to reveal underlying weaknesses in the core of NGO A's mission and vision. It is a question of opinion how long the organization would have been able keep moving forward even without these government reforms.

While NGO A has restrictions placed on it for lobbying and advocacy because of its legal structure, that should not mean that the organization, if fact, the family of organizations that work in international development shouldn't be able to find ways to open of

communication channels with the federal government. The object of such an action would be to "lessen the tensions by increasing each groups's awareness of the reasons for positions adopted by the others as well as by increasing their awareness of alternative means for resolving the conflicts" (Feit and Scott 2004: 234) that take into account "on the ground" knowledge in international contexts, the local implications of Canadian development policy, as well as cultural and social considerations.

These government policy changes are just as much about the negotiation of what Canadian values are as the actual projects that are delivered internationally. If nothing else, this thesis should support the position that there is a critical disjuncture between the official policies and strategy of the Canadian federal government and a long standing, and highly respected method of program based international development work through CIDA, that sought to bridge Canadian policy with local practices and internationally through open communication and long term relationship building. Although there are important issues that NGO A needs to treat with its donor base as relationship management rises as a core business function for the organization, there were no respondents in this study who, having detailed knowledge of the work that NGO A does and being able to understand it in the language it is presented in, think it is not a very good way to practice international development. A skilled facilitator and advocate that could navigate the political system and reestablish lines of communication with government on the high-level of policy design in the "official" language would be of benefit not only to NGO A but also for other nonprofit international development organizations. Without the connections to leverage a dialogue about their core issues of social equity with government, as was revealed to be the case by the unwillingness of NGO A's institutional supporters to engage, and staff members own reluctance to speak in the public sphere, NGO A will likely have far more difficulty and struggle ahead of it. In light of knowledge about the needs of its support base, NGO A can progress toward better leadership in making sure that the means and content of organizational outreach match desired ends and remediate deficiencies in strategic communication, planning, and continuous improvement processes.

6.2 A Future for Applied Cultural Analysis

While maintaining a neutral role, a cultural analyst may assume the burden of outlining imbalances of power and facilitate each parties ability to "formulate its position in the best possible knowledge of the perceptions and expectations of others and that, out of such transactions, the structure of future relationships could be influences for the better" (Feit and Scott 2004: 243). A cultural analyst is trained to develop practicable knowledge that takes cultural factors into account in order to bridge gaps in understanding and mismatching of practices with goals due to bias, indifference to the views of others, lack of knowledge, and inability recognize either the taken for granted in everyday life or the complexity of our lived experiences. In the case of NGO A, there is a breakdown happening in the context of a power struggle on the national level to redefine the legitimate business of government and the use of public funds that has revealed underlying issues that that organization may not have needed to deal with otherwise regarding its relationship management, branding, and communication practices that has nothing to do with perceptions of its *delivery practices* in responsive development throughout Latin America as ideal means to achieve durable development in a respectful way informed by and tailored to local contexts.

While this study may have been of use in in the identification of problems that may have been overlooked using other approaches, there is an opportunity for cultural analysis to do better. While the preliminary results of this study were presented to NGO A staff before I left Canada, it is difficult to leave a situation with problems unsolved. This lack of resolution is attributable largely to the incommunicability of the research findings to NGO A's partners in a productive way. Most of this study was focused on one-way communication from an external environment back to NGO A staff, the the recommendations all center on different aspects of improving the articulation of ideas and enhancing communication practices. Facilitating the creation of a circuit of communication to translate back and forth among NGO A staff, its institutional partners, individual donors, and even representatives of the Canadian government would have been valuable in a context where open communication is abnormal.

In the words of Richard Salisbury (2004) in "the world of today, in all areas, the need exists for increased communication between central bureaucracies and smaller, relatively powerless local or grass-roots groupings, and that the relative powerlessness of those

groupings depends in large part on their lack of access to information" (276). Salisbury was an early champion of applied anthropology for improving the course of government driven development within Canada, and described this role as that of the "social ombudsman," or a skilled communicator that can facilitate flow of information both upwards and downwards" where stalemates and acts of force have overtaken dialogue and negotiation (ibid. 277). Referring to the communication gap between organizations like NGO A, its partners, and the Canadian government, and presuming that all parties would accept this kind of mediation, "if the anthropologist is prepared to approach official bureaucracies with the same aims of understanding a 'foreign' language and culture [and] has technical knowledge of the process of developmental change, he could phrase the aims of planners [or decision makers] in terms comprehensible to local people, while also suggesting to the local people ways of achieving their wishes which they did not previously realize" (Salisbury 2004: 278).

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