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MASTERARBEIT

Titel der Masterarbeit

Emerging Places: nature, nudism and tourism on Ada Bojana, Montenegro

*An ethnographic case study on the changing meaning of place in a
holiday setting*

verfasst von

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angestrebter akademischer Grad

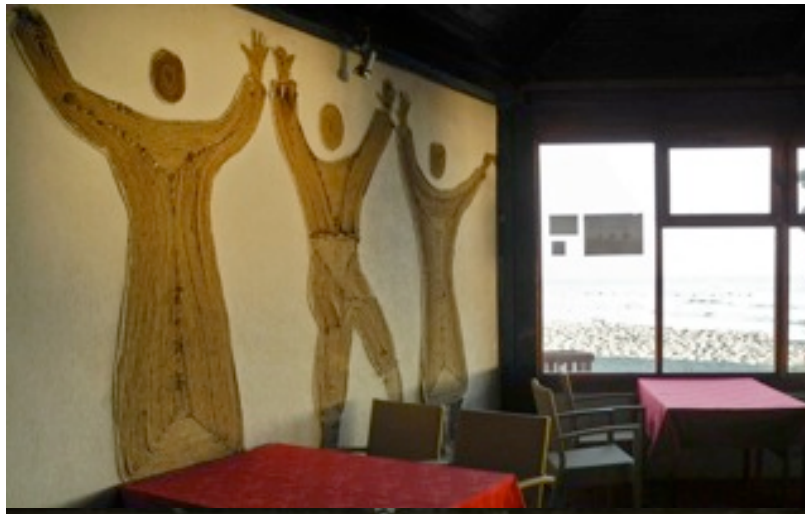
Master of Arts (MA)

Wien, 2014

Studienkennzahl It Studienblatt: A 066 656

Studienrichtung It Studienblatt: Masterstudium CREOLE - Cultural Differences and Transnational Processes

Betreuerin: Univ. -Prof Dr. Ayşe Çağlar



ABSTRACT

The aim of my ethnographic research is to show how the interplay between people and place produces particular place narratives, and how these narratives reveal the intricate elements that constitute places and that permeate place's landscapes. These elements are a mixture of place identities, experiences, and sense of place, which are tightly intertwined with and interdependent on the specific landscape and environment. To explore this, I select Ada Bojana as a case study – a place on the southern Adriatic Sea in Montenegro, which developed into a popular holiday seaside destination in the 1970s. Through its development, I show how socio-cultural processes have mingled with ecological processes to produce specific characteristics that have come to distinguish Ada Bojana over time. On the one hand, I explore how these characteristics influence people's place experience and sense of place, and on the other, I investigate how new place narratives reveal the changing purpose Ada Bojana serves in people's lives. This emerging role, I conclude, mirrors a desire for alternatives to typical coastal tourist settings on this part of the Adriatic. I employ ethnographic fieldwork along with a historical analysis of the place and its surroundings. I detect three main characteristics running through place-based narratives that form Ada Bojana's identity. Then, I select two main catalysts of change that have been challenging these characteristics. While Ada Bojana continues to build upon its historical legacy and exist as an alternative place on the Montenegrin coast for summer visitors, it is also becoming an ambiguous place that challenges concepts of holiday and home, for local and foreign tourism workers, visitors, and those seeking a second home away from the city life. Thus, I mainly focus on the relationship between people and place in a holiday setting, and how place-based narratives can reveal changing meanings of place, holiday and tourism in today's era of globalization.

Key words: tourism development, Montenegro, sense of place, place-based narratives

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Das Ziel meiner ethnographischen Forschung ist zu zeigen, wie das Zusammenspiel zwischen Mensch und Ort produziert bestimmten Ort Erzählungen und wie diese Erzählungen die komplizierte Elemente zeigen, die die Orte darstellen und die Landschaften durchdringen. Diese Elemente sind eine Mischung aus Ort Identitäten, Erfahrungen und Gefühl für den Ort, die eng miteinander verflochten sind mit und voneinander abhängig von der jeweiligen Landschaft und Umwelt. Um dies zu erkunden, wählen Sie Ich Ada Bojana als Fallstudie - ein Ort an der südlichen Adria in Montenegro, das sich zu einem beliebten Urlaubsziel am Meer in den 1970er Jahren entwickelt. Durch die Entwicklung, zeige ich, wie sozio-kulturelle Prozesse mit ökologischen Prozessen vermischt, um spezifische Eigenschaften zu produzieren, die im Laufe der Zeit der Ada Bojana ausgezeichnet hergestellt haben. Auf der einen Seite habe ich untersucht wie diese Eigenschaften, Ort Erfahrung und Gefühl für den Ort der Menschen beeinflusst haben, und auf der anderen ich untersuchen wie neue Ort Erzählungen zeigen die verändernde Zweck Ada Bojana dient im Leben der Menschen. Diese neue Rolle, ich schließe, spiegelt den Wunsch nach Alternativen zu typischen touristischen Küsten Einstellungen auf diesem Teil der Adria. Ich beschäftige ethnographische Feldforschung zusammen mit einer historischen Analyse des Ortes und seiner Umgebung. Ich erkennen drei Haupteigenschaften durch ortsbezogene Erzählungen, die Ada Bojana Identität bilden. Dann wähle ich zwei Haupt Katalysatoren des Wandels, die Herausforderung diese Eigenschaften haben. Während Ada Bojana weiterhin auf seinem historischen Erbe aufbaut und als Alternative Ort an der Küste Montenegros für Sommergäste existiert, ist es auch immer eine zweideutige Ort, die Konzepte von Urlaub und Hause herausfordert, für die lokalische und ausländische Tourismus Arbeiter, Besucher und diejenigen die suche eine zweite Heimat entfernt von der Stadt das Leben.

Schlüsselwörter: Entwicklung des Tourismus, Montenegro, Ort Gefühl, ortsbezogene Erzählungen

GRATITUDE

To mention and give thanks to all the people who inspired, advised and guided me along the way would mean I have to start at the beginning of this grand journey, back at home in California, with the people who encouraged my move to Europe to begin the CREOLE Master's program in Cultural Anthropology.

First, I must express the most gratitude to family. My dear parents, Diane and Ken, have held their breathe (and probably bit their tongues many times) as I jumped around the European continent to document and write about life. Thank you for letting me be who I am, for seeing and respecting the creative adult in me while still loving and caring for me as parents. And to my sister and brother, Nichole and Kenny, thank you for bringing me down to earth and reminding that, above all, love and a supportive family are treasures that are not to be taken for granted.

Then, to my supportive and inspiring friends in the Bay Area, you have remained strong visionaries of my thesis even when I felt that I had lost my way. Not only this, you have helped me craft an art of living that has influenced my work and writing. My mentors and close companions, Andreas, Jim, Irina, Ben, Rachel, Rico, and Dominique, your holistic perspective on life, work and health have given me so much guidance and without you I am sure I wouldn't be who I am today. You planted the wise and creative seeds in my brain and assured me I have nothing to lose in following my vision.

Numerous professors and staff supported my academic beginning in Vienna. Professors Ayşe Çağlar, Thomas Fillitz and Tapio Nisula have been three of my main leaders on this journey. Whether in lectures or advising sessions, they have guided me with their challenging critiques and supportive solutions. Behind their efforts, I must also mention and thank the entire CREOLE administrative staff for their support at the University of Vienna, especially Kerstin Poeltz and Rosemarie Mueller.

In Ljubljana a new group of encouraging professors and staff strengthened my academic experience. Professors Rajko Muršič, Boštjan Kravanja, and Bojan Baskar, you welcomed me from the very first day, providing guidance not only for my thesis, but also for my life in Ljubljana. You set me off in the right direction and confirmed my abilities to successfully carry out research in Montenegro. Thanks greatly to you, my fieldwork was successful and enjoyable.

And finally, I express endless gratitude to all those who've crossed my path in Montenegro. From those who have offered a place to sleep, Stana in Cetinje, Banja and his family on Ada Bojana, and the others who have lent me tents, blankets and shared food, you gave me the comfort and security I needed to accomplish my fieldwork. To everyone who is a part of Ada Bojana's community, your stories enabled me to produce this work and I value and respect all the time and personal insights you shared with me. All the island staff and management, Ana, Miki, Hamsa, Nikola, Micho and Skender just to name a few, and all the visitors and homeowners, such as Zoran and Ana, Sloba and Goran, Pavle, Damir, Nebojsa, Didi, Cavor and Oleg, thank you for sharing your friendship.

And lastly, to Ms. Michelle Vignes, who has been the inspiration for most of my ethnographic aspirations. You showed me that no matter what you do in life, your heart has to be in it. If anything else, I tried to live by this motto during my work, which I hope reflects in the pages below.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Sometime in the mid-1800s, on the southernmost point of the Montenegrin coast, the Bojana River that flows into the Adriatic Sea split in two, forming a small island that became known as Ada Bojana. In 1973, tourist entrepreneurs turned one part of this island into a nudist settlement, marking the beginning of tourism development on the final strip of Montenegro's coastline. As visitors multiplied over the years, AB developed social features, acquired meanings and underwent physical changes that came to characterize the place. As people interact with the natural environment in new and different ways year after year, the place is constantly transforming. From new forms of tourist activity and island management, to more fishing regulations and an eroding shoreline, AB is changing. As my ethnographic account shows, vast and intricate webs of social relations and networks have been expanding, ultimately creating a new kind of tourist place.



Figure 1: Entrance to Ada Bojana

The aim of my ethnographic research is to show how tourism has solidified a strong identity for AB and how new and continuing tourism activities continue to transform the place. By

identity, I mean all the physical and non-physical traits that characterize the place according to people's perceptions. Thus, I collect place narratives from a wide range of AB's inhabitants (tourism workers, visitors or fishermen) to examine shifting senses of place and varying place identities. People hold on to particular images and meanings while adapting to new forms of tourism in a different socio-political context. First, I go back to its historical beginnings and describe how AB developed into a place. Then, I go through the major events that altered its course of development, and finally, I explain how these events changed people's experience of and relationship to AB.

Place, tourism, identity

Globalization has affected social relations and claims on space. Although the world is arguably getting *smaller*, a place can never cease being a place, even in the face of homogenization and a weakening distinct character, just as an individual "can certainly become more superficial, yet will always retain traces of integral selfhood" (Casey, 2001, p. 408). This implies that our relationship to place is changing, yet still significant. Places provide the backdrop to the human experience; we connect them to many memories of people and moments that have marked our lives (Raadik-Cottrell, 2010). Thus, because people identify strongly with places, but are increasingly becoming translocal and mobile, it's necessary to look at how people create and define identities and lifestyles that are adjusting to new concepts of place and society (Meethan in Meethan, Anderson & Miles, 2006).

Moreover, the widespread prevalence of tourism today means that many people have been or will be tourists at some point in their lives. Because of this, tourism is ambiguous - what makes a place *touristy*, what characterizes *tourists*, *guests*, *hosts* or *locals*? None of these terms have clear answers today (Coleman & Crang, 2002), in part because travel is more accessible and affordable than ever before (Ringer, 2007). Thus, we are living in a world where tourism is all pervasive

(Duim & Lengkeek in Boissevain & Selwyn, 2004), where certain conceptions of tourism and tourist places may be outdated. Therefore, we need to expand traditional concepts and theories within tourism studies in the anthropology and the other social sciences.

Research in holiday settings is helpful for repositioning tourism in general, but it also a way to understand the meaning of holiday places in specific regions. Tourism industries in the countries of the former Yugoslavia have been redeveloping quite rapidly since the end of the conflict in the 1990s. Although tourism was thriving from the 1960-1980s, mainly along the Yugoslav Adriatic, very little research provides a holistic picture of tourism in this area (Grandits & Taylor, 2010). Because of this, more research is needed that focuses on domestic tourism and the social significance and importance of holiday places for local populations in this region.

Every country has its own tourism history that is closely marked by socio-political and economic developments. In Montenegro's case, tourism was, and still is, heavily concentrated on the coast. The southern coast and the municipality of Ulcinj, where AB is located, is one of the only coastal areas unscathed by large development projects. Because of this, the natural environment and much of its landscape have been largely unaltered since the 1970s. However, development plans loom closely on the horizon, and it is likely just a matter of time before AB and the 13km coastline is sold to a foreign investor for a heavy makeover.

Such a potential scenario would most likely clash with the socio-cultural life that currently exists on AB, making it ever more important to understand the place, how and why it has come to be, and what new social patterns are emerging. By examining its past and inquiring into people's relationships with AB, we can try to see why certain meanings have developed and what the place symbolizes for various groups and individuals. Changes in its touristic life mean that people today experience and connect differently to AB than they did in the past. It has transformed from a strictly-tourist destination with clear rules and protocol to a mixed holiday-home place with

loosely defined regulations. This emerging life on AB is important to consider in light of the probable foreign development.

AB is likely not the only place in the world experiencing such changes. Collecting case studies in different holiday settings around the globe can help us identify patterns and trends to better understand the meanings places hold and purposes they serve. Anthropologists have long been interested in how people develop a sense of belonging to certain places and the varying meanings people attach to them (Kravanja in Simonić et al., 2006). Some scholars focus on the effects of tourism development on local communities (Boissevain & Selwyn et al., 2004), while others concentrate on the experience of tourists while on holiday (Raadik-Cottrell, 2010; Kneafsey, 1998; Heimtun, 2007).

“Tourism, the travel between places and touring of landscapes, is essential to the identity process of both travelers and places” (Raadik-Cottrell, 2010, p. iii). This reciprocal interaction between people and place means that, as places constantly evolve, so do the relationships people have with them. Although these relationships are unique to the individual, place experience and sense of place also depend on the respective landscape and environment. Because humans and nature are bound together, there is no disjoint between people and landscapes (Ingold, 1993), and therefore, between people and places. Humans and the environment interact in landscapes (Olwig, 1996) and effectively create places, molding their histories and identities. Thus, landscape and nature are socially constructed, and people’s interaction with the place generates a multitude of meaningful relationships (Heine & Arnold, in Simonić, 2006).

By collecting place narratives we can understand how and why places change, how people develop a sense of place and how they distinguish between various types of places, such home, leisure and work. Furthermore, holiday settings on the coast have unique qualities that create specific kinds of place experiences (Raadik-Cottrell, 2010). Thus, sense of place largely depends

on the specific coastal tourist context and the events that have influenced its people and landscape. Because place, environment and landscape are intricately connected with varying definitions, it is also necessary to take into account the socio-cultural and political history of the place, and specify the distinguishing features of the place and landscape.

Ethnographic inquiry is useful for such studies in holiday settings because they allow us to focus on the interaction between space and human activity, which can reveal a lot about places in general (Raadik-Cottrell, 2010). By collecting, documenting and analyzing place experiences through in-place dwelling and fieldwork observations, we can get an in-depth and intimate look at the meaning places hold and how they factor into life experience. Thus, my ethnography is a case study that is relevant for anthropology and it can also be of interest for those outside the discipline because it concerns a topic central to the human experience - place. By exploring AB's landscape, its changing identity and the meanings it has for people, my research opens up a discussion on the changing face of tourism and the meaning of place in today's global and mobile world.

AB is a useful case study because it is a relatively new place (+/- 150 years) that has lived through dramatic transitions, especially during the Yugoslavian conflict in the 1990s. Today Montenegro continues through a major phase of transition, which heavily shapes developments and social life on AB. As the government increasingly invests in tourism development, AB will be subject to major changes in the future. Although these will directly affect the tourism industry on the island, they will also indirectly have repercussions on the social meaning and symbolism AB has acquired over time, much of which goes beyond tourism. As domestic visitors extend their stays on AB and are more frequently making it a second home, it evidently satisfies non-touristic needs and serves a significant purpose in society.

The field

Upon my first trip to AB in February 2008, the place looked desolate and abandoned – not one person crossed my path, no lights shone in the river houses, and the structures on the island looked worn and weathered from winter storms. When I returned in the summer, the sun was shining, beaches scattered with sunbathers and human chatter filled the air. The past hovered all around me; history was seeping out from every corner - the “Darth Vader” bungalows built in the 1970s, the dilapidating apartments overgrown with weeds and bush, old signs for German tourists pointing to “Frühstück,” and the predominance of island employees over the age of 55. What started as simple curiosity quickly turned into an inquisitive investigation into AB’s story and the variant ways people interact and connect with the place.

After having completed my first phase of fieldwork in 2012, I left the sea and ascended 1000 meters up to a city called Cetinje. Here I found a massive relief map of Montenegro that Austrians created in 1917. My eyes scanned Montenegro’s landscape and singled out several features – the incredible mountainous terrain, the massiveness of Skadar Lake, and a small river, the Bojana, flowing from this lake to the Adriatic Sea. After it meanders in and out of Albania and Montenegro, it arrives at the Adriatic and divides at a triangular piece of land just at the delta. This is Ada Bojana.



Figure 2: Montenegrin relief map

The sea, sand, river sediments, and the Bojana River formed the island in the 1850s. It lies on the southernmost point on Montenegro's coast and marks the border with Albania. *Ada* means island in Turkish, and Bojana refers to the river (in Albanian, *Buna*). Although the island has existed for over 150 years, people didn't regularly inhabit it until the 1970s. It was an important transport route from the Adriatic Sea to the interior and a border military zone from 1946-1990, but human interaction in this landscape was minimal.

Prior to the 1970s, locals used AB to fish and keep livestock during the winter months, but for the most part the beaches were empty, except for sparsely placed fishing nets and wandering animals. There were no houses or restaurants, only a few fishing shacks built along the riverbank that local fishermen used from time to time. AB was accessible only by sea or a sandy dirt road that connected it to the main city of Ulcinj (15 km away), which took over an hour to travel. After it became known as a nudist tourist complex in 1973, socio-cultural life and physical characteristics of its landscape began to change.

From its early days as an unpopulated island used for keeping livestock to its later days as a popular nudist settlement and a weekend destination for local Montenegrins, every aspect of life on AB has become more intricate, multifaceted, and in many ways, problematic. Human activity that has introduced new life to AB's ecosystem has added new layers of complexity to the place. Rivers, insects, oceans and fish already have intricate biological systems that are far from simple, and human interference with these systems seems to maximize the complex systems already in place. Thus, each person and every element is an actor who influences the total life of the place.

In AB's case, the most impactful human activity that has drastically altered the landscape and ecosystem is tourism. Tourism brought social life to the island and gave an international meaning to its name. From 1973, it quickly developed an identity that was based on nature, nudism and tourism. Human activity has been sustaining this identity, but also changing it, which

is reflected in people's place experience and sense of place. Two of the main factors that have challenged AB's core characteristics are the bridge and the river houses. Changes on AB represent a new kind of tourism in a society transitioning from socialism to a capitalist-oriented market economy. And, they reflect shifting attitudes about leisure, work, and living in a time of increasing mobility. As its role in society is shifting, AB serves different social purposes and meets new needs.

To investigate AB's emerging identity, new notions of tourism and people's relationships to place, I outline the development of AB, starting from its beginnings as an unpopulated island, through its popular heyday as a nudist-only tourist complex, and then to its current status as a born-again domestic holiday destination with a growing population of half-residents. Throughout this historical sketch, I incorporate observations and data gathered during fieldwork. Personal narratives support my observations and independent research. They allow me to analyze how a place's identity is constructed over time and what factors influence people's place experience and sense of place.

On one hand I am interested in how places influence the self and what meanings people attach to place. So, I review concepts and theories related to place identity, landscape and sense of place. On the other hand, I inquire into the changing role tourist places acquire in today's age of global mobility. Therefore, I discuss literature on coastal tourism development within the social sciences, with an emphasis on Southeast Europe. Despite trends of destructive and homogenizing tourism development in many coastal places (Boissevain & Selwyn, 2004), my research on AB suggests that tourism isn't necessarily destructive to local places. And, in line with research on place and sense of place, people perceive and relate to AB in manifold ways. Understanding these ways within the local context can help envision a future that preserves its special characteristics while adapting to future developments.

My work is based on literature in tourism, place identity and landscape in anthropology and other social sciences. In the following chapter I review literature on the relevant concepts. Then, I give a description of the field, followed by an explanation and justification of the methods I used. I present data and knowledge gained through fieldwork in chapter 4, and then analyze and discuss this material in Chapter 5. In my conclusion, I summarize the main points from my research and suggest ideas for further exploring people-place relationships in holiday settings.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE

Tourism

Tourism is a controversial topic in anthropology because it “both creates and undermines the construction of place” (Duim & Lengkeek in Boissevain & Selwyn, 2004, p. 268). In the best scenarios it brings economic wealth, cultural diversity and other social benefits. More commonly, however, it exacerbates social inequalities, creates unreliable financial dependency and harms the environment. It is “a form of modern leisure associated with consumption, modes of economy, social transformation and cultural identity” (Grandits & Taylor, 2010, p. 2). And during this peak time of globalization, our notions of place, time, spatial organization and ownership are radically changing (Raadik-Cottrell, 2010), which has major implications for tourism.

As a consequence of its widespread prevalence around the world, past ways of defining and viewing tourism are inadequate. Even basic notions such as *tourist*, *guest*, *host*, *local*, and *mass tourism* are changing, and in most cases, are becoming more ambiguous. These changes can partly be attributed to “increased globalization, individualism, consumerism, new information technologies (shrinking of time and space) and growth of public relations industry which markets place and produces images of them” (Meethan, Anderson & Miles, 2006, p. xv).

Due to tourism’s increasing presence in everyday life, it is important to understand not only its history and various forms, but also its socio-cultural and environmental impacts. Anthropological studies of tourism focus on the socio-cultural aspects of tourist places, often highlighting their complex and conflictive character. They emphasize the way people (tourists, residents, developers, managing agencies etc.) symbolically construct landscape features and settings as tourist places (Williams & McIntyre in Uysal et al., 2012). An ethnographic approach makes it possible to analyze various aspects of places, not just economic, but also environmental,

political, social and symbolic. By taking into consideration several of the larger processes at play, as well as the individual needs and concerns of the community, anthropologists can positively contribute to understanding tourism and places in holiday settings.

One comprehensive book in anthropology is 'Contesting the Foreshore: Tourism, Society and the Politics of the Coast,' edited by Jeremy Boissevain and Tom Selwyn (2004). The authors analyze the social, political, environmental, economic and symbolic aspects of places by presenting case studies of various coastal tourist destinations. Aside from being nice places to do fieldwork, the authors show how coastal places reveal how the tourism industry is closely intertwined with "social order, organization, local identity, national character and international relations" (Boissevain in Boissevain & Selwyn, 2004, p. 32). Thus, researching tourism actually encompasses much more.

The tourism industry uses marketing and place-branding to attract tourists and enhance cultural and economic life (Vitić & Ringer, 2007). It helps position places on the regional and global market, and can also aid in diminishing negative images associated with past political and social conflict (Vitić & Ringer, 2007). However, places dependent on tourism are vulnerable to unpredictable seasonal patterns and regional inequalities that exacerbate social differences (Boissevain & Selwyn, 2004). Thus, although many benefits are clear, they are questionable, and anthropologists have been among some of the strongest critics (Boissevain & Selwyn, 2004).

The material and imaginative aspects of places, along with the material and ideological aspects of shaping them, combine to produce various myths, images and fantasies that are partially influenced by the economic reality of tourist places (Boissevain & Selwyn, 2004). For example, Natasa Rogelja (in Boissevain & Selwyn, 2004) explores how these themes are enacted and re-enacted in Izola, Slovenia. In her fieldwork, visitors and fishermen engage in conversations about "changing identities and solidarities, the place of Slovenia in the world, the changing nature

of work and play” (Rogelja in Boissevain & Selwyn, 2004, p. 26). Thus, tourism is not only researched from an economic perspective, but also from a socio-cultural perspective as a symbol of social change.

Economics are, however, a major factor. Tourism is an industry after all. It signals the arrival of the market and market principles, which affects social, political and economic life (Boissevain & Selwyn, 2004). Its growth in the last 50 years shows that the tourism industry is a byproduct of capitalism and a form of consumption in an increasing global market. Societies that traditionally rely on specific forms of labor will experience major socio-cultural changes as they adjust to the demands of the tourism industry (Boissevain & Selwyn, 2004). In coastal areas, fishing often provides a primary source of income. Families often change their modes of labor due to new fishing regulations or dwindling fish stocks. Many families also try to benefit from tourism by opening restaurants or renting accommodation (Boissevain & Selwyn, 2004).

Raoul Bianchi and Agustin Talavera (in Boissevain & Selwyn, 2004) discuss how an agriculturally based community in Gran Canaria switched to a service-based economy as a response to tourism. They trace the evolution from low- to high-level tourism, and explain how the local farmers and fishermen eventually couldn't compete with the increasing competition from outside entrepreneurs and developers. A capitalist-structured ownership system arose that restricted space locals had traditionally used for fishing and farming.

Capital flows and the exchange of people and goods link places all over the world. Places become commodities as new value is attached to the landscape. Individuals and institutions assert their control of the land in various ways, such as by establishing hotels, building houses and opening tourist centers. Such activities may be at odds with communities that have been settled in these places before the industry developed. Often, local needs clash with institutional interests.

Although locals most often lose out in the face of large-scale development plans, they are not always powerless (Boissevain & Selwyn, 2004).

Coastal holiday destinations are places of contestation, conflict and tension because “interests in the land (material interests) and ideas about the land come face to face” (Boissevain & Selwyn, 2004, p. 27). Problems surrounding land-use are very often related to environmental protection, as many touristic facilities are built upon land in non-sustainable ways. Long-term environmental concerns often get pushed aside by short-term development interests. In many cases, people want to maximize profit quickly and they pay little heed to potential ecological consequences. These environmental impacts immediately bring local communities into the conflict.

Despite the long record of locals being disadvantaged in environmental development disputes, Katia Frangoudes and Frederique Alban (in Boissevain & Selwyn, 2004) found that it's possible to achieve outcomes that benefit locals and the ecosystem. In their study of marine tourism's impact on fishermen in Greece, Catalonia and France, they observed that problems occur when fishing restrictions are put in place, but when tourism regulation is let to run wild. However, when protected parks are created in a sustainable manner by a competent group of people, and in a way that doesn't negatively impact fishermen's incomes, a positive environmental and social outcome can prevail.

State policies and governance play an extremely important role when it comes to the environment and tourism development. Land ownership and management show who or what institutions are involved and what implications these policies have on the place. Even if laws exist to protect the environment and regulate tourist activities, these may or may not be adequately enforced. This is especially important today as many governments are following global sustainable tourism trends and targeting niche markets, such as adventure, eco or rural tourism.

Ideally, national parks or nature reserves are created to preserve natural habitats and protect them from overuse. However, many tourism authorities and policy makers mainly see an opportunity in eco-tourism to bring in higher spending tourists (Meethan et al., 2006).

Despite claimed commitments to sustainable tourism today in many places around the world, maximum profit and quick gains often take precedence over environmental and social sustainability, especially in times of crisis (Bramwell, 2004). Policy-making in the tourism industry involves many people with different interests and pressures who are influenced by financial incentives. It is a complex process that happens “within the context of capitalist development and the dynamics of capital accumulation, as well as changing opportunities in the market” (Bramwell, 2004, p. 32).

These processes involve a detailed network of actors, such as tourists, tourism workers and local hosts, and are dictated by social power relations. “Political doctrines, power relations and personal experience are interrelated and vital aspects of tourism, producing a vibrant weave of ideology and culture remembered in different ways” (Grandits & Taylor, 2010, p. 25). All actors have an invested interest in the land and consequently compete for it as space becomes limited, which makes tourism policy very political. As Boissevain (2004) states, “the danger is not in tourism but in the commoditization of space which usually accompanies tourism development” (p. 22).

Such issues are typical for mass tourism that exploded in the 1960's along the Mediterranean and Adriatic coastline. Bill Bramwell, the editor of *Coastal Mass Tourism, Diversification and Sustainable Development in Southern Europe* (2004), explains that mass tourism is usually dependent on outside investors, fosters a local informal sector, is used as an international diplomacy tool, and has been pitched as a path to economic development. Place branding and image-making are central to these goals, so tourism officials adopt marketing

strategies to showcase places and attract specific types of tourists (Vitić & Ringer, 2007).

Typically, this image combines a place's traditions, history and physical features. Place branding is even more important in places that have experienced a major trauma or conflict, such as war, environmental disasters or poverty (Vitić & Ringer, 2007), like in the former Yugoslavia.

In addition to economic and political ramifications, tourism alters the socio-cultural life in holiday settings. Relations between people change as the place transforms and adjusts to the industry. Many different kinds of individuals and groups with varying social roles come together in one place: hosts and guests, locals and newcomers, homeowners and renters, employees and managers, etc. People must continuously adapt to new faces, attitudes and behaviors, and find their position in the place, which can often produce tension and disputes. In his study of a community in Sennen, Michael Ireland (in Boissevain & Selwyn, 2004) shows how tourism caused social and economic changes that made the social structure more complex. For example, as guests segued into hosts by moving into the community, all people needed to negotiate their positions in the place and learn how to function in this new diverse setting. Ultimately, the place and all its inhabitants are involved in an intricate relationship that constantly fluctuates with the rhythm of tourism.

One explanation for social conflict and tension is because, like all places, a holiday destination is a power-embedded space entrenched with inequalities (Heimtun, 2007). Each person experiences the place differently, and holds contesting views of its past as well as varying interests in its future. While studying single midlife women on holiday, Bente Heimtun (2007) found that tourists use social capital and social networks to position, integrate, advance and distinguish themselves in the community. Interacting and experiencing life in a holiday setting is closely connected to social integration and bonding through social networks, which are built from

various factors such as obligation, trust, friendship, institutional rights, exchange of gifts, and recognition (Heimtun, 2007).

Social integration and bonding can be particularly challenging because social status frequently fluctuates - new visitors arrive, old-timers leave, employees and management rotate, visitors buy or build property, locals sell and move away, etc. When, for example, tourists buy local property, their position changes within the community, but they may not integrate into the local scene right away (Boissevain & Selwyn, 2004). In these types of crossbreed holiday settings, the line between insider and outsider, or host and guest becomes blurry. In addition, as these holiday destinations become second home locations, they challenge the meaning of leisure and holiday.

Following from this, domestic and foreign tourism have varying implications on socio-cultural life. In his study of the Canary Islands, Jose Pascual (in Boissevain & Selwyn, 2004) found a difference between domestic and foreign tourism's socio-cultural impacts. In places that are primarily visited by domestic tourists, locals had better chances of adapting to tourism's changes, and they tended to take more control of developments. In any case, he says, "the possibilities of local people for directing patterns of transformation are rather limited, but they always devise strategies to cope with new circumstances and new policies and political actors" (p. 66).

But tourism cannot just be analyzed from a domestic-foreign paradigm. This dichotomy is not adequate because there are people who fall in between these categories, and it also minimizes the variances amongst locals. In Montenegro, for example, "domestic" is vague because of the political events that split Yugoslavia into six republics. What was "domestic" ten years ago is "foreign" today. How people identify themselves seems to be a personal matter largely dictated by past political events. Each group is very complex and cannot be generalized so easily. Many Montenegrins, for example, consider themselves Serbs, while others identify more strongly with

their region and family line. These national identities also reveal social inequalities, which factor into tourism development and place experience. Inequalities inherent in society, whether they are social, economic, cultural, environmental or political, become heightened when forces like tourism perpetuate change. And as places are always changing, there's a need to constantly re-evaluate the dynamic social relations that run within them.

Holiday settings may be ideal places to investigate various socio-cultural phenomena because being on holiday has unique effects on how people understand society and themselves. Being on holiday creates a "heightened awareness of the experience of time and place where human beings reflect and gain understanding of places outside everyday life in a sudden and expanded sense" (Birkeland, 2005, p. 56). As tourist places change in scope and kind, new experiences, myths and images of them develop, which people use to reinterpret the place, but also themselves. In this way, we can use holiday settings to take a deep look into the meaning places have for people and for society as a whole.

Case studies on specific places let us examine these individual and collective meanings on a small scale. Tourism in any place is influenced by whatever socio-political system is in place, meaning that we must analyze the specific contexts of the case study site in order to understand why tourism has developed in particular ways and why certain socio-cultural outcomes have emerged. In Yugoslavia's case, and for the separate republics today like Montenegro, this entails looking at the transition to capitalist market-oriented economies and the switch to democratic governance after socialism in Yugoslavia.

Tourism in Yugoslavia and Montenegro

As Hannes Grandits and Karin Taylor explain in the book, *Yugoslavia's Sunny Side, A History of Tourism in Socialism* (2010), much research on tourism in Europe has focused heavily on the West. In Yugoslavia, tourism development has been closely tied to social, economic and political

change, and, because of the violent dissolution of the former Yugoslavia in the 1990s, much work on the former Republic has focused on conflict and emerging nationalisms. Additionally, most research has concentrated on foreign tourism, while completely ignoring the importance of domestic tourism for the local economy and social capital. Thus, we are lacking research that addresses all sides of Yugoslav tourism - positive and negative, domestic and foreign (Patterson in Grandits & Taylor, 2010).

In coastal regions of Southeast Europe, mass tourism development was associated with fast overdevelopment, which had negative environmental repercussions. Coastal mass tourism in Yugoslavia began in the late 1950s (Bramwell, 2004). The industrial revolution and trade centers were concentrated in Northern Europe, making these countries economically stronger. When incomes rose after WWII, people began traveling to the south where it was warmer and Yugoslavia opened its doors to foreign tourists.

Yugoslavia's position in the international community and its relationship to Western tourism before the 1950s are closely connected because "political legitimacy was gradually established with the opening of the country's borders, a phase embodied in the 1949-1950 tourism slogan *come and see the truth*" (Grandits & Taylor, 2010, p. 108). However, Yugoslavian socialism (1951-1989) also had a strong national market and people all throughout the country enjoyed a relatively good standard of living (Bajec, Radović & Jovović, 2009). Tourism was expressed as a "modest brand of consumer culture" (Grandits & Taylor, 2010, p. 12) that contributed to its reputation as being a "kind of hybrid of socialism and capitalism in both East and West" (p. 12). The government pushed the ideology of self-governance under principles of social property as new ways of making money were integrated into the socialist economic structure through tourism.

The height of mass tourism was the 1970s and 80s, when Western European tourists crowded the Adriatic coast from May to October, which bolstered local economies. The Adriatic highway completed in 1962 made a big impact on the increasing number of travelers to the Adriatic Coast. It connected Rijeka in Croatia all the way down to Ulcinj in Montenegro. Although the Adriatic coast was very well traveled, the interior was neglected, resulting in a distorted image of Yugoslavia (Hall, 2004). Many coastal residents who traditionally relied on agriculture shifted their economic activity to tourism. Higher incomes caused people to become more consumerist-oriented, and while they had more freedom with private business, they also struggled with less security from fees and competition. There was a general feeling of state-free control or management of these tourist experiences, both for locals and foreigners, and it became a way for Yugoslavs to “put themselves temporarily beyond the reach of the state” (Patterson in Grandits & Taylor, 2010, p. 391).

Under socialism the tendency was to control and plan the expansion of this industry, but very often it was left to market forces, which lent to it a “disturbing ad hoc quality to it all” (Patterson in Grandits & Taylor, 2010, p. 389). With increasing numbers of guests and efforts to modernize, many places faced infrastructural problems, like water and electricity. Loans for private homeowners became available in 1963 so that they could improve their houses for tourists, which also increased their own living standards since they adapted their homes to foreign tourists’ comforts, such as “modern” bathrooms.

Starting in the late 1950s the federal tourism associations were able to lease private accommodation and the state was encouraging this through tax benefits. This greatly influenced how tourism developed in Yugoslavia and how market principles were adopted into the changing economy. It also enabled the state to offer affordable vacations for its residents in special resorts (*odmaralište*) and effectively merged both socialist principles with private economy. “In the

‘anything goes’ atmosphere of the late 1980s, however, it became increasingly tempting for *vikendica* (vacation/weekend house) owners to make informal extra earnings from property on the Adriatic” (Taylor in Grandits & Taylor, 2010, p. 203).

The most difficult years for Montenegrin tourism were between 1990-2001. When the civil war began in Yugoslavia in the 1991, foreign tourists left the Adriatic coast and the countries had to do a lot of “reconstruction, diversification and re-imaging” to get them back (Hall, 2004, p. 344). The crisis interrupted the development of the Montenegrin market economy that began in 1990 (Bajec, et al., 2009). Industries collapsed, unemployment skyrocketed, low wages set in, foreign trade dropped, scientific development dwindled, and a grey economy and hyperinflation ensued. Although war never broke out on Montenegrin territory, it didn’t avoid political, economic and social instability, which were further exacerbated by the UN sanctions and the NATO intervention in 1999 (Sisević, 2005).

This disruption caused a “vacuum effect” (Vukonić, 1993, p. 136 in Grandits & Taylor, 2010, p. 111) that actually boosted domestic tourism. Domestic at this time mostly meant tourists from Serbia and Montenegro due to the political and social divide with the other 4 republics. While Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Macedonia ceded from the union, Serbia and Montenegro remained together until 2006. Travel restrictions and high unemployment meant that residents of these countries were limited to where and how they went on holiday. Montenegro’s seaside was often the best option, and prices dropped to accommodate domestic budgets.

The first phase of transition in Montenegro started after 1997 and tourism began to increase despite the NATO bombing in 1999. In Montenegro, tourism developed alongside the institutional economy and privatization processes with a mixture of success and failure (Vucetić, 2012). The investment trend that began in 2000 significantly devastated Montenegro’s coast

(Perović, 2012). Physical developments radically accelerated, as increased investments led to informal and intensive construction by the private sector (Schneider-Jacoby, 2004).

Foreign tourists started to slowly re-emerge and the first decade of the 21st century was very dynamic for Montenegro. Just as tourism was a way to build Yugoslavia's reputation to the Western world, Montenegro began rebranding itself and showing the West that it wasn't a dangerous war zone. In 2006 Montenegrins voted for independence from Serbia, cutting the final link with what was once Yugoslavia. Privatization processes accelerated as the country opened itself up to foreign investment, and in 2007, Montenegro was the fastest growing economy in Central and Eastern Europe, along with Latvia and Slovakia (Bajec, et al., 2009)

Montenegrin tourism has been characterized as having "an institutional ethos of ecological awareness, limited attempt to diffuse tourism from a coastal dominance, partly influenced by slow privatization processes and an ambivalence towards foreign investment" (Hall, 2004). Coastal developments since 2000 have been quite problematic, especially in places like Budva, which has been described a "dust inhalation chamber" (Cardais, 2008, p. 2). *Budvarisation* (Bickert, Goeler & Lehmeier, 2011) refers to the rapid unplanned development that swept throughout the Montenegrin coast when the country opened up to mass tourism in the 1960s, and continued even more unregulated in the 1990s.

Since tourism "may ultimately have functioned as one of the most important mechanisms for constructing not just a constellation of cultural groupings within Yugoslavia, but also, even if only partially and imperfectly, a 'Yugoslav culture' itself" (Patterson in Grandits & Taylor, 2010, p. 381), it is interesting to look at how the individual republics developed their tourism industries after the breakup of Yugoslavia. Slovenia has dubbed, "sLOVEnia," while Montenegro has "Wild Beauty" and Croatia is "The Mediterranean As It Once Was" (Patterson in Grandits & Taylor, 2010, p. 369). Although in the early 2000s tourists choose Croatia and Slovenia over Montenegro "which

they erroneously perceive to be more secure from ethnic conflict than their neighbour” (Vitić & Ringer, 2007, p. 131), Montenegro was the fastest growing tourism market worldwide in 2007 (Bickert et al., 2011) and continues to grow today.

High-end and eco-tourism have recently gained popularity worldwide, partly as a way to curb the rampant development for quick gains that target mid-range paying tourists. Many geographical features make Montenegro ideal for ecotourism, including its position on the Adriatic and impressive mountainous interior (Bickert et al., 2011). The Ministry of Tourism has been rebranding the country as a sustainable tourist destination, emphasizing its rich biodiversity, beautiful landscapes and unspoiled natural environment (Vitić & Ringer, 2007; Sisević, 2005). A Master Plan (DEG, 2003) was developed to guide development along the lines of sustainable tourism, but it is not adequately implemented in practice (Perović, 2012).

Eco-tourism is defined as tourism that causes “minimal disturbance to the natural environment while socially and economically benefiting local communities (Clifton in Boissevain & Selwyn, 2004, p. 115). Despite efforts to develop eco-tourism, it may prove to be difficult considering that eco-tourism mostly exists in developed countries that have strong governance and plentiful resources (Boissevain & Selwyn, 2004). Furthermore, Montenegrins themselves don’t always uphold the best environmental practices, which can be seen in many parts of the landscape rid with trash (Cardais, 2008).

The type of socio-political system may influence how people in particular places view the environment and how they treat it. Post-communist societies have a specific relationship with the environment (Raadik-Cottrell, 2010). It is common to find indifferent value orientations towards nature, which affect their evaluation of environmental risks (Koit in Raadik-Cottrell, 2004). Societies with established histories of democracy tend to be more sensitive to environmental

issues because “there’s a higher individual responsibility and criticism toward pre-determined route of progress” (Beck in Raadik-Cottrell, 2004, p. 175).

Although the tourism sector is of utmost importance to the Montenegrin economy, it has a slew of problems and weaknesses. Božidar Sisević (2005) describes it as “without tradition, weak and disorganized” (p. 125). In terms of service, Montenegrins have been characterized as unskilled and lacking proper training, especially in management positions. The workers often earn poorly and must deal with unreliable hiring periods due to the short seasons. So, many people turn to the informal sector (Sisević, 2005).

As the history of tourism in most places shows, the benefits of tourism are accompanied by many negatives consequences, such as regional inflation and environmental degradation. Similar to other countries in transition, Montenegro can be said to be experiencing a “crisis of space identity” (Perović, 2012, p. 3): development is unevenly distributed and concentrates on the northern coast; exploitation of the natural environment threatens rare endemic species; high water consumption, pollution and waste cause environmental problems; and local ways of life, social structures and traditional activities related to sustainable use of biodiversity are disappearing (Perović, 2012).

Furthermore, the development of the state and market systems in Southeast Europe in recent years is characterized by capitalist market mechanisms preceding democratic political institutions. This contributes to misuse of municipal power and local politician’s abuse of autonomy (Bianchi & Talavera in Boissevain & Selwyn, 2004), which puts municipalities at odds with state bureaucracies. Many countries of the former Yugoslavia went through privatization processes following the breakup of the Republic. In Montenegro today, all state tourist enterprises have been privatized since 2000, except Ulcinjski Riviera on the southern coast, which manages Ada Bojana.

The role and face of tourism has changed greatly since the 1960s, not just in Southeast Europe, but all over the world. In Yugoslavia, foreign tourism was a way to propagate socialist policies and lifestyles, while today in Montenegro it promulgates the transition into a democratic and capitalist system that is oriented toward integration into the European Union. Tourism under socialism was able to uphold the value of leisure for workers, whereas under capitalism it becomes “a commercial model that vaunts the pleasure of tourism as an end in itself” (Patterson in Grandits & Taylor, 2010, p. 398).

Yugoslavia was quite a faraway destination for many Westerners, which is still the case for Montenegro today, except that transport is getting easier and its geopolitical situation is also much improved. However, there are many places on the margins within the former Yugoslavia that remain less accessible and traversed, such as Ulcinj, and the tiny island, Ada Bojana.

Places & People in Holiday Settings

Place

Places are empty spaces where life emerges (de Certeau, 1984; Olwig, 1996). They complete the human experience because we are always *somewhere*. Whether we call that place by its' city name or give it a simple category, such as *the beach* or *home*, we comprehend everyday life, who we are and what we've done in relation to places (Spagnolli & Gamberini, 2005; Casey in Raadik-Cottrell, 2010). By familiarizing ourselves with places we can better understand people's life experience, not only because places exist *in* an experience, but because they are “integral to the very structure and possibility *of* experience” (Malpas, 1999, p. 32).

As a result of increasing mobile lifestyles, our understanding of place is changing, and it seems true that although we need places as humans, we do not necessarily have to be tied to one place (Oakes & Price, 2008). Globalization and capitalism affect how we consume and produce

space, and there is growing academic interest in how this influences places in general (Schmidt, 2011). One way of exploring this is by looking at how “individuals or collective groups give or take meaning from their encounter with place and why places acquire and reproduce particular representations” (Schmidt, 2011, p. 21).

Contrary to their stationary positions around the globe, places are constantly moving via human activity and material exchanges. They are not objects out there that we look at, but are created by humans and sustained by human interaction with the environment (Spagnolli & Gamberini, 2005; Casey in Malpas, 1999). Making places and making meaning from them allow “an intimately embodied engagement with our surroundings” (Oakes & Price, 2008, p. 254). We connect different places through bodily movement and stories, giving them a multifaceted character that is dependent on other places (Malpas, 1999).

Social scientists often focus on the reciprocal relationship between people and place – people’s actions and behavior that affect places and the influence of places on the self and society. “The self is constituted by a core of habitudes that incorporate and continue, at both psychical and physical levels, what one has experienced in particular places” (Casey, 2001, p. 409). Therefore, actions and behavior give meanings to places and help people understand the self. Experiencing and perceiving a place are thus partly dependent on the identities, images and meanings people create while situated there.

In holiday settings, this people-place experience needs to be observed and analyzed with the relevant context in mind. Sociologist John Urry’s (1990) concept of the *tourist gaze* examines how a tourist place is categorized and commodified through people’s perceptions of and activity in that place. He emphasizes that people learn and enact a routine behavior that is socially acceptable in a place and reproduce these behaviors through gazing, or visual acts of looking and seeing (in Heimtun, 2007). Some have criticized Urry’s theory for overemphasizing the tourists’

agency in gazing. “Far from tourism being simply a one-way process as suggested by the phrase the *tourist gaze*, something far more nuanced happens in tourism” (Knudsen, Metro-Roland, Soper & Greer, 2008, p. 5). The tourist experience is performative, involves more than just the sense of sight, and is interactive with other people and things, so experience is not dependent solely on the tourist (Knudsen et al., 2008).

As human beings, we desire to make sense of our environment, and because of this, each place has a multitude of meanings that change over time (Williams & McIntyre in Uysal et al., 2012). Scholar Michael de Certeau (1984) says that stories are a key element to understanding places, not only their histories, but also their meanings. “Stories transform places into spaces or spaces into places. They also organize the play of changing relationships between places and spaces” (p. 118). In tourist places, anthropologists can try to understand these changing relationships by looking at how place-based narratives shape a place’s identity over time (Kneafsey, 1998) and how sense of place varies amongst different people.

The social emerges from and is based in place over an ordered period of time (Malpas, 1999; Raadik-Cottrell, 2010). Although places are social constructions, it seems there would be no *social* or *place* without a physical landscape. Looking at the totality of places and imagining what they were like before people attached names, identities and meanings to them, requires an understanding of the entire landscape that the place is situated in. Focusing on the landscape in tourism studies may help avoid objectifying the earth as ‘the scene on which the activity of man unfolds itself, without reflecting that this scene is itself living’ (Sauer in Oakes & Price 2008, p. 97).

People experience place at any given moment and are simultaneously connected to the past and future while in the place, so presence is not only spatial, but also temporal (Spagnolli & Gamberini, 2005). Therefore, being present and making places are processes that are always

unfolding and involve interactions with other people and the environment. So, “if the identity of each participant is subject to the expectations and possibilities endowed by a certain mediated place, then it is a natural territory for negotiations and struggles (Spagnolli & Gamberini, 2005, p. 12).

Coastal landscapes

Like place, the word *landscape* is an ambiguous term with contested meanings. It is often objectified and used interchangeably with *environment* or *land* (Berleant, 2012). Philosopher Arnold Berleant agrees with many social scientists that although place is a product of human activity, we are interconnected with the environment, including the landscape. Environments, like humans, “are living systems in which all the physical and organic constituents function in a complex reciprocal interrelationship” (p. 4). Thus, studies of place require a good look at the landscape that encompasses that place.

Landscape is central to tourism studies because tourism transpires in a particular *tourism landscape* (Knudsen et al., 2008). This tourism landscape is socially constructed over a period of time and touring such landscapes “is quite complex and revolves around deciphering the identity of a place and its inhabitants from that place’s landscape” (Knudsen et al., 2008, p. 5). Therefore, they contain multiple layers of meaning and they hold “tensions between imagined and real (Meining in Raadik-Cottrell, 2010, p. 38).

Places on the coast are normally revered for their impressionable beauty and natural wonder, and they are also vulnerable to human developments. Physically, coasts mark the end of the land; a whole body of mystery laps beyond their borders. Coastal places are commonly associated with strong regional myths or heroic stories of the people who traversed their shores and lived through social dramas (Boissevain & Selwyn, 2004). They are links to other nations and their geographical positions are often of vital strategic significance.

Nature is of central importance for coastal tourism. We flock to the seaside for the water, the sun, the wind, the sand and the sunsets, and tend to romanticize nature, as if it were a thing existing outside us. "Nature has meant the countryside, the unspoiled places, plants and creatures other than man. Nature is what man has not made, through if he made it long enough ago, it will usually be included as natural" (Williams in Oakes & Price, 2008, p. 211). Like the term *culture*, *nature* is frivolously used in everyday discourse, and it really represents a process, rather than a thing.

Additionally, islands possess a unique character and landscape that influence human interaction and use of space. Their autonomy from the mainland often makes them key sites for relaxation and holiday. Although they are physically cut-off from the mainland, they are highly connected through various material and social activity (Vannini & Vannini, 2009). Changes in the landscape, such as creating bridges to improve access and efficiency, influence the activity and social behavior in the place, and ultimately alter place experience (de Certeau, 1984).

Bridges become physical and symbolic monuments in the landscape. They represent exclusionary boundaries that influence place experience and place narratives (Rose in Massey & Jess, 1995). Boundaries, such as bridges, essentially make places because they affect their *appropriation value* - our interest in getting to know a place, our desires to lay claims to space, and making space our own by physically demarcating portions of the land (Duim & Lengkeek in Boissevain & Selwyn, 2004). "Rapidly changing political, economic and socio-cultural conditions find their reflections in landscapes" (Raadik-Cottrell, 2010, p. 141). Changes we inflict on landscapes, such as bridges, are symbolic examples of such conditions. Thus, bridges are inherently political and reflect ideologies.

However, we don't just see a landscape and passively interact with it, but participate in it (Bell & Lyall in Coleman & Crang, 2002). As a result, we also commodify a place's identity through

our daily interactions and behavior (Kneafsey, 1998). Both insiders and outsiders (those who inhabit a place and those who do not) possess power, or “the ability to shape places, events and perceptions” (Greer, Donnely & Rickly in Knudsen et al., 2008, p. 16). In affect, tourism is both a stabilizing and destabilizing force in terms of protecting places, landscapes and local cultures (Williams & McIntyre in Uysal et al., 2012).

Experiencing Place

Life is a collection of memories, and those memories are shaped by place (Rose in Massey & Jess, 1995). Thus, place is present in our individual experience of everyday life. Places are *imagined communities* (Anderson in Raadik-Cottrell, 2010) because we construct ideas and images of them in our minds based on our personal experience. We create them by attaching meanings to them, and in effect, we also attach our identities to places (Rose, 1995; Raadik-Cottrell, 2010).

Place identity can be understood as a “broad range of social relations which contribute to the construction of a ‘sense of place’, a sense which enables people to feel that they ‘belong’ to a place or that a place ‘belongs’ to them” (Kneafsey, 1998, p. 112). Constructing both individual and collective identities is a social process that involves living and being with others. Various people with different experiences contribute either individually or collectively to place narratives (Kneafsey, 1998), so they are “created by different people at different times and for different reasons” (Raadik-Cottrell, 2010, p. 42). Thus, how we describe places and landscapes reflects how we relate to them, and consequently, notions of self-identity (Rose, 1995).

As a consequence, numerous identities flow within places simultaneously (Ireland in Boissevain & Selwyn, 2004) and are prone to clash (Rose in Massey & Jess, 1995). This is even more likely if we feel a strong sense of belonging to a place because belonging facilitates a stronger sense of personal identity (Oakes & Price, 2008). It is a key emotional component to

place experience that can manifest simultaneously on various scales, making each individual experience with a place highly personal (Rose in Massey & Jess, 1995).

Our actual experience of a place may not match up with our recollection of that experience (Bruner in Raadik-Cottrell, 2010). Memory and emotion are integral to making sense of the world and creating place narratives. Memory is central to understanding place identity because, “along with the unconsciousness, makes being a self possible; it weaves the conscious and the unconscious together” (McConkey, 1996, p. 315 in Jones, 2007, p. 208). Memory reveals prevailing emotions inherent in our relationship to and perception of places (Jones, 2007). These emotions are “intensely political, gendered, and spatially articulated in many obvious and less obvious ways” (Jones, 2007, p. 207).

Memory is mysterious in the sense that we are not conscious of how experiences are integrated into our memory (Rose, 1995). We remember emotionally (Morrison in Rose, 1995) by connecting our memories to feelings and images (Hampl in Rose, 1995). Thus, we often tell the same story differently at various moments in time. Ethnographic inquiry, with its emphasis on in-depth interviews and building relationships with research participants, is a method that can help look into memory in a very reflective way. Very often, it’s not until someone asks us for our story and listens, that we begin to understand what has happened in our lives.

Tourism can exaggerate and have profound affects on our identities because changing place causes us to reflect, see, and understand ourselves differently (Meethan et al., 2006). Being away from the daily routine “offers the individual the chance to reflect on and assess who they are in the world, and also to accumulate memories which are then accommodated into the narrative accounts of their lives” (Meethan in Meethan et al., 2006, p. 8). When on holiday, we bring our lives with us, even if we are consciously going to get away from our everyday living. We express our self-identities through activities and lived experiences in the vacation place (Heimtun, 2007).

These experiences reflect the meanings, symbols and identity narratives that are commoditized to produce the tourist space.

“Tourism stimulates nostalgia for communal spaces of the past” (Selwyn in Boissevain & Selwyn, 2004, p. 57). Nostalgia emerges when we are away from a place, showing how important places are for a sense of belonging and identity (Raadik-Cottrell, 2010). In tourist places that are attractive for their natural beauty, like many islands, nostalgia plays an especially important role in developing a sense of place. Islands have a particular ability to beckon us to get away, and time spent on islands “often relate to certain moments of fateful curiosity and identity search” (Raadik-Cottrell, 2010, p. 191).

Therefore, island *tourismsapes* are prime places to inquire into the complex relationships between people and place. In recreation or nature tourism, place identity is especially useful to grasp how people use places to create and preserve self-identity (Farnum, Hall & Kruger, 2005, p. 4). National parks and nature reserves commonly attract tourists who want a *pristine* or *raw natural experience* (Frangoudes & Alban in Boissevain & Selwyn, 2004). Thus, the natural environment seems to provide the basis for this experience to occur, and therefore strongly impacts people’s experience in and memory of the place. So, the place itself is like a stage - people intermingle with all its elements and are consequently influenced by these elements (Wearing in Heimtun, 2007). How the environment and landscape influence people is equally important as to how people influence the place.

Remembering and imagining the past are also connected with imagining the future (Raadik-Cottrell, 2010), which is relevant for tourism places because plans are constantly being prepared for future development. Local place narratives are often incorporated into marketing strategies, as tourism officials aim to maximize profit and attain a particular position on the global market (Rose, 1995). However, locals’ sense of place and feelings of belonging or attachment do

not always complement official development plans. The resulting conflict is especially strong when “groups differ in place attachment or when groups with similarly high levels of attachment have conflicting goals” (Farnum et al., 2005, p. 29).

However, a strong place attachment or sense of place does not necessarily predicate conflict (Farnum et al., 2005). Resistance to change enables places to keep their particularities when certain types of tourism attempt to homogenize them (Ireland in Boissevain & Selwyn, 2004). Inquiring into the changing relationships between people and place helps us understand social relations in places undergoing major changes, which is particularly relevant for holiday settings in transitioning countries.

CHAPTER 3: METHODS

My history with Ada Bojana started in June 2008 as a tourist. Long before I studied Cultural Anthropology or considered writing my Master's thesis about a place in Montenegro, I was a tourist on the island's camp. Once I chose this site to study place experience and sense of place, I was able to return several times and divide my fieldwork into two phases. The first round was from 5 July - 10 September 2012 (high season) and the second from 1 April – 25 May 2013 (low season). In addition, I made short visits to finalize data in August 2013. My intention was to get a wider picture of AB by inhabiting the place in the peak tourist season and in the off-season. This also gave me ample time to experience different parts of the place and talk with a wide range of people.

During round 1 my behavior was highly touristic. As a guest on the camp and in private accommodation, I was able to get to know many visitors and employees on the island while it was active and full. In the second round of fieldwork I left the island and rented a house on the river, which let me explore the other side of the delta and experience another part of AB's life. At this time I didn't frequent the island, and when I did I was normally alone because the hotel complex does not open until May 15. Most of my conversations at this time were with homeowners on the Bojana, i.e. my neighbors. Employees who were present were busy preparing the island for the May opening. In addition, I met a people that inhabit the wild camp near the mainland delta. I structured my fieldwork in this way to get a holistic picture of the place and of the people.

The field & people in the field

My original intention was to study the island, but I realized that AB symbolizes and covers much more than the triangular piece of land that the name originally refers to. Thus, I treat AB as a porous place, as opposed to a fixed island cut off from its surroundings, which brings up the

issue of scale in my research. People's experience largely depends on where they spend their time and which type of accommodation they choose. Therefore, AB is divided into several different scales. The two main scales I have identified are the island and the mainland. Within these, I see subscales: campgrounds, bungalows & apartments, textile beach, nudist beach, wild beach, river houses, forest & hinterland, river bank, the two deltas, and the Albanian border. Many people cross over into several scales at various moments in time, so there are many gray areas where they overlap and connect.

These scales are important for orienting and locating observations and stories. Older generations know that AB really refers to the island (the name *Ada*, after all, means *island* in Turkish), but the newer generation uses it to refer to the area that stretches north up the coast. For example, kitesurfers on *Velika Plaža (Long Beach)* use the name *Ada Bojana* to advertise their schools, and several restaurants near the island do the same. Thus, when someone says, "I am going to Ada Bojana," it's not clear exactly where; it could be on the island, on the river or on the other side at the wild camp. As I will explain later, these scales have implications for place experience and sense of place. Throughout my work I use the name AB to refer to several positions, both on the island and in its environs.

My research covers most of these scales since I migrated to different spots. I slept in private accommodation along the river, camped on both the island and mainland, slept on the beach and on boats, but did not stay in the hotel bungalows due to financial restraints. Also, my place experience diversified with the multiple modes of transportation I employed throughout the field: foot, bicycle, boat, and swimming. I was unable to experience the place in winter, which would have enriched my data.

In a similar vein, rather than focusing on either the host/domestic or visitor/foreign populations, I combined all perspectives in order to emphasize the overlapping roles people

acquire on AB. Although hosts and guests experience place differently and hold variant senses of place, strict host-guest categories do not accurately describe the type people or the type of tourism on AB. All groups and individuals combine to produce similar and divergent place narratives and collectively contribute to its emerging identity.

Research participants include various members of AB's community who interact in and use the space: foreign and domestic visitors, employees (hotel reception staff, apartment cleaners, grounds-keepers, beach cleaners, lifeguards, security, gate staff, and waiters), restaurant owners and owners of private residences along the Bojana River, and local fishermen. Most of my interviews were informal and spontaneous, some recorded, some not. I held semi-structured interviews with two individuals working in the tourism industry: the director of Ulcinjski Riviera (UR) and the marketing director of UR. Several participants became close companions, friends and acquaintances, and I consider them as cornerstones of my research.

Methodological approach

A socio-cultural perspective on place emphasizes the collective elements of place, not just the "individualized meanings that develop out of personal experience" (Farnum et al., 2005, p. 5). Ethnographic inquiry, with its emphasis on participant observation, deep interviews and developing relationships with participants over an extended period of time, is an approach that can access these elements and facilitate deep reflection. For my research on AB, ethnographic inquiry was very valuable and useful to study people-place relationships.

Choice of methods depends on the type and scope of information the researcher wants. I chose a single case study approach with mixed methods due to the exploratory nature of my research. I wanted to investigate AB's identity and sense of place in a particular tourism context. Instead of strictly adhering to any particular method or theory, I concentrated on mixed methods and loosely followed a few grounded theories to guide me in my analysis. This, along with a

historical comparison of the place, allowed me to answer a wide range of questions and get a general view of AB at a specific moment in time.

My data primarily consists of narratives or stories because they can reveal a lot about perceptions and relationships to places, and also about the society in which people live. “Narratives of travel and tourism are not only an essential ingredient in the construction of personal, collective and place identities, but are also important in the process of contemplating, experiencing, remembering and disseminating travel and tourism experiences, both factual and fictional” (Tivers & Rakic in Meethan et al., 2006, p. 1). Additionally, storytelling is a normal way we make sense of our lives and process events (Birkeland, 2005).

Stories are a key element to understanding place, not only its history, but also its meaning to people (de Certeau, 1984). Stories are spatial in that they are about places, or based in place, so our everyday stories constantly link places and spaces (de Certeau, 1984). From this view, we make places through stories. Also, in light of our increasing mobility, extracting biographical accounts generates reflexivity that can help us better understand who we are (Meethan in Meethan et al., 2006). Reflexivity is also important for me during analysis and writing, as “no narrative version can be independent of a particular teller and occasion of telling...as it has been constructed in accord with some set of purposes or interest” (Smith in Raadik-Cottrell, 2010, p. 47).

In addition to collecting narratives through interviews and conversations, I conducted general participant observation and explored the place and people photographically. Participating with people in daily activities was central to my fieldwork, such as beach cleaning and fishing. A few strategic spots became part of my everyday route in the summer season - the entrance gate, the hotel’s café terrace and the benches under the pine trees next to the bungalows. The entrance gate was full of activity, and let me observe the general flow of people to and from the island, and

how they interacted with the gate staff. The hotel's café terrace was a resting spot for the employees (mostly male), and a perfect place to listen to their stories. Finally, the bench area near the bungalows was a peaceful location where I went to write in between conversations, and it also put me in a good position to meet people passing by.

Otherwise, many valuable observations and spontaneous encounters happened while simply walking around: up and down the beach from one delta to the other; over the bridge to the mainland beach; and along dirt paths leading to hidden camps and vacation houses. In addition, I disconnected myself from the place by walking far distances toward Ulcinj, stopping along the way to photograph, write and feel the place from afar. Once I got a bicycle, I explored the surrounding area to see how AB is connected to other parts of the landscape, such as the suburb of Stoj, villages in the hinterland and Saško Lake. I normally woke at dawn and stayed out until it was dark. In the evenings I wrote and read.

I recorded my observations as field notes and in a personal journal, which I later ordered for analysis. Pre- and post-fieldwork consisted of thorough Internet research on various travel forums and local news sites. Not only did this fill in the gaps about AB's past and present that I missed during fieldwork, but it also showed me how the media depicts AB. An especially useful online source was the Ada Bojana Facebook group (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/10756815810/>), which displays a wide range of guest experiences and photographs. I was able to collect material artifacts such as brochures, pamphlets and postcards, as well as business cards of local tourism entrepreneurs and old T-shirts.

Concept and theories

Various perspectives and theories from the Social Sciences helped me form a specific research question and analyze my data. When I sorted out my notes and sat down to write, I saw how physical traits of the landscape dictated and influenced much human behavior and how they

feature in people's narratives about the place. Thus, I became more interested in how places are created, from both an ecological and social perspective, and how sense of place develops differently amongst various people. So, I do not focus on a particular problem or conflict on AB, but I look at the historical development of the place more generally through a perspective that combines both its cultural and natural landscape.

Literature on coastal tourist places and tourism development in Cultural Anthropology often emphasize social life and conflict revolving around resources, environmental crisis, and economic inequality, situating people as the main agents (Boissevain & Selwyn, 2004). For my research I also found it helpful to add the perspective from other social sciences, particularly Human Geography, which is still concerned with the relationship between people and place, but which seems to emphasize the physical aspects of the landscape as well.

Although scholars across various disciplines agree on a connection between place and identity, the theories and concepts used to investigate the connection vary. Place and identity are linked in a reciprocal relationship. Place identity is relevant for this study because it refers to how parts of our identities are connected to place and emphasizes the relationship we have to the environment, whether it is the natural or built environment. The concept implies that perceiving and understanding an environment reflects aspects of ourselves because identity is revealed through "memories, thoughts, values and settings, and relationships among different settings" (Hauge, 2007, p. 5). We use places to describe ourselves, but we also affect places in how we claim and affirm our identities to the world (Hauge, 2007).

Therefore, we continuously create places through our expressions and descriptions of them, and as such, places are only made real by our representations of them (Huff in Knudsen et al., 2008). When studying these representations, we must focus on a place's entirety. Many definitions and terms are used to define and describe places, which can make this task arduous.

Landscape, place, space and environment are often used interchangeably. In my study I do not stick steadfastly to any one term, but I do find that landscape is particularly useful in understanding life on AB.

I understand landscapes as “concrete manifestations of conceptions of place and as such, they represent the cultural values of a group of people” (Huff in Knudsen et al., 2008, p. 21). So, we can read landscapes and environments as texts that speak about human social life. A Presence-In-Place perspective (Spagnolli & Gamberini, 2005) is helpful in reading landscapes and analyzing places. Such an approach recognizes that the resources enable us to establish our presence in a place and engage in activity. In coastal holiday settings, resources such as water, trees and sun, establish our presence and connect us to the place. In this way, we create places together with resources found in the environment.

A Presence-In-Place perspective helps us understand human interaction and relationships with place because it emphasizes our presence, or *being*, in a place. This *being there* is a simple, but highly significant factor because “action gives way to repeated practices according to which place is constructed by a community of people” (Spagnolli & Gamberini, 2005, p. 8). I applied this framework to analyze life on AB because it is a holiday destination that has evolved from a series of ongoing activity. People are constantly coming and going, at one moment being in the place, and at another gone, establishing presence and cutting presence. Presence in place influences action, memory and place experience, which are central concepts in my work.

In a similar vein, Owain Jones and Paul Cloke (in Oakes & Price, 2008) applied Actor-Network Theory in their research on an apple orchard in England and found that the apple trees actually have agency in creating and sustaining life on the orchard and in facilitating its identity. The orchards’ function is to produce apples, which makes trees the center of this complex and interactive environment. Human activity and the organization of space are organized around

trees, making the trees key players or *agents*. “The density and texture of all this at work *in place* makes the orchard *a place*. So the orchard can be understood as being contemporaneously both an achievement woven by a complex set of networks and a place marked by different imaginative and material articulations” (p. 234).

Of course, it’s important to consider *all* physical and social elements of place. Although I do not directly apply either of these theories, I use them as a guide to employ a place-based approach in my research. Chosen methodology should depend on the specific research question and the particular context. In a holiday setting on the seaside, where most people come to fish, lie on the beach and swim, an emphasis on the landscape seems fitting. On AB, the water, wind and sea are three vital natural elements that shape social activity and sense of place. Without them, social life would be completely different and tourism may not even exist. Therefore, in my research, I attempt to situate the entire ecological system on par with the socio-cultural, political and economic facets that are also essential for this ethnographic inquiry.

Conclusion

In conclusion to this chapter, I would like to mention some factors that influenced my fieldwork. My position as a single female researcher and tourist influenced my experience and ultimately my entire work. As Bente Heimtun (2007) describes in her study on single mid-life women on holiday, “gender identity or subject formation is based on social positions as spatial positions of a field (p. 2).....which is affected by material and cultural structures as well as the people struggling for control over it” (p. 3). She describes the importance of a feminist perspective in knowledge-creation while researching tourism. She calls for a highly gender-sensitive approach to methods and fieldwork that makes the tourism industry more welcoming for women.

Gender is always an influential variable and in coastal holiday settings it takes on specific significance. From a feminist poststructuralist paradigm (Jordan in Heimtun, 2007) “the tourism

industry marginalizes women travelling alone and solo women are sexualized in tourism spaces” (p. 30). Being sexualized was an extreme personal challenge for communicating and establishing relationships with both men and women. Due to a few occasions when I felt uncomfortable and insecure around men, I learned to establish serious boundaries and be clear about my motivations. While being a single female in the field, I had difficulties establishing my position as a professional researcher, rather than a carefree easygoing American tourist. When I returned in the off-season my work was slightly easier because people saw me less as a tourist. Over time, especially upon the second return, as people began to understand my motives, I was able to get past some of these barriers.

Although it was generally easy to talk with men, I had difficulties connecting with other women, mainly Montenegrin employees on the island. Men’s presence was more public; they worked outdoors while the women stayed inside as housekeepers and kitchen staff. The disproportionate gender representation in my research may be partially due to the patriarchal organization of Montenegrin society and the traditional view on gender roles. Men were more public, socializing and doing things outside, while women were more private and occupied with indoor tasks. However, I did not inquire into this enough to make any conclusive statements. Even when I directly approached female employees, they often downplayed their importance for my study and suggested I speak with someone else (always a man) who “knows more about AB.”

Montenegro is also extremely small and close-knit. People are personally connected, and, as one religious figure stated, “Montenegro is nothing but a large family” (in Cross & Komnenich, 2006, p. 14). This affected my fieldwork because everything gets done through connections. On one hand it was helpful for making contacts and developing relationships with people. On the other hand, it limited me because of social protocols that were expected once favors are exchanged. Although I quickly established my presence and met people, I had to be more

conscious of my actions and words, so as to not burn any bridges. In general, it took time for people to understand my intentions, and I learned that fieldwork is a work in progress that requires patience, humbleness, honesty and confidence.

CHAPTER 4: DATA

Ada Bojana – from a river to a sea; from a delta to an island

In this chapter I explain the historical development of AB and present findings from my fieldwork in 2012 and 2013. I select the most prevalent characteristics that have come to define AB and I identify the main forces influencing these characteristics over time. I show how historical and socio-political events have molded AB's identity, and in turn, how social factors inside and outside the tourism industry, as well as geographical features of the landscape, combine to influence the place's creation and development. Although AB existed before the 1970s, tourism developed and solidified an image and identity that commodified the place. This identity is based on **nature**, **nudism** and **tourism**. In the following section I explain how these three main characteristics developed. Then in my analysis, I describe the two main catalysts of change.

After my first round of fieldwork I thought I knew the most important facts about AB: how the island was formed, who turned it into a nudist settlement in the 1970s, what the glory days were like in the 1980s, how the Yugoslav conflict crushed the foreign tourism industry in the 1990s and how the place has been redeveloping and rebranding itself ever since then. But something was missing in my data. There was a part of life on AB that I wasn't able to experience in the summer months when the sun is shining, money is rolling in and everyone is in good spirits. To get this deeper perspective, I started my second round of fieldwork in Ulcinj, rather than go directly to the island. The majority of people who work or fish on AB are from Ulcinj, so it seemed logical to start there first, and then slowly make my way down.

I got in contact with a man named Petar. A friend highly recommended him, saying there's no one else who knows or loves AB more. Petar picked me up at the bus station and invited me to join him and his friend Milan on their daily walk through the nearby olive groves. Petar grew up in

Ulcinj and used to manage a store on AB for several years, and Milan owns a café near the mainland delta. They drove me up a windy hill behind the olive groves to show me AB from above, how the island connects to the entire landscape, and my perspective widened.

I noticed how the long sandy beach starts at the end of the city, curves in deeply for 13km, and then jets out sharply at the delta where the island forms. Then I saw a huge body of water in the interior, the salt flats that form the Milena Channel and constitute a vital part of the entire waterway system. Next I made out the Bojana River, realizing how small she is compared to the vast sea. Her path weaves in and out of the land, eventually going off to a place my eyes could no longer capture. And Albania was just on the other side of all this, making the national border seem trivial and permeable. When I returned to the island I felt more connected because I had a better sense of where I was.



Figure 3: Milena Channel, Ulcinj

Ada (Turkish for *island*) Bojana (name of the river) lies at the end of the longest sandy beach on the Adriatic coast (*Velika Plaža*), on the border with Albania. Forming a triangle of 494 hectares, 3km on each side, it's a tiny feature on the landscape that hasn't been there for very long. The local story holds that about 150 years ago, a shipwrecked boat named *Merito* from Trogir

caused sand and sediments from the Bojana River to gradually accumulate, eventually forming the island that we know today. A less mythic story describes how AB was formed from natural processes of the Bojana delta. Whichever tale one believes, it is apparent that the island changes dimension and size very easily due to the dynamic currents and river flow.

The Bojana River flows from Skadar Lake through Albania and back into Montenegro before entering the Adriatic Sea. One arm of the river marks the border with Albania, but the island itself and the north arm of the Bojana belong to Montenegro. The entire area, including the island, is a protected zone. Dunes, forests and long sandy beaches mark the landscape. The ecosystem is unique to this part of Europe, and it is home to endemic plant and animal species, mineral-rich sand, a rare type of Skadar Oak, wild pigs, dogs, cows, special bird species, and many fish that use the Bojana river as a nesting place and gateway to the sea (Schneider-Jacoby, 2004). Dolphins are even known to sometimes go upstream from the sea to eat.

From fishing and swimming to sun bathing and kite surfing, this natural phenomenon has provided the means for an array of human activity over the past century. However, most of this has occurred only in the last 40 years. Thus, human involvement on the island was nearly nonexistent for nearly half of AB's life. Aside from a handful of fishermen, passing ships and locals who transferred their livestock to graze during the winter months, AB wasn't a place for many people.

Part of the reason for this is that AB has always been hard to access. Before it was an established tourist complex, the 15km road from Ulcinj wasn't paved and took over an hour to travel. Boat was the only other option, which fishermen of course used. Also, AB was a controlled military zone while Albania was under communism from 1946-1991. While mass tourism branded and redesigned many other Montenegrin coastal towns, including Ulcinj's beaches just a few kilometers away, such activity was prohibited on AB. Most locals describe the place before

tourism as abandoned, deserted or desolate, and hold the perception that tourism brought something good. In fact, without tourism, it seems as if AB wouldn't be important at all.

My basic sketch of AB's timeline looks like this:

1850s Bojana River + Adriatic Sea + environmental changes = birth of an island

1970-80s Mass tourism + Yugoslav socialism = nudist settlement *Ada Bojana*, bridge & vacation houses on the Bojana River

1990s Yugoslav conflict (economic and political collapse, disappearance of foreign market) = domestic tourism market & unregulated building on the Bojana River

2000s End of conflict + privatization + transition to capitalist market economy = return of foreign guests, tourist regulation, decreasing nudism & new tourist activity.

Tourism for many people correlates with modernization, development and progress from a more *primitive* past. Stories about AB before tourism were hard to find. The rare locals who had information normally wanted to fast-forward to its "more interesting" phase as a tourist complex in the 1970s. It seems that time before tourism on AB is associated with low living standards and underdevelopment. Elements of the landscape made it possible to market the place and turn it into a nudist tourist complex. Therefore, the ambiance that AB has built its reputation on is largely dependent on the physical landscape and the living features of the ecosystem.

Although it was still a military zone, tourist activity was permitted under conditions that regulated activity and movement. After political changes in 1991, the river became the national border and it is controlled today by occasional police boat patrol. Despite loosely enforced laws, the border is a physical and symbolic barrier that affects activity and influences people's experience and perceptions of the place. Gzim is one of many fishermen who must report his catching to the border police station 2 km upstream. Although he and his father have been fishing everyday for over 50 years at the same spot on the delta, new laws require them to follow this

protocol. Additionally, any tourists taking a boat tour around the island are required to get permission from the border police. Even though these laws are inconsistently enforced, the border provides a backdrop to several stories that characterize AB as mysterious, dodgy or outside the law.

In the 1970s, as tourism spread down the Montenegrin coast, tourists became increasingly interested in the Ulcinj Riviera, particularly Germans. While the 13km stretch of *Velika Plaža* became a popular holiday seaside destination, the small island at the end of this beach remained unvisited. Finally, a German investor and a local tourist entrepreneur created a plan to turn it into an exclusive nudist settlement. On 13 July 1973, AB welcomed the first group of visitors, and very quickly it became one of the foremost nudist destinations in all of Europe (Bickert et al., 2011).

Nudism

In Yugoslavia, AB was unique because of nudism and in Montenegro it was even controversial because local people were not familiar with or accustomed to it. Because of this, Western Europeans were the predominant visitors for the first half of AB's tourist history. The hotel enterprise had contracts with German travel agencies and catered the premises to German-speaking visitors with signage in German and German-speaking employees.

There were exceptions of course, such as Sasha and Jelena. Sasha first came to AB in the 1960s and built a fishing hut on the Bojana. At that time, there were only a handful of such huts, and he had to learn from locals how to live and fish on the Bojana. Him and his wife Jelena began visiting the island when there were 95% Germans in the 1970s and 1980s. Jelena recalls how male Montenegrin employees eagerly greeted the new arrivals, creating a specific "Montenegrin" ambiance by playing traditional music, serving welcome drinks of local brandy and charming "Western" ladies with their "exotic Balkan" charm.

Romance was common on the island. For many employees, AB allowed them to explore their sexuality, find new loves and discover the joys of nudism. Many male employees had affairs with foreign women, but also found love amongst local colleagues. However, love affairs went both ways. Female employees had their fair share of foreign lovers, but first-hand accounts were not easy to come by because most women preferred to stay quite about their personal experiences.

Nudism influenced employees' work experience on AB and their interaction with guests. While women's jobs were confined mainly to housekeeping and cooking, male employees held various positions such as waiters, lifeguards, DJs, hotel receptionists and beach cleaners. Because of this, part of their role was to enforce the nudist-only policy on the island. If guests were shy or new to nudism, employees had to kindly remind them to take off their clothes and forget their timidity. Employees from that time, such as Jovan, recall the often-humorous encounters with guests. Jovan proudly remembers his role in helping a young newlywed couple loosen their inhibitions by pulling down the adamantly shy husband's pants.

The dramatized film *Lepota Poroka* (*The Beauty of Desire*, Nikolić, 1986), captures the perception many traditional and conservative Montenegrins held of AB, as well as how working on the island transformed the livelihoods of some employees. In this film, the young housekeeper, played by the famous Croatian actress Mira Furlan, is barely able to look at the naked guests during her first days, but by the end of the summer she's drinking alcohol, swimming naked with a young German couple and dancing in the disco. Each employee had a different experience of course, and while many embraced nudism, others didn't.

Nudism thus essentially defined AB, and it has been increasing in popularity with Montenegrins over the last 20 years (C.L., 2013). Despite its acceptance, nudism still holds a stigma today amongst many locals. Local nudist Montenegrins often keep their nude beach

outings private because many people in their social circles are still not comfortable with it. Petar's favorite way to spend his free time is to fish nude on the island, but he doesn't have any friends or family who understand that, so he normally comes alone. Today however, only part of the island is reserved for nudists. Visitors have the option of going to a small textile beach near the northern delta, which allows non-nudists to enjoy the island in a way that is comfortable to them.

The stigma partly stems from nudism's association with sex. Many people assume those who go to the nude beach want to look at other people's naked bodies or find lovers. Serious nudists normally scoff at this ignorant mentality and insist nudism has nothing to do with sex or sexuality. At the same time, since the textile beach has opened, people confirm that there are an increasing number of newcomers on the nudist beach who are looking for sex partners. I was approached several times by men who asked if I would like to "take a walk," or who directly asked my sexual orientation. Therefore, although nudism remains a strong defining characteristic that influences the places' identity and people's experience, it is changing.

Nature

Nudism served as AB's primary attraction in the early years of its development, but it was also dependent on the natural environment. Guests didn't only come to be nude, but to be nude on the beach, in the forests, breathing in clean air and swimming in a mix of fresh and salt water. The tourist settlement was envisioned and planned to be as low-impact as possible, in order to foster the sense of *being in nature*. The hotel enterprise, UR rents only one-third of the island, meaning that the majority of the land is untouched and the ecosystem is minimally altered, providing a peaceful and natural ambiance.

Preserving nature was part of the original concept, and is reflected in the physical structures and layout. Accommodation was restricted to small earth-toned bungalows that are still the same today. Later, two different types of apartments were built, which were modest low-

lying structures. Today all of these are in use except one group of apartments on the eastern end, which were neglected in the 1990s and left to deteriorate when guest numbers dropped. The withering apartments serve as monuments today of AB's past. Although UR would like to renovate them, the current capacity is enough to meet guest demand and they don't have the financial capital to do so.



Figure 4: Renovated "Darth Vader" Bungalows

In addition to these relics, the island is full of remnants that provide a great source of stories and memories that verify the role nature and nudism play in AB's tourist experience. The campground is a place where these three elements come together. Guests socialize, cook and play while being nude outdoors. Many people know each other from years past, and share food, drink and stories. Due to a lack of demand in the 1990s, the campground area was cut in half and it is now full only one month out of the year. New river houses signify an increase in luxury and comfort, but the campground has remained the same, and still represents the modest accommodation that solidified AB's image in the 1970s.

Although AB still holds onto its image as a no-frills destination amidst a pristine natural environment, basic infrastructural defects can diminish this experience, such as a lack of potable

water. Water is a highly contested issue that is related to larger issues in the municipality. Apparently, the hotel was supplying potable water until residents in the nearby suburbs starting tapping into the water source and stealing it. Since no solution could be solved at the municipal level, the hotel management decided to shut it off because it was costing them too much money. Although nobody expects luxury on AB, the water issue does seem to be an irritation rather than another one of its rough charms.

Very important in emphasizing nature on AB is its island character, which I refer to as *islandness*. To emphasize the island feel, guests were transported from one side of the river to the other by a small ferryboat. From 1973 until 1986 this was the only way guests could access the island from the mainland. Although the river is less than 100 meters wide, the physical separation from the mainland cultivates a sense of detachment that manifests in experiencing the island as a place removed from normal daily life. Although this sense is strong for both visitors and locals, it has different meanings because “normal daily life” for each individual varies. In the 70s and 80s, Western European visitors were clearly on holiday, while locals on AB were working. Thus, their island experiences were different.

Frida, a woman from Germany who has been coming to AB since the early 1970s, said that every time she got on the ferry she felt herself really going away on vacation. It seemed to be not only a means of transportation, but also a symbolic ritual that mentally transported people to a different experience, place and time. Likewise, Pedja, who as worked on AB for over 35 years, recalls in elaborate detail his commute to work at 6:00 o'clock on his motorbike, when the sights and smells of nature greeted him and gave him a sense of peace and calmness before work.

The ambience of AB's islandness was carefully crafted and monitored so that only certain types of people could visit the island. Unlike today, hotel staff used to strictly control who entered, ensuring that only registered guests boarded the ferry. When on the island, guests had everything

they needed, including food, leisure activity, social life, and entertainment. Many guests never left during their typical three-week stay, unless they wanted to explore the surrounding areas by bike or visit the city for a day. Thus, AB held an exclusive character that contributed to its image as an island oasis.

As tourism on the island became more popular, limited access also became a hindrance. From May to October the island was at full capacity, and transporting goods and people was getting difficult and tedious with the ferry. So, in 1986 a bridge was built to connect the island to the mainland, a tactical move to ease access and facilitate movement. The bridge may have opened the island to the outside world, but it was still somewhat inaccessible because of its location and weak links with other transportation. The closest airport is 90 km away and has no transport connections directly to the island, nor is there transport from the bus station in Ulcinj. Thus, once in Montenegro, getting to AB in the summer season can take 2 ½ hours by a combination of bus, taxi or hitchhiking. However, this is a positive idiosyncrasy for some people, one that keeps AB secretive, hidden and special.

Nature provides for many experiences in the place. Narratives revolving around adventurous encounters with the sea, river and forest are commonplace. One of the most popular stories is that of a careless swimmer who got swept away by the currents and was taken all the way to Albania. A more recent story that made the national news involves two well-known figures on AB, Milan and Viktor. Both locals from Ulcinj and long-time fishermen, Milan and Viktor spent 9 hours in deep sea after a strong current had swept them away from shore in their boat. While dramatically retelling the story, the men expressed how they never experienced such a close brush with death in all their years on the Bojana.

The river not only represents a political border, but it also connects AB to other places, carrying stories and material artifacts from elsewhere. Debris traveling down the Bojana ends up

on the island, creating not only an unattractive sight for tourists, but also a lot of clean-up work for employees. Although not aesthetically pleasing, many people use these artifacts to create small art installations or makeshift shacks on the beach to shade from the sun. This debris is a significant part of AB's character and features in many narratives, as if the place is somewhat admired for these blemishes. It is unique, unpredictable and challenging. Imperfections give AB a charm and allure that differentiates it from many commercially developed places on other parts of the Montenegrin coast.



Figures 5 & 6: Debris beach art near the southern delta

Weather patterns, the river and the sea mark AB as a wild and natural place. Every year guests return to a slightly different beach after heavy and forceful winter storms alter the shoreline. During this time the river rises, flooding the area and limiting access to the houses along the Bojana. Year-round fishermen like Dragan have to sometimes travel by boat to the mainland and get a ride back to Ulcinj if the water is too high to drive through. Even the island isn't suitable for guests until May because of these conditions. Its depiction as a beautiful landscape is accompanied by images of wild and pure nature, giving it a raw character that is rare to find on other parts of the Montenegrin coast today.

People tend to have a close relationship with AB's environment and they engage in many activities with the land and water that provide the foundation for their relationship to the place.

Narratives revolve around fishing, walking on the beach, kite surfing, camping, cooking outdoors, beach cleaning, lifeguarding, etc. Visitors don't usually expect or want a luxurious experience, but as newcomers build bigger and more luxurious houses equipped with all the comforts of home, this is changing. Thus, perceptions of the wild, natural and challenging environment are taking on a different meaning.

The wind is an important feature on AB that shapes the type of activity people engage in and affects tourism development in many ways. Every day around 13:00, a northwestward wind called the *masetral* forcefully sweeps along AB's shores. This wind is particularly strong on the mainland beach just across from the island, which began attracting a new kind of tourist in the early 2000s– kitesurfers. One of the first professional kitesurfers to bring the sport to this part of Montenegro is Matej. He opened his kitesurfing school in 2002 on *Velika Plaža*, and moved to a new spot on the island this past year. Now that kitesurfing is also becoming a major feature of the island, the visitor profile and social relations continue to change.



Figure 7: Afternoon kitesurfing at the delta with the Maestral wind

Nature and islandness on AB are connected to adventure and risk, and it normally attracts people who prefer outdoor activities, away from the neon lights and umbrella-packed beaches on other parts of the coast. Therefore, social life revolves around the water and other environmental

elements, like the beach, the wind and the sun. Even though the ecosystem has changed and the place has become more populated, people continue to strongly experience AB's nature. This experience of nature varies because people hold diverse views of nature and personal encounters with the place are unique.

Tourism officials continue to use these ecological features to market AB and attract guests. Official representations found in marketing and promotional materials generally match people's narratives in that they stress the natural world. Although word-choice varies, they strongly emphasize its peaceful, remote and calm atmosphere, the unique island ecosystem and its exotic and exclusive legacy. These images are recycled through the media and brand AB in a particular light. Tourism, therefore, builds off of AB's identity as a place of nature and a place for nudists.

Tourism

Although it seems redundant to say that tourism is central to AB's identity, it is important to distinguish what aspects of tourism have shaped AB, especially in light of the changes in recent years. During AB's *golden years* in the 1970-80s, a specific type of tourism solidified and branded the place that, as mentioned previously, was based in *nudism* and *nature*. People who worked on and visited AB also defined tourism through the social life they created. Their activities, behavior, and decisions influenced life on AB, particularly regarding the type of tourism that would later emerge.

Guests are one group that marked tourism on AB to a great extent. The German tourists made a name for AB in the 70s and 80s, while domestic tourism flourished in other seaside areas. Despite its popularity with these German masses, it didn't embody the mass tourism trend that was spreading up and down the Yugoslav Adriatic. As previously stated, the vision for AB was a nudist complex in nature, which meant that plans to turn it into a commercial tourism center were

never popular. It represented an alternative to mass tourism, and in fact, most visitors came specifically because of this unique atmosphere.

Such an ambience attracted people with similar qualities and holiday preferences. Generally, they valued nature and the outdoors and sought a healthy and relaxing holiday. In this intimate setting, lasting friendships emerged as guests returned year after year. These loyal returnees sometimes came twice per season, each time like a big reunion with old friends. As memories developed over time, AB became a special place in their lives, not only as a place to visit for the beach and sun, but also for the good friends and meaningful social bonds. A few of the original guests who first visited AB in the 1970s still come today.

Frida passed me one day with her brisk stride down the beach. I could tell she felt familiar with AB and that she had traversed the shore many times. Frida and her husband came to AB in 1974 and have returned every year since then. During the crisis in the 1990s, they found other seaside places, but as soon as it was deemed safe to return, they continued their AB tradition. Now into her early 70s, Frida continues to visit alone since her husband passed away several years ago.

Coming solo for a 3-week holiday isn't lonely for Frida because she feels like she has a small family on AB. As we spoke on the beach, her friend Maria came by, a German lady that she recently reunited with after 20 years. Unlike Frida, Maria didn't return to AB immediately after the crisis passed. Despite this time lapse, Maria doesn't feel that AB has changed that much. Although there are new faces, a textile beach, more river houses, and a slight drop in food quality, she still has a positive experience on AB similar to the past.

In addition to establishing relationships among each other, guests also made friends with the island staff. Like the original guests, many first generation employees are still around. While I was talking with Frida and Maria, Nenad came by, one of the rare local men from Ulcinj who frequents the nude beach, also with his wife. Nenad worked on AB when it opened, but moved to

Germany in the early 80s. During his 30 years abroad, he visited home every summer and spent most of his time on AB to fish and visit with old friends. Now retired and living back in Ulcinj, he continues his summer tradition on the island.

Nenad and his colleagues from this era have countless stories of their memorable days working on AB. Their accounts are retold in a positive light, and emphasize the fun they had with guests and with other employees. Magnificent sunsets, fish picnics, beautiful foreigners and hefty tips are just some of the memorable experiences that they share. Nikola started working the day AB opened in 1973, and remembers the madness of the regular fish picnics. On these nights, the locals grilled an array of fish, served up domestic brandy in bell pepper cups, played folk music and danced the night away, while at the end of the night, Nikola had to go fetch the guests that got lost in the forest during their drunken daze. Such activity contributed to a type of tourism that was non-commercial and intimate.



Figure 8: Old Ada Bojana post card

These 'golden years' came to a dramatic halt in 1991 when the civil war in Yugoslavia erupted. During ten years of political and economic turmoil, many tourist places in Yugoslavia became desolate. For AB, the 90s' crisis both destroyed and recreated tourism. On a physical level,

the island's facilities deteriorated. The harsh winter weather requires the structures and edifices on the island to be maintained and renovated every year. But because of the dire economic situation, there wasn't money to do this. Although most facilities have been renovated in recent years, several of them continue to decay amongst the encroaching forest and shrubbery.



Figure 9: Old apartments

From 1991 to 2000, tourism on AB transformed. During these years, it became a newfound paradise for many Montenegrins and Serbs. While continuing its legacy as an alternative vacation spot, it quickly became popular amongst musicians, actors and artists from the local cultural scene. As citizens of Serbia and Montenegro were unable to go abroad for their annual holiday, AB became their escape during these grim times. Nudism continued, but it wasn't strictly enforced like before, and many non-nudists came who began camping on the other side of the delta on *Velika Plaža*, referred to as the *Wild Camp*. Thus, tourism spread away from the island.

The building trend on the Bojana River that started in the 1980s increased in the 90s, which contributed to an even greater surge in domestic visitors. These new homeowners could vacation cheaper by saving money on accommodation and food that they would normally pay at the hotel. In general, money was scarce for everyone. Employees had to adjust to depressing salaries and tips, and visitors spent frugally. For them, the good old days were gone, but the

landscape and familiar domestic guests continued to provide a positive atmosphere and strong place experience.

Domestic visitors commonly knew each other through family, friends or acquaintances, which meant that social ties were relatively close. Because many people began to prefer the non-nudist mainland beach, social life significantly expanded beyond the island and new kinds of social activities and bonding emerged. While peace, nature, and nudism were integral to some place experiences, many stories revolve around the vibrant social scene, with late-night beach parties and live music. People still loved the outdoors and natural atmosphere, but were equally attached to AB for the new social bonds and free fun that emerged.

In 2000, after the major political struggles in the former Yugoslavia had passed, Montenegro needed to redevelop its tourism industry nearly from scratch. Luckily, AB's legacy was strong enough that it didn't need a complete makeover or rebranding. Aside from basic renovations, most things remained the same, as if everything stood still for ten years. When foreign guests slowly returned, many still found material remnants of the place they once knew. Despite the overgrown pathways, shabby bungalows and negligible hotel occupancy, many guests experienced the place similarly like before. Although their close-knit community was lost during the 1990s, new relationships emerged that allowed for a different kind of social interaction and tourist activity.

One major activity that caused life to expand beyond the confines of the island is kitesurfing, which has become popular the last 13 years. Today there are more than ten kitesurfing schools within 3km of the mainland beach closest to the northern delta. The alarming popularity has attracted an array of youth from all over Europe looking for a new, cheap and exciting destination, free from the constraints of an overpopulated and overregulated holiday

spot. Although not on the island, most of these schools advertise that they are located at AB, or more recently, *Bojana*, because of its close proximity to the island and the delta.

Today, people constituting AB are a mix of newcomers and old timers, hotel guests, homeowners, campers, hotel employees, restaurant workers, fishermen and day-trippers. Their experiences with AB are as varied as their backgrounds. Although many things look the same as they did 40 years ago, tourism is beginning to mean something different, not only on the island proper, but also in the mainland areas that are connected to AB physically and imaginatively. AB is becoming a new type of place, one that is not so easy to define. Its identity is in flux, without clarity and full of contradictory characteristics.

Conclusion

Many people identify Ada Bojana as a place deep in their hearts and memories, one that they will devotedly return to year after year. Long-term experiences of travel may actually change us permanently (White & White in Heimtun, 2007), and it is clear that many visitors experience personal transformations while on AB. In most cases, people inhabiting AB have multiple identities and overlapping social roles as employees, visitors, hotel guests, homeowners, tourist entrepreneurs or fishermen. And as can be expected, they have different relationships to the place, different expectations and different needs.

These experiences have been shaping its character and identity over time, as stories and experiences get passed down from guests, workers and locals, and as tourism authorities perpetuate favorable aspects of its identity through media and marketing. The three characteristics of AB that I found most prevalent in my fieldwork, ***nature, nudism and tourism***, are still alive today, but are transforming to adjust to a new socio-cultural and physical environment. In the next section, I analyze the two main agents of change I found in my research

and how they factor into place experience and sense of place. Then, in chapter 6, I discuss the implications of these changes for future of life on AB.

CHAPTER 5 – ANALYSIS

Tourism, Nudism and Nature – Ada Bojana’s changing face

From my observations I have identified a set of parameters that can describe changes in AB’s identity since 1973. Apart from the Yugoslav conflict, two interrelated factors that have significantly influenced people’s relationship to and perception of AB are the bridge and the houses. These factors have affected the main characteristics that distinguished AB in the 1970s: *nudism*, *nature* and *tourism*. Because of this, AB’s identity has been gradually shifting in three main ways: from nudism to non-nudism, from an island with minimally disturbed nature to a populated and developed mainland, and from a foreign niche tourism market to a domestic hybrid.

These change factors multiplied social and material networks, creating an intricate system of socio-cultural life that instilled manifold meanings in the landscape. People inhabiting AB have been creating, sustaining and adapting to these changes through their actions and behaviors. Their sense of place and relationship to the landscape help us understand how these agents of change have impacted the core characteristics that define AB. Thus, in my analysis below, I first provide information about the bridge and houses, and then I analyze how sense of place and place-based narratives reveal changing notions of nature, nudism, and tourism.

The bridge and the houses

“The bridge changed everything,” said Nikola. “If I could, I would destroy it and remove all the houses on the river.” Nikola is one of a dozen employees who has worked on AB since the 1970s. He is a legendary fisherman amongst locals and takes pride in his work on the island because of his strong attachment to the place. Unlike many of his colleagues at the time, Nikola declined an opportunity to move abroad for work during the 1980s. His reason was that he

couldn't leave fishing on the Bojana. He is also one of the few locals who lives nearly year-round on the Bojana River in his small house, which was one of the first to exist.

Nikola and several of his colleagues were involved in discussions about erecting the bridge. Despite the unintended consequences, it seemed like the best solution at the time. Tourism was thriving and growing in the early 1980s, and this popularity created pressures on maintenance, infrastructure and management of the island. Although AB was revered for its autonomy, peace, quiet and islandness that a bridge could seemingly take away, they didn't predict that the bridge would significantly disturb this atmosphere. In fact, it was expected to make tourist life easier on the island and benefit the industry as a whole.

A combination of factors pushed the decision to build a bridge. For one, the island was becoming increasingly popular amongst domestic visitors. As vacation houses on the seaside were rapidly growing on all parts of the Adriatic Coast, Montenegrins were also building houses on the mainland riverbank in the 1980s. However, constructing on the other riverbank was too difficult without a way to transport materials. Pressure increased from various groups and individuals who saw that the bridge would solve this problem. Many tourism personnel, including their friends and family, supported the idea because they were personally interested in building a vacation house.

Therefore, the bridge was seen as a way to ease the burden of transporting a high volume of people, goods and services onto the island to meet tourists' demands, while also satisfying the growing desire for vacation houses along the Bojana River. Riding the ferry was part of the charm and thrill that enhanced AB's islandness, but the benefits of a bridge seemed to outweigh the disadvantages. Finally, in 1986 the bridge was constructed. It symbolized a moment of change, but most of these changes wouldn't be seen or felt until several years later, most notably concerning nudism and the type of tourism that characterized AB.

Bridges change both the physical landscape and the image of a place, but also the type, dimensions and effects of tourism (Raadik-Cottrell, 2010), especially for islands. Bridges unify; they often represent modernization, symbolize progress, ensure increased speed and accessibility and also serve as monuments (Raadik-Cottrell, 2010). Moreover, islands that are connected to the mainland by bridges can be problematic because they are frequently ordered and controlled from the outside (Raadik-Cottrell, 2010).

AB's bridge indirectly impinged on social relations and the ecosystem over time, and spurred a chain reaction of affects that are still manifesting today. It led to several problems concerning island access and raised questions of ownership and public use of the land. This friction comes to head at the infamous gate, the official entrance to the island. The gate and visitor entrance fee were set up to resolve several matters. For one, UR wanted to enforce the nudist policy on AB, and the gate served as a checkpoint that monitored who came and went.

Secondly, UR was losing profit because many visitors chose river houses over the hotel accommodation. In order to make up for this loss, a fee was charged for day visitors. This is problematic for some local people today who frequently visit the island and do not feel that they should be charged as tourists. This situation is also very uncomfortable for the employees at the gate because they may have friendly or familial relations with these people and empathize with their complaints. To cope with this situation, negotiations and deals are regularly made, in the form of free or discounted access in exchange for favors or small gifts. Others try to find hidden paths through the woods or ride by boat across the river.



Figure 10: The Entrance to Ada Bojana Nudist Center

Thus, in conjunction with the bridge, a sharp increase in river houses compounded the issue. In the early 1980s there were only a dozen houses, but by the early 2000s that number had multiplied tremendously. As the bridge enabled increased freedom of movement and more efficient flow of goods and services, people began to build vacation houses on the island's north river bank as well. These newcomers added new layers to already complex socio-cultural networks by bringing with them new sets of attitudes, behaviors and activity. Thus, the bridge and subsequent houses affected the overall visitor profile, and the scope and kind of tourism on AB.

Vacation houses, or weekend houses (*vikendica*), were popular along the Yugoslav Adriatic in the 1960s and especially in the 1980s. Even the former Yugoslavian president Josip Broz Tito had his modest weekend house on Vanga in Croatia, which was widely shown in the media (Grandits & Taylor, 2010). This trend was similar to those in Western Europe and in Soviet countries, in which "romantic portrayals of nature later elaborated the theme of authentic experience of the self away from the city" (Taylor in Grandits & Taylor, 2010, p. 173). Generally speaking, the houses expressed a move toward individualism and private life that contrasted with the socialist doctrines of togetherness (Grandits & Taylor, 2010).

Unlike prefabricated houses that gained popularity in the 60s and 70s, most people preferred to build and design their own houses on the Bojana. Most are modest constructions designed similarly to traditional fishermen huts, but more recently people began constructing bigger and more luxurious houses with modern comforts. Homeowners from the north of Montenegro tend to build houses similar to mountain cottages with steep pointed rooftops, which many locals find absurd.



Figures 11 & 12: old fisherman house (left) and new pre-fabricated houses (right)

Just as vacation houses reflected social values and social inequalities in Yugoslavia (Grandits & Taylor, 2010), the houses near AB today mirror other facets of social life that go beyond tourism. Locals who live abroad have houses that symbolize much about their lives at home. Zarko has an elaborate and eccentric garden influenced by his environment in Munich. While sitting with company surrounded by garden gnomes, wooden sculptures and flowers, Zarko's house on the Bojana represents a life very different from Germany. When he comes here he relaxes, enjoys the landscape, and spends quality time with friends and family, whereas in Germany he mainly works. Thus, the houses symbolize something special for each owner.

The ownership structure seems to mirror some social inequalities in Montenegrin society. Originally, the locals from Ulcinj were the primary homeowners, but today most houses are owned by Montenegrins from other cities, as well as Serbs and Russians. Many locals have sold

and are continuing to sell their houses because of financial hardships. Among local ownership, a further distinction exists. The municipality of Ulcinj is 80% Albanian, but there are very few Albanian homeowners left on the Bojana. As a minority group in the country, Albanians and Montenegrins in Ulcinj have a history of good relations (Nikolaidis, 2000), but that doesn't suggest that they have equal socio-economic status or the same opportunity structure.

Land and property ownership are very complicated and ambiguous in general. Land becomes heavily contested in tourist settings because "control of land is a central component in the creation of a rentier capitalist class in any tourism economy" (Bianchi & Talavera in Boissevain & Selwyn 2004, p. 94). By law, homeowners only own the structures upon the land, and they must pay taxes for their property. However, most of the houses on the Bojana were built illegally at a time when the municipality ignored or didn't enforce these regulations, and for several years people were free to build as they pleased.

Today authorities are increasingly controlling this by restricting building and even demolishing unregistered houses. However, many people protest these regulations because they seem to be selectively enforced. In general, many people do not trust how the local government uses the money collected from these property taxes. Without greater trust in local authorities, it seems people will continue to evade laws and indirectly protest against them. While a lot of homeowners do abide by these regulations, several people do as much as possible to evade them.

Laws are problematic not only for property taxes, but also for renting houses to tourists and operating restaurant establishments. An increasing number of homeowners on the Bojana profit from tourism by renting their river houses to tourists, which by law they must pay taxes for. Similar to the other regulations however, enforcement has increased the past 5-10 years with mixed results. The vacation house situation on the Bojana seems similar to Yugoslavian times, which was characterized by "the reluctance of owners to pay communal taxes, construction

without building permission, the extension of houses beyond granted approval, building in protected nature zones and the favored treatment of *vikendica* projects belonging to local personalities” (Taylor in Grandits & Taylor, 2010, p. 196).



Figure 13: demolished house

The socio-political situation in Montenegro has also influenced the development of vacation houses. When foreign tourism hibernated for ten years, building on the Bojana continued throughout the 1990s, but this time drawing more visitors from Serbia and other parts of Montenegro (Sisević, 2006). These new domestic tourists found an affordable, alternative summer holiday destination that was in large part made possible by vacation houses. They enabled visitors to come more frequently and stay for lengthier periods of time. With their increasing regularity, homeowners, their friends and family became very familiar with the place and quite close with locals, causing tight social networks to emerge. In effect, AB has adopted a new kind of local.

With a growing numbers of visitors, issues of land use on and around the island have risen to the surface. Authorities, visitors and tourism workers have varying interests in the place, and activity becomes contested when these interests are at stake. This involves activities such as fishing, kitesurfing and beach going. Fishing is a pleasurable hobby for some, and a primary or secondary source of income for others. This past summer, authorities began issuing fines for fishing without a license. Although the new rules are intended to establish order and control

fishing for good reasons, people who have been freely fishing on AB for many years are irritated and angry.

Another activity affected by the river houses that faces new regulation is nudism. Initially the majority of domestic visitors staying in the vacation houses were not nudists, but still wanted to spend time on the island. To resolve this issue, UR decided to establish a small section of the beach for non-nudists in the mid 2000's. Occupying only 100 meters on the northern delta, the textile beach is separated from the nudist beach by a thin bamboo fence. An employee is stationed at this border to ensure that each group stays to its appropriate side.

If clothed guests want to cross over and explore the rest of the shore they must be nude, and visitors who don't want to be nude can go to the mainland beach near the delta. New social life has emerged as that area has become more populated. Sunbathing and swimming are standard activities that have persisted over the years, but many young visitors have also started kitesurfing on the mainland beach. While these activities now extended beyond the confines of the island, they still emulate many of the characteristics connected with AB.

Similar to the bridge decision, the primary motivations for establishing a textile beach were to increase revenue and accommodate a changing guest profile. Likewise, complications arose that affected social life on the island. Because the entire hotel complex is nudist, there are naked guests walking around, lying in the shade or sitting outside their apartments. Non-nudist guests arrive by car and must walk through the nudist area to get to the textile beach. This infringes on people's privacy, especially when visitors come to gawk at the naked people or when men approach naked women for an innocent chat. Until now, the organization is badly planned and UR has not come up with a better solution.

The situation has upset many long-time guests who value the privacy and exclusivity of AB's past, and they are outwardly disappointed with developments on the island. New

management and new regulations disrupt their experience of the place, and several people are seeking out new destinations that are equally accessible and affordable. However, other island guests have no complaints about the changes and are happy as long as they have a spot on the beach. Thus, opinions about changes on AB vary, depending on personal interests and past experience with the place.

Another issue connected to the river houses that needs to be resolved is ecological destruction, particularly human waste and riverbank erosion. Most houses and many restaurants do not have proper canalization, meaning that all waste is dumped directly into the river. The long wooden stilts that many houses are built upon dig deep into the sand riverbank, causing it to shrink year after year. Even though newly enforced building regulations and property taxes are intended to control this, many people still bypass these laws and lack consciousness about their own impact on the environment.

A newer generation of campers at the mainland beach delta have been using the forests and beach as a dumpster. These harmless youngsters just want to have fun, but they leave their trash behind, which the sea eventually collects and takes away. A growing number of people park their campers in the hinterland vegetation, some of whom even build small wooden huts hidden in the forests. Although quite harmless and minimalistic, space is shrinking every year and each new hut or tent leaves its mark on the land.



Figures 14 & 15: Using space in the 'wild camp'.

Of course not all people are ignorant of their environmental impacts, and some are actively engaged in cleaning and protecting the habitat. One particular group of friends from Podgorica has been coming for more than a decade to the mainland beach, parking their campers and marking their territory with makeshift fences and foot-drawn pathways that connect them to one another. They organize initiatives to collectively clean up their area, but also other parts of the beach. Unfortunately, this type of action or awareness is greatly lacking amongst homeowners in general. Although some of them recognize the problems, they do little to change their habits and even less to influence others' habits. The community that seems to be growing the most as an extension of the houses is this groups of mainland campers, who are younger and more ecologically conscious.

Nature: islandness, remote, wild

As already explained in Chapter 4, nature is central to people's sense of place on AB. More cars, human traffic and buildings have been disrupting the remote and exclusive island feel as well as the pristine and peaceful atmosphere that mark the landscape. The bridge and river houses are two central factors that have directly challenged this aspect of AB's identity, one that strongly

determines how sense of place is constructed. Through my fieldwork I found that the bridge and houses have had different affects that are interrelated.

Bridges are integral to places' histories. Stories of times before and after bridges show people's changing conceptions of and relationships to places, and reflect the fluid and changing nature of place (Raadik-Cottrell, 2010). People who remember AB before the bridge have different perceptions of the place than those who arrived after its construction. "The bridge is ambiguous everywhere: it alternately welds together and opposes insularities. It distinguishes them and threatens them. It liberates from enclosure and destroys autonomy" (de Certeau, 1984, p. 128). Bridges have a dual character – they are both constructive and destructive – and the AB bridge serves as a nostalgic monument that symbolizes both positive progress and negative interference with islandness and nature. Despite its modest construction, its impact on place experience is quite strong because it links the island physically and symbolically to the mainland. Islands have a special ability to beckon people to get away, and time spent on islands often "relate to certain moments of fateful curiosity and identity search (Raadik-Cottrell, 2010, p. 191). Although the bridge doesn't completely take away such experiences on AB, there is no doubt that the sense of islandness is less strong than it was in the past.

Perhaps having an even stronger influence on nature and islandness is the housing boom on the Bojana that occurred after the bridge's completion. The houses shape peoples' experience because they alter the natural landscape. Houses are nestled in tightly next to one other, leaving no privacy between neighbors and creating a lot of noise in the summer season. Basically, more houses mean more people, and along with that, more trash, congestion, and tourist activity. The high volume of people and activity interferes with the quiet and peaceful atmosphere associated with nature, especially in July and August. In the off-season, there are nights when only a few lights shine on the Bojana at night, and AB reverts back to its more "natural" self.



Figure 16: Houses along the Bojana River

Additionally, people in the houses gradually impair the ecosystem in ways that are not yet visible. River water quality and fish stocks are just two examples of such consequences that will worsen in the future. Nikola and Zarko recall when they could drink the water directly from the Bojana. And Gzim returns each day from the delta with unimpressible catches in his net, unlike years ago when he always had enough to sell and feed his family. In the summer months, many guests renting the houses are unfamiliar with living on a river in a nature reserve and do not properly dispose of trash. In general, an awareness of environmental care is lacking. Throwing cigarette buds in the river or occasionally dropping a small piece of trash in the bushes is commonplace, even among long-term guests or employees who “love” AB.

This lack of environmental concern may be characteristic of places in similar phases of economic development. “Northern European countries ‘have a reputation for post-materialist environmental sensitivity, while southern countries, still struggling with developmental problems and motivated by the urge for economic modernization and higher productivity, place a much lower priority on environmental concerns.’” (Weale in Bramwell, 2004, p. 35). Many guests from abroad are appalled at the trash lying around the area or dumped in the forest. They often complain to hotel staff, or even pick up trash themselves. Of course, domestic visitors recognize

the problem, but they also understand it from a different perspective. The municipality of Ulcinj, for example, does not even provide all residents with regular trash pick up service, and it seems to cause some people to develop an indifferent attitude to littering. Therefore, perceptions and attitudes about nature depend on one's background, but also on one's social role and length of time spent on AB.

Nature and islandness remain primary motivators for visiting AB, and they factor strongly into place experience and attachment. Place attachment can occur at different scales, although it hasn't been researched enough to know how it operates at different levels (Farnum et al., 2005). Many of the new visitors who own houses on the Bojana tend to develop strong attachment, which is heavily grounded in AB's natural environment. It provides a space for peace, tranquility and time to rest and socialize. Having a second home in this landscape is thus very meaningful for them. Although they are disrupting nature with their house, they are still able to benefit from it.

Visitors on the island who are paying guests of UR tend to differ in their attachment, especially the campers who spend their days and nights outdoors. Although their place attachment can be high, it seems to be based more in the landscape rather than property, so they can be more sensitive to changes in the natural environment and more conscious of their actions. Not only do they see and live in the landscape, but they also rely on it for their holiday activities. Dejan and Mia have been coming from Belgrade to camp on AB since 2002. Their daily activities completely depend on the weather, the water and the sun, so they feel closely connected to the social aspects of the place, but also to the entire ecosystem.

Home place and prior exposure to natural environments influence perceptions of nature. Many visitors from Serbia's capital Belgrade strongly value the peace and quiet, the clean water, the "wild" forests and the "rustic" river houses. It is often described as "heaven" that is rare to find anywhere else. On the other hand, many local employees from Ulcinj perceive the landscape very

differently, and remember when it was truly “wild” and “pristine” in the 1970s or even early 80s. For many city-folk who never spent time outside in forests or sparsely populated beaches, AB is the ultimate experience of nature. But for anyone who knows AB before it’s popular tourism days, or who is accustomed to outdoorsy holidays, the natural environment isn’t as impressive as it once was.

Many of the newer visitors don’t realize how their activities are impinging on nature, especially the campers on the mainland delta. As they carve their camping space into the forest or build modest wooden huts, they multiple spatial boundaries, which ultimately influences sense of place. Structures and markings, from the concrete walking paths on the island and the dirt trails behind the beach, to the ad-hoc shacks and 3-euro umbrellas and lounge chairs, take away from the island feel and immersion in nature. These actually act as boundaries, dictating activity on the island and ultimately affecting place experience.

Boundaries and territories can be geographical features, such as rivers and trees. Thus, they are often ambiguous or *in-between spaces* (de Certeau, 1984), which people adapt on their own to create places.

*An architect who saw this sight
approached it suddenly one night,
removed the spaces from the fence
and built of them a residence*

(Morgenstern in de Certeau, 1984, p. 127).

This poem alludes to how humans transform such in-between spaces into established places, such as the campers on the northern delta who have been building small wooden shacks out of materials collected from the surrounding area. They are molding AB’s identity through these transformations and bring a new semi-residential quality to the place. At the same time, they

attempt to preserve its character as a special nature reserve, which means their actions are inevitably contradictory.



Figure 17 & 18: Boundaries on Ada Bojana

Despite good intentions, many people are not aware of their harmful actions and do not take the initiative to protect and respect nature. In this case, regulations on building, fishing and renting houses may not be so bad. However, people are used to doing things on AB without interference from authorities, or at least with the possibility to bypass regulations through personal connections. Thus, the transition causes disputes as people adapt to new order. Freedom is important for place experience on AB, but without some planning and regulation, human activity can destroy the natural environment. Nevertheless, if people continue to distrust authorities and the state, enforcing environmental protection will be difficult.

Tension and conflict concerning environmental protection usually occurs between tourism authorities and visitors or homeowners, rather than among visitors themselves. Despite diverse perceptions of nature, their general interests in the place are often on par. Long-term inhabitants with a strong sense of place sometimes blame newcomers for their rowdy or disruptive behavior, but this is a short-lived period when tourism peaks in late July. Thus, a strong place attachment or

sense of place does not necessarily predicate conflict (Farnum et al., 2005). Above all, people want to enjoy their time in an intimate social setting among nature's beauty.

Harmonious social relations may be partly due to the large percentage of domestic homeowners. Montenegrin society is very small and close-knit. Many people are connected via familial or social circles within Montenegro and also Serbia. These homeowners not only know one another well, but also share similar motivations for visiting AB. Montenegrins and Serbs seem to value the social connections just as much, if not more, than the natural environment, while many foreign visitors are not as strongly pulled by the social life. They often travel with one or two other people and spend time enjoying the beach, sitting in the pine tree shade, swimming or making crafts from washed up debris.

Despite the fact that the sense of islandness has decreased for those accustomed to AB in years past, exclusivity, remoteness and nature are still very important for people's connection to and experience with AB. Based on my collected narratives and observations, islandness and nature will continue to be focal points in place narratives and general place experience. With this said, the bridge and the houses have had consequences that are just beginning to materialize, which means that islandness and nature may continue to weaken and alter people's place experience if certain behaviors and actions persist. The entire ecosystem that created this geographic phenomenon - the river, the sea, the forests, the air, and the flora and fauna - complete the island experience. Thus, unless major developments allow for a higher capacity of traffic and human activity, AB may still retain its remote, exclusive, and peaceful ambience. As long as nature allows the island to exist, Ada Bojana will still be *Ada (island)*.

Nudism – exotic, free

Nudism is still a central reason for visiting AB, although it is no longer reserved exclusively for nudists. The island management's decision to create a textile section the beach in the early 2000s, despite the fact that the island had been known exclusively as a nudist settlement since 1973, was a very symbolic moment for the development of AB and for people's place experience. The textile beach was and continues to be a disputed issue because it directly challenges notions of AB's identity - *what is Ada Bojana without nudism?*

The nudist legacy is a key component in AB's landscape that speaks of political and cultural developments and reflects a cultural ideology that dictates activity on AB. When European tourists dominated the island in the 70s and 80s, nudism was synonymous with "western culture," and AB was created to accommodate this culture. Today, tourism officials strive to enliven AB's foreign guest profile and regain some of its glory. From the industry perspective, attracting guests from outside the Balkans is more beneficial for both profits and position on the global tourism market. However, in the meantime, nudism has spread and is no longer just popular amongst foreign or "western" guests.

The rationale for the textile beach was based on perceived needs at the time, but it has irrevocably altered people's experience of AB. "Often sense of place really amounts to the politics of place, situations in which it is impossible to reach a decision satisfactory to all. In such cases, what can actually be accomplished in terms of equitable, acceptable, and effective management may fall short of the best ideals" (Farnum et al., 2005, p. 38). Times were tough in the 1990s - money was scarce and the visitor profile dramatically shifted. In efforts to save the dying hotel enterprise by attracting more guests and accommodating a new demand from non-nudists, a textile beach seemed the most logical option.

The textile beach has created a complicated scenario that influences life and work on the island. The bamboo fence separating the two beaches is clearly demarcated, but after 1km of nude beach, there is again an in-between space that is open to all and not managed by UR. Boundaries play a big role in defining identities and, as space becomes limited and more valuable, they become more important and contested (Rose, 1995). Although the fence protects the nudists' privacy, non-nude guests are increasingly flocking to the island's beach, and lifeguards now spend much of their time regulating nudism in addition to watching the water.

For nudists, space is being increasingly encroached upon, while for new non-nudist guests space is expanding. People develop mechanisms to adapt to this complex environment. Nudists assert their presence and uphold AB's nudist legacy by claiming space on the wild beach. Gate staff try to minimize complications by explaining the nude and textile areas to visitors when they arrive. Fees to access national parks or protected areas are common, and they usually help keep human activity to a minimum. On AB, the fee intends to regulate nudism and control the flow of visitors, while bringing in revenue for UR. However, it apparently is more effective in executing the latter.

Much tension accumulates here at this spot because people have strong feelings of entitlement to access the beach, but do not want to pay. Conflict is "especially likely when groups differ in place attachment or when groups with similarly high levels of attachment have conflicting goals" (Farnum et al., 2005, p. 29). Visitors and gate staff have different relationships to AB, and also opposing aims. Furthermore, gate staff have to fulfill multiple roles - one, as employees carrying out their duties of collecting money, and two, as friends or family wanting to extend favors by giving free passes.

Sense of place is often connected to claiming territory, and involves demarcating boundaries that become social boundaries, ultimately determining differences in a community

(Rose, 1995). The boundaries on AB begin at the gate and extend to the beach. Although the *wild beach* is open to all, it is unofficially known to be an extension of the nudist beach, which makes it symbolically off-limits for non-nudist guests. While some people are very disappointed in the changes to the nudist policy, others are more worried about the increasing crowds and commercialization of AB in general.

For some, nudism is simply the act of being naked on the beach, while for others it is more meaningful because it plays a role in defining equality and power on AB. Places are inherently unequal because they reflect already disparate social relations, and notions of power are imbedded in places' landscapes and environments (Rose, 1995). The nudist and textile beach compartmentalize people into two groups that cannot mix according to beach regulations. People may carry judgments of one another based on their beach preference because each beach is imbued with various representations. Attitudes toward nudism vary, and although it is more acceptable for local Montenegrins than it was in the 1970s, foreigners still make up a large percentage of the hotel guests.

While some stigmatize nudism as exotic, curious or even shameful, others are indifferent and spend time on both beaches. As the textile beach attracts new guests year-after-year, it also recruits new nudists. Many people snicker at the thought of nudism, but are increasingly trying it out and getting over their shyness. In one way then, nudism isn't dying, but transforming into a crossbreed of sorts that heavily factors into people's place experience. This transformation from strict nudism to optional nudism affects sense of place in various ways and greatly depends on the age and generation of AB's visitors and workers.

For the newer generation of guests and workers, nudism seems to be less important. It is a nice perk, but not essential to their experience on the island because they didn't experience the place when nudism was the core feature that made it unique to this part of the Adriatic.

Conversely, most of the current management has been employed since the 1980s, and they recognize that not only would AB lose one of its most important attractions, but it would also have to completely rebrand itself if nudism disappeared. However, when the next generation of managers and tourism personnel come in, nudism may fade into the background as long as it makes financial sense.

Because place narratives have several generational layers, memory is vital to creating and recreating places (Raadik-Cottrell, 2010). Over time, each generation accumulates its own experiences with a place, which is why two people can have completely different senses of the same place. Also, being away from home and returning home causes us to reflect upon our relationships with places over time (Bachelard in Raadik-Cottrell, 2010). Those who have returned to AB over the years know a different place than the newcomers. It is easier for them to adjust to the changing nudist atmosphere because they are less attached to the past.

Memories of the past are often tinged with an air of nostalgia, and remembering experiences on AB may be associated with heightened feelings of freedom because we tend to lessen our inhibitions and judgments when on holiday (Raadik-Cottrell, 2010). Nostalgia on AB has various levels depending on the age or background of the individual. On one level, there is nostalgia for Yugoslavia in general, when things were “simpler” and salaries better. On another, nostalgia exists for the 1990s when AB became a cult name amongst domestic tourists and when people could do as they pleased without restrictive regulations. Nudism is interwoven into these place narratives, and it plays a significant role in sustaining nostalgia.

Changes to the nudist policy on AB do affect long-time guests’ place experience and shape the way new guests sense and connect to the island. While some island guests have switched to the mainland over the years to avoid fees and regulations, nudism continues to attract old and new visitors. Thus, as nudism on AB changes, people alter their sense of place and adjust their

activity and behavior to best suit their interests and needs, rather than abandon the place altogether.

Tourism – emerging hybrid

Tourism on AB is a defining factor that shapes people's sense of place and place experience. Changes in tourism are important for studying place experience and sense of place on AB because tourism made it popular regionally and internationally. Generally speaking, by looking at tourism development on AB over the last 40 years, we can see a gradual shift from a foreign niche market to a domestic hybrid. These changes speak to the specific socio-political context, but also to tourism's changing role in general. Similarly to nudism and nature, the bridge and the houses have notably affected tourism development.

In broad terms, tourism was for nudist Germans in the 1970s and 1980s. It was clear who tourists were, how long they were staying and what they were permitted to do. When they arrived to the island they were already registered with the hotel for a particular period of time. Today on the other hand, visitors are both foreign and local, nudist and non-nudist, hotel guests or homeowners and stay for indefinite lengths of time. Access is open to anyone who is willing to pay 5 Euros per car, which ultimately raises questions of how to manage tourism on the island as it became ever more popular among non-nudist visitors.

Although the bridge opened AB to the public, the entrance fee at the gate still limits accessibility to some degree. Problems at the gate occur largely because it is no longer obvious what a tourist is or what counts as a holiday. In previous years when only registered guests were able to enter, the role of the tourist was clearer, but today the visitor profile is eclectic: people from the river houses coming just for a few hours, Montenegrins from other cities visiting for the day, and even evening guests coming to eat dinner at one of the three restaurants not operated by UR. The fee seems unfair to many people who are charged like a tourist, even if they don't feel like

one. Although the entrance fee was meant to mediate UR's revenue loss and better monitor who enters the island, it disagrees with the type of tourism that has been evolving since the 1990s.

To adapt to the situation and make up for inapt regulations, people negotiate and take matters into their own hands. For example, gate staff do not charge some fishermen who come daily to the island because they know that their purpose is to fish, not to sunbathe. Similarly, once they understood my purpose was research and saw that I was coming several times per day, I was also able to pass through. There are many other examples of visitors with non-touristic purposes and overlapping roles. To deal with this vagueness today, negotiations like these may be the new norm.

Tourism is also changing because the presence of "domestic" and "foreign" guests has been shifting over the years. Tourism development is partly dependent on the type of visitor, and in many coastal places, domestic tourism may be more inclusive than foreign tourism (Pascual in Boissevain & Selwyn, 2004). However, the type of foreign tourism that characterized AB in the 70s and 80s seems to have been more inclusive than other developments on the Adriatic or Mediterranean coast, which were typical of mass tourism. AB was for foreigners, but its nudist policy kept it non-commercial and low key. And when more domestic guests arrived in the 1990s, they sought the same peaceful and calm ambiance as their predecessors. Thus, whether foreign or not, people coming to AB seem to seek a common experience, one that is based in a relaxed natural environment.

Furthermore, in many coastal tourist places it has been found that locals have a stronger place attachment than visitors (Farnum et al., 2005). Locals can have starkly different relationships to the land than tourists and they may not visit places if there are entrance fees, (Bell & Lyall in Coleman & Crang, 2002). My research on AB is not wholly consistent with these statements. Although there are residents from Ulcinj who could be most closely defined as locals,

many of them don't visit AB regularly and prefer other parts of *Velika Plaža* for their beach outings or fishing. Those locals who do visit AB developed their relationship with the place at the same time as many non-locals, so there are not stark differences between the two groups' place attachment or sense of place.

Thus, AB attracted locals and non-locals nearly from its beginning as a tourist destination, and was "raised" by both local and non-local "parents". As mentioned previously, there are not clear divisions between "domestic" and "foreign" on AB because of the socio-political changes in the last 20 years. Also, because it was an off-limits border zone for several years and is not residential, nobody really claims to be "natives" of AB. As a result, new visitors today are still able to establish themselves in the community rather quickly, which is also influenced by the accommodation structure. There is no standard hotel, so the majority of visitors stay in apartments, bungalows, private houses or the campground. Consequently, people tend to get to know locals quite easily. Thus, the houses that have had negative environmental affects also have helped create this close community.

Tourism has become not only more domestic, but also more permanent or residential, meaning visitors are coming more frequently, staying longer and even establishing structures that claim territory and signify their presence. These constructions are very significant because building is connected to *dwelling* - we build a house, which we will then dwell/live in once it's finished. However, building is just one part of the process of being in a place, or dwelling, "for building is not merely a means and a way toward dwelling - to build is in itself already to dwell" (Heidegger, 1971, p. 1). As homeowners and campers expand around the island, AB is becoming a place of long-term dwelling, and a new kind of tourism continues to develop.

The wave of domestic guests who came in the 90s sparked this shift toward half-residential holiday and caused AB to develop a cult character of sorts that expanded beyond the confines of

the island. They found all of nature's bliss just across the river, but without the space limitations and beach code of conduct. Therefore, the north delta reflects cultural ideologies of this new generation of campers and tourism entrepreneurs. They are escaping the commercialized tourism rampant throughout the rest of the country and have created a place that not only allows for an enjoyable holiday, but that also seems to fulfill certain needs in Montenegrin society.

These needs seem to be related to the socio-economic and political atmosphere in the country and the lifestyle the young generations carry in the capital city. Most of the regulars come from Podgorica, Belgrade and Novi Sad, where unemployment is high, pay is low, and the increasing pressure to adapt to consumer capitalist-oriented existence is extremely stressful. On AB they create sporadic camps with improvised fences and borders; build collective beach cafes from the ground up; throw spontaneous parties with local bands and DJs, and rarely visit the island. For some it is becoming a second home that nourishes their physical, emotional and spiritual selves in a way that the cities do not. Thus, they've added a new dimension to AB's landscape, one that is very different from tourism on the island, but that still builds off of a similar spirit that has characterized AB since the 1970s.

As mentioned before, these developments have unfortunately brought up environmental issues. A German company, Environmental Resource Management GmbH, did an impact assessment of tourism on AB in 2005 and concluded that the ecological state should be preserved and any major developments would damage and threaten the unique ecosystem (Raschke, 2005). Montenegro became the first self-declared ecological state in the world in 1991, and the government claims to support sustainable tourism efforts throughout the country. However, there is "distrust and miscommunication between public and private sectors which hinders integrated tourism development projects" (Household Survey Report, 2004, p. 24). Policymakers are

preaching a commitment to sustainable tourism development, but environmental awareness is lacking in general (Bickert et al., 2011)

Eco-tourism and sustainable tourism are niche markets that have become a global trend in recent years, and Montenegro has also started branding itself in this fashion. Sustainable tourism on AB is only a vague concept that is nowhere near materializing. So, although it is well known that AB has great potential to rebrand itself as an eco-tourism destination, real efforts in that direction are minimal, partly because there is no money to do so. The Master Plan drafted in 2003 envisions a mid-range tourism place with an emphasis on outdoor activities, educational and active tours, while maintaining a certain level of luxury and exclusiveness.

Despite apparent interest, no foreign venture has bid on AB, which means the local tourism enterprise still has a chance to take the lead. However, the general attitude among locals is that nothing will change or improve without a foreign investor. Similar to most other places in Montenegro, even if local people exhibit great entrepreneurial ideas on AB, many things do not materialize without foreign investment (Household Survey Report, 2004). Thus, Montenegrin tourism seems at least partially dependent on foreign participation and is consequently controlled from the outside (Bickert et al., 2011).

Until now, no foreign investor is likely to step in, perhaps because, like in other places that have gone through major transitions, “revitalization would require large investments and uncertain profits” (Perović, 2012, p. 3). Thus, AB still holds onto its low-profile tourism character and it may be very long before that changes. This would suit most people because they like the place as it is and do not want to see too many changes. The most feared outcome is that it will continue to expand and grow into a mainstream tourist destination. These opinions show the paradox of tourism development: people want to maintain the peace and tranquility of AB’s landscape, but also acquire profits and/or space to use for their pleasure.



Figure 19: Ulcinj Beach



Figure 20: Ada Bojana Beach

Conclusion

From its early days as an unpopulated controlled border zone to its emergence on the tourism market as an exclusive nudist settlement and to its current status as popular getaway for locals and foreigners alike, AB has changed quite significantly in its short history. The strongest traits that identified AB were its natural environment, nudism and tourism. Although these remain to be the defining characteristics today, their qualities and symbolism have changed. Many factors that are interconnected caused these changes, but the two most prominent are the bridge and the river houses. Over time, these change factors influenced people's experience with the island because they altered nature, nudism and tourism.

The island has been the cornerstone of AB's natural landscape. Islandness enabled tourism to develop in its specific way and it supplies people with a rich ecosystem to use, observe and discover on their holiday. Relationships and attitudes people have toward nature vary on AB. Visitors who stay in the hotel accommodation, in private river houses or on the campgrounds seek a particular kind of experience for their holiday that can be different from what local employees,

tourism workers, and fishermen want. Notwithstanding the obvious disturbance to islandness and the environmental degradation, people still continue to revere nature as one of the primary factors that attracts them to the place and also marks their place experience.

On a similar note, although the nudist space has shrunk on AB, many people still maintain that nudism is a defining element of the place. Yet, this strictly applies to the island-goers, and not the newer visitors who stay on the mainland beach. While nudism has lost some weight on the island due to the textile beach, it has also grown in popularity and become more inclusive, and even drawn new nudist converts. As it is now open to a wider range of people than before, AB can still satisfy guests and workers who rely on nudism for their sense of place, while also allowing others to experience the place in ways that were not possible before. This diversity is leading to a more complex web of place narratives that will enrich its historical legacy.

Tourism has transformed greatly since 1973. Nature, the island feel and nudism are part of the tourism profile, but more significant changes point to a shift from its original exclusive foreign market that was defined by specific activities and tourist behavior. Today, a domestic hybrid is emerging that is characterized by extended stays with multiple returns, expanded activities beyond nude sunbathing, and a close community of visitors, island employees and other tourism workers. The possibility of mass tourism development seems low unless a major foreign investment is made. And, if plans go according to the national development scheme, AB will emphasize its natural protected status and cater to eco-tourism enthusiasts.

Many planning decisions involve creating, destroying and recreating boundaries. These boundaries, such as the bridge, the gate, and the textile beach are exclusionary, limiting movement and affecting place experience. But for the most part, boundaries on AB are still nominal and seem to minimally disturb people's sense of place. So, it seems that the absence of exclusionary boundaries is what makes people treasure and love AB. The name evokes a sense of

freedom and ego-less bliss, where people can forget their differences for a while and free themselves from restrictive roles they may feel in their lives at home.

CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION

A new kind of tourism, a new kind of place?

On the former Yugoslavian coast, we can see a “crisis of space identity” (Perović, 2012, p. 3) that is usual for places experiencing transition (Schneider-Jacoby, 2004). AB has been arguably going through an identity crisis since 1991, when tourism drastically changed due to the crisis in Yugoslavia. Changes in actual landscapes caused by political and ideological shifts also affect mental landscapes (Raadik-Cottrell, 2010). In other words, what people think, feel and know about a place is largely influenced by what’s happened and what is happening in the social and political sphere.

In addition to the main catalysts of change highlighted in my study, the bridge and the river houses, the conflict in Yugoslavia had tremendous implications for AB’s development. Although socio-political conflict generally destroys places, perhaps there are situations when it actually preserves them. From an environmental standpoint, the socio-political conflict didn’t necessarily lead to AB’s demise. Rather, it could have actually slowed it down because it halted the development of commercial or mass tourism. Just as the border protected it from human activity while it was a military zone, the Yugoslav conflict prevented major developments from altering the landscape.

From another angle, the 90s conflict didn’t benefit the place because, although it enabled AB to maintain a low profile, it brought disorder and lawlessness that allowed uncontrolled building and land use. The weekend houses epitomize this situation. Also, because the tourism industry was hit hard with financial problems, there was no money to maintain infrastructure. In the aftermath, UR has been seeking out ways to boost revenue, such as by adding new fees, which causes problems and raises disputes. Therefore, tourism development is intertwined with

developments in the socio-political context, and thus influence both place experience and sense of place.

Tourism isn't necessarily equal to place destruction, but it undoubtedly has negative environmental and social impacts. That is tourism's paradox - it destroys and creates - which means it ultimately both harms and helps places. By focusing on this duality in the course of tourism development, we can see how the meanings of places change over time and how places serve different purposes and fulfill various social needs. By inquiring into places' pasts and specifically focusing on perceptions people have of those pasts, we see how sense of place evolves, and finally, how places are integrated into individual life stories and conceptions of the self.

All places are unique, and ethnographic case studies are valuable because they let us look at the specific features of places and draw comparisons. Not only is AB an island and a nature reserve, but also a non-residential place very close to the city. Such islands are interesting because they don't have a formal system of residence or registered "locals." In effect, they are closely connected to outsider actors who have varying relationships to the place, whether they are local mainland residents or foreign visitors. As a consequence, policies and initiatives that shape developments on islands come from these outside actors, who may or may not have personal ties to the place.

In an ideal world "there are particular negotiations happening in tourist places which allow tourists to get their wishes met of beauty, warmth, exoticism, etc, and locals get their wishes of economic accumulation and improved economy" (Lippard in Oakes & Price, 2008, p. 345). In most cases, however, coastal holiday places are ambiguously defined, social roles are unclear, and negotiations to satisfy all parties seem nearly impossible. In the 70s it was much easier to distinguish between different groups and define AB in general. So, we have a situation today

where the traditional tourist structure has changed, and as a result, people are repositioning themselves in the place.

The possibilities for these social positions have multiplied over the last 40 years as social activity caused the place to expand. When domestic tourism spread to the beaches surrounding the island, the name Ada Bojana began to change in scope. So, AB no longer refers only to the island, but now incorporates the mainland area on the other side of the delta. As I already mentioned, this has been slowly happening over time as houses spread on both sides of the riverbank. The ecosystem - the sea, the river and the deltas - unites separate areas of AB's landscape, bringing together people, stories and behavior that complete its picture. Thus, the small triangular island is now only one part of this landscape.

Not only has AB's name taken on new meanings, but its social role has also expanded. It is still a tourist destination, but it now satisfies other uses that fall outside standard holiday activity because of the large amount of houses. It is normal to assume that we go on holiday to get away from everyday life. However, in tourist places where there are secondary or vacation homes, the place can become an extension of our everyday lives, rather than an escape from the everyday (Massey in Raadik-Cottrell, 2004). AB exemplifies such extensions, and from my research I can say that it is becoming more and more a place of second residence rather than occasional visiting for a several individuals and groups.

Through my ethnography I can see that AB is developing from a traditional tourism landscape into a place of half-residential dwelling, while retaining aspects of tourism, leisure and recreation. It does not fully embody a residential place or a tourist place; it is becoming something in between. AB's environment is still inconvenient for modern comfortable living due to infrastructural deficiencies. Without policy supporting development plans or sufficient support

from the local government to invest in infrastructural developments, AB may never fully transition to a place of full-time residents.

This new kind of tourism on AB may reflect changing social trends in Montenegrin society. People interact with the landscape in ways that show their desires for a slow, peaceful and enjoyable lifestyle that contrasts with the hustle and bustle of city life. Just as the *vikendica* (weekend house) in Yugoslavian times provided for certain social needs, the houses on the Bojana River also seem to serve a special purpose in contemporary Montenegro. “Like the tourist destination, the choice of weekend or holiday ambience speaks about style and self-perception” (Taylor in Grandits & Taylor, 2010, p. 175). In the 60s-80s weekend houses spoke about individual or family values and offered images of relaxed leisure, time together and connection with nature. Many of these themes still characterize the weekend houses on the Bojana.

Although they reflect similar values from Yugoslavian times, the social and political context has changed, which has ultimately affected the houses’ symbolism and the meaning of AB in general. People continue to seek out peace and rest from work and life in the city, and the houses offer the chance to extend that time away from home a little longer. The growing number of semi-permanent camps also shows that domestic visitors are looking for peaceful places, not just to vacation once per year, but to return as much as weather and spare time permits. With the high unemployment rate in the country, many of these young people actually have the time, and are taking advantage of it.

As building regulations and property tax are increasing, people continue to seek out refuges in nature by finding new spots in the hinterland near the delta. If a holiday destination is “a place removed from routine social arrangements, the cottage can be understood to offer escape from the normalizing forces at work on the individual” (Taylor in Grandits & Taylor, 2010, p. 174). Perhaps this shows that the demand for peace, quiet and an alternative lifestyle to the city is

growing. Therefore, the type of tourism emerging on AB could mirror personal and social values, and speak to what kind of life people want in general.

On a larger scale, the expanded meaning of a holiday destination might even be a global trend. “Place-based practices of culture, nature and economy” (Escobar in Oakes & Price, 2008, p. 296) is a growing movement in communities around the world who are reacting to the “economic and cultural avalanche of recent decades” (Escobar in Oakes & Price, 2008, p. 295). This speaks to the value and importance places have in our lives, and could apply to holiday settings as well. Tourist places like AB could be becoming place alternatives for many people seeking a certain lifestyle, while maintaining aspects of their holiday nature. In this way, it’s not just a shift in tourism activity, but also a lifestyle shift that points to the importance of place in general.

Aside from the general importance of place in everyday human life, local places may be gaining importance in our contemporary times of globalization (Rose, 1995), which can also help explain trends on AB. The preponderance of domestic guests on AB may suggest that people in and around Montenegro see the value in this local place. Despite the fact that many people (especially the youth) want to go out of the country, AB retracts a core group of domestic visitors who believe AB is a vital component of their lives. They understand that it may not be easy to find a place like this, where nature is still relatively undisturbed and where their activity is essentially unrestricted.

All this points to the fact that we can build communities, identify with them and develop feelings of belonging toward them, in all kinds of places. We can see this in growing concepts such as Diaspora or global city (Hall in Oakes & Price, 2008), which also offer new ways to define place and home. Because of this, ordinary depictions of tourist places inadequately describe and explain trends in places such as AB, which show many non-touristic characteristics. AB shows that tourist places, like all places, are constantly evolving, and it just one example of how we are seeking and

expanding notions of home and place. Meaningful communities can develop in holiday settings that enable people to connect on a personal and deep level, perhaps in ways that standard “home” settings do not afford. This search for a peaceful, harmonious and restorative experience away from everyday life is a strong theme that should not be taken lightly. I presume this is not just the case in Montenegro, and it would be an engaging and worthy topic to further explore in various settings around the globe.

Variables in place experience

The conclusions I’ve discussed and analyzed are based on qualitative ethnographic research that was more explorative than regimented. Because of this, there are many variables to consider that have influenced the data I collected. I find this an important section to add to the discussion because it gives the reader a better understanding of my own reflexivity during the different stages of fieldwork, and clarifies how representative my research participants were of AB’s inhabitants. Each person holds a particular image of AB based on his or her personal experience and relates to the landscape in different ways. It was my task to understand these differences and factor them into my analysis.

One important variable that affected narratives and my own research experience is time. Generational differences in perceptions of and relationships with AB show how memory and social background strongly influence place attachment and sense of place. Changes affect people in different ways because generational time barriers are inherent in landscapes (Raadik-Cottrell, 2010). The war of the 1990s structures the way people along the Yugoslav Adriatic remember the past, and can explain why many carry an idealized view of earlier years (Grandits & Taylor, 2010). In general, people who visited AB during the crisis have a strong emotional attachment, perhaps because landscapes acquire particular importance and meaning during major shifts or transitions (Raadik-Cottrell, 2010).

The time factor also explains differing senses of place expressed by various groups and individuals. Physical and socio-cultural developments affect sense of place (Blake in Farnum et al., 2005), which clarifies why employees from the 70s and 80s carry certain memories of AB that are laden with nostalgia. Moreover, what we choose to say reflects what we choose to remember or forget, as “selective oblivion is necessary to all societies” (Raadik-Cottrell 2010, p. 69). Thus, the information people shared and how they communicated that information have to be understood from an objective point of view. Stories I collected during my fieldwork are filled with a plethora of emotions, and each encounter or recollection of AB is unique to the individual. Although I strived to include as many perspectives as possible, the information I gathered cannot complete the full story of AB.

Visitors who arrived in the early 2000s do not know the AB from the 1970s. Although they feel and see the changes in nature, nudism or tourism, they interpret the causes differently than older generations. By blaming new tourist policy or increasing numbers of guests, they overlook the political and social processes that have led up to these changes. The unregulated building or changing visitor profile may not have been possible if the crisis in Yugoslavia hadn't brought economic disaster, political unrest or international travel restrictions. Thus, I needed to filter each person's response through this time lens to see why they remember what they do, and why particular emotions are connected to those memories.

In general, all generations speak of an *original* time in the past, as if AB has a true identity that has been lost. The local island employees from the 70s and 80s hold the strongest sense of loss and nostalgia for older times, when “everything was better.” The 90s' arrivals have a slightly different nostalgia, one that is connected to fewer crowds, little regulations and low prices. Referring to an authentic past is common after major events significantly change a place from how it once was. We tend to forget that places emerge from “a series of practices which have evolved

over time, and changes which are constantly informed by shifting economic, technical and cultural formations” (Jones & Cloke in Oakes & Price, 2008, p. 237). It may be difficult to obtain this wider perspective unless an outside observer brings to light certain facts hidden from our view.

When speaking of place authenticity, we must define from which point in time and from whose perspective. From the perspective of the trees living on the island, AB’s authentic self began some 150 years ago when the triangular landmass actually formed. But from most people’s perspectives, the authentic AB started in 1973, when humans brought social life to the island and created a name for the place. So, when people describe how a place has changed for the better or worse, we must understand what the past means to them. In the case of nostalgia or longing, we must ask if it’s longing for the *real* or *authentic* place or really for a more socially and economically stable past?

Other important variables in my research that affected place experience and sense of place are gender and ethnicity. Because “public lands may have very different meanings and interpretations according to one’s ethnic and social background...lands cannot be viewed merely in terms of economic and behavioral goals” (Farnum et al., 2005, p. 38). Ethnicity and gender affect how and why sense of place develops (Farnum et al., 2005), and I found that they do influence experiences of AB. Like time, these social categories affected the kind of information I received and also the way I received and processed that information.

Gender subtly but strongly influences sense of place and experiences people have with AB. Not only could I observe this in other people, but also in myself as a researcher and a visitor. As I already mentioned in Chapter 3, it was difficult being a solo female in a coastal holiday setting and develop relationships with people so I could do my research effectively. I was able to get past many barriers and prove myself as a serious female researcher, but it was doubly difficult in Montenegro because women my age are generally not alone, especially not on a nudist beach. Not

only did I have to assert myself as a researcher, but also a female researcher in a nudist setting. It wasn't until the end of my first round of fieldwork that Skender told me, "we see that you are very serious about this, always with your journal sitting in the shade and writing."

Gender influences heavily depend on the personal background of each individual. For example, local men and women on AB carry gender roles specific to their local culture. Many men in Ulcinj are fishermen who come to AB, while women are homemakers and stay back in the city to take care of domestic affairs. Therefore, local men are everywhere on AB, but women are hidden, and it was challenging for me to access women because of this.

This was also the case with women employees on the island. Although they were present, it wasn't easy to speak with them because their jobs were normally indoors, but also because they didn't have the time to talk when I approached them. Unlike the men, at the end of the workday they had to immediately go home to attend to their other duties, like housekeeping and child rearing. Therefore, my research definitely lacks a representative women's voice. An interesting future study could focus solely on women's experiences on AB, considering its nudist legacy and conservative Montenegrin culture.

Ethnicity and nationality also factored into my research data and analysis. These variables showed to have considerable weight on place experience and sense of place, but also on my relationship to research participants. Official statistics show that national minorities have a good standing in Montenegrin society (Budisavljević, 2002; Cross and Komnenich, 2006), but there are ethnic and national inequalities that aren't recorded in official reports. Several encounters showed me that many Albanians tend to feel marginalized within the country, despite the majority of people who proclaim "we don't care about that."

However, people on AB are especially proud of their openness to one another, regardless of ethnic or national background. Employees do exert close relationships and commonly call

themselves “one big family.” This openness is an important characteristic of AB that attracts visitors and keeps them returning. Ulcinj’s demography is unique in Montenegro because the majority of citizens are Albanian. There are two official languages, and many people are of mixed decent. Therefore, Ulcinj has a reputation of possessing exceptionally good interethnic relations.

Regardless, there are some obvious and less obvious facets of AB’s landscape that follow ethnic or national lines. Denis Cosgrove (in Oakes & Price, 2008) talks about the symbolic aspects of landscapes (he prefers to use *landscape* instead of *place*), explaining how they reveal aspects of the cultures that impact the landscape. Some cultures or sub-cultures have little influence on the landscape, while dominant cultures have more. The houses, for example, are owned majorly by Montenegrins. Further, even more of these houses are owned by Montenegrins outside of Ulcinj, which points to another social stratification that exists at the local and national level in Montenegro.

The future

Research on AB has shown me that there are many kinds of tourist places. Therefore, concepts and terms we use to describe them can be combined in various ways. Because the stories, values and images circulating in and about tourist places are used for marketing and place-branding, they are *imagined places* (Meethan et al., 2006). However, it seems that all places are imagined and have some tourist elements in them. Thus, understanding tourist places is also about understanding places in general, which requires looking at the complex interplay of their narratives, histories, images and myths. We produce these elements, and so we are always engaged in an interactive relationship with places. Because of this reciprocal relationship between people and place, there seems to be a constant need to explore the shifting identities and social roles of tourist places.

AB is only one example of such a place, and as it develops it would be interesting to research this topic further. All over the world, “societies are reclaiming their spaces, creating new places and their identities are being altered as a result” (Huff in Knudsen et al., 2008, p. 34). As more and more people become regular year-round guests, social and economic life will continue to change. Experiences people have with AB and the sense of place they develop will likely transform in the coming years, as the place attracts more visitors, as employees rotate and as tourism officials rebrand and market AB to suit the industry’s needs.

If we look at how AB’s identity and landscape have been changing over time, one could easily assume that it will become like other Montenegrin coastal destinations, overrun with masses of tourists or either redesigned to accommodate high-end luxury vacationers. Many Adagors fear that either extreme would ruin its peaceful atmosphere and degrade the ecosystem. AB’s tourism industry hasn’t recovered from the crisis in the 1990s, and, as in many other parts of the country, the local tourist enterprise is looking for foreign investors to help. This has serious implications for AB’s socio-cultural and natural environment. Depending on the type of tourism development an investor envisions, it could heavily alter the landscape by infringing on its social meaning and value and by threatening the already-vulnerable ecosystem. In any scenario, “revitalizing” AB will inevitably clash with images and perceptions that have formed over the years. As we have seen from the bridge and river houses, alterations that affect a place’s character and landscape ultimately shape people’s sense of place and place experience.

Nevertheless, AB’s future does not hinge solely upon outside powers. People inhabiting the place already show how they’re shaping its future. But to positively affect the place’s development, these people may need to re-evaluate the sustainability of their actions. Domestic visitors who claim a plot of land and mark their territory, either by building a house, parking a camper, putting up a tent or constructing a hut, all “love” AB, but this love inevitably leads to

irreversible changes. Changing our environments may be related to power and love; “we change them because we love them, hoping to love them all the more when we have changed them” (Lowenthal in Knudsen et al., 2008, p. 86). Through changing places and asserting our control over them, making them “ours,” we ultimately become even more attached. Altering places in tourism landscapes seems to be a form of self-expression because identity “is intimately related to the places they (people) have created through altering their landscapes” (Huff in Knudsen et al., 2008, p. 34).

Visitors and travelers seek out places that afford a rewarding, rich experience, which very often leads them to places with beautiful landscapes and unscathed natural environments. And, as places become “thinned out, the more, not the less, may selves be led to seek out thick places in which their own personal enrichment can flourish” (Casey, 2001, p. 408). People come to AB for the lovely setting, the peace offered by nature, the healing properties of the water and sun, and the community of people that has gathered over the years. AB seems to represent such a “thick” place in Montenegro, and as it attracts new faces and personalities, its landscape, legacy and identity will continuously evolve.

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION

The scope of tourism is large. One angle in approaching tourism's changing role in a place is to look at the development of place-based narratives. These narratives reveal the importance people attach to various aspects of places, and also perceptions they hold of work, leisure and home. Thus, place identity narratives can be used in ethnographic research to better understand places' histories, development and social significance in an increasingly mobile world.

Socio-economic change complicates a place's social structure and should be understood on many levels (Ireland in Boissevain & Selwyn, 2004). Tourism is only one instigator of such change, but in places that rely heavily on tourism for economic prosperity, it is a highly significant one. Thus, in tourist settings it's important to look at the present and past, in order to better understand how they have developed, i.e. what forces along with the tourism industry have created the place.

Although tourism can damage unique place identities through homogenization processes and exploitation of cultural heritage (Kneafsey, 1998), it seems much more practical to focus on what emerges from tourism. In other words, it can't be entirely bad. Cultures always change and globalization isn't new (Kneafsey, 1998), meaning that places have been adapting to external forces like tourism for a long time. By treating holiday settings as ever-changing spaces, where physical landscapes and social relationships constantly transform, tourism is then just one point in places' histories.

After forty years of development through tourism activity, countless numbers of people have created stories about AB that have defined its character. AB began as an unpopulated island in the 1850s and was rarely visited until 1973. From this year on, the place has been transforming physically, socially, and symbolically. The landscape of forests, river, sea, sand, and sun provide the basis for its appeal. From the very first fishermen who came ashore in search of peace and

abundant catches, to the newest group of youth from the city interested in sun bathing all day and partying all night, this landscape has collected many narratives, adopted many characteristics and is very symbolic of the socio-cultural and political changes that have occurred in Montenegro over the last 150 years.

Socio-political and economic change affects our relationships to places and leads to new ways of sensing and experiencing them. The characteristics and images that were central to AB's identity at the onset of tourism have been transforming alongside changes in the country. In my ethnographic inquiry, I have first described how and why AB's defining characteristics came to be – nature, nudism and tourism. Then, I explained what the main catalysts of change were that challenged and altered these elements – the bridge and the river houses. And finally, by looking at narratives of people's place experience, I analyzed how these catalysts influenced people's sense of place in relation to the three main identity traits. Through this, my attempt has been to better understand life on AB and show how new social activity is emerging and potentially changing the meaning of tourism.

As human beings, we like to be in beautiful places or in pleasant environments that evoke a sense of peace and magnificence (Berleant, 2012). This retreat to the land is not surprising if we consider the exorbitant increase in mass tourism, urbanization and urban sprawl in the 21st century. Since not all of us have the chance to go into beautiful surroundings everyday, we go on holiday. Going to nature is a form of leisure (Berleant, 2012) and many city folks frequently escape to quiet places in the countryside (Bell & Lyall in Coleman & Crang, 2002). Cities can make us feel bad, trapped and oppressed because of their unfit design and lack of natural greenery (Berleant, 2012). Yet, as we flock to the mountains, seaside, lakes and rivers for rejuvenation, we ultimately change these places.

The bridge on AB is a living relic from the 80's that symbolizes development, progress and change. It's a bittersweet reminder of the unintended consequences human developments have on landscapes. The river houses point to the days of deregulation and disorder in the 1990s, when building skyrocketed without planning or authorization. The campers and cafes on the mainland delta are an extension of AB's socio-cultural growth, and represent a growing population of domestic youth seeking out not only alternative holidays, but also alternative lifestyles.

Nature has been a primary motivator to visit AB since the beginning of its history. Even before tourism, local people used it to fish or store their livestock. When tourism came to the scene, it continued building off what nature has given. Nature continues to provide for people what they don't often have at home. People continually seek out quiet places and want to enjoy in AB's natural beauty. By doing so, however, they are essentially destroying the very element that connects them. Although human activity has definitely contributed to some of this degradation, much of it might also be from natural processes. In fact, some experts have said that AB could very well disappear within 100 years. Just as nature created her, it can also take her away (Knezević, 2013).



Figure 21: Erosion of Ada Bojana

What nature can't take away is nudism, but humans can. And we can see that the development of nudism on AB correlates with tourism development. Nudism also goes hand-in-hand with nature, so all three elements are interconnected. A change in one causes changes in the others. Although AB is still defined as a nudist tourist destination, it is no longer exclusively nudist because the island is open to all types of guests. As the significance of nudism shifted, so did the type of tourism. Even though nudism will always be part of AB's legacy, it may lose importance in the future and alter people's place experience if nudist space continues to shrink.

Above all, the role and meaning of tourism has greatly changed on AB. While the island retains much of its tourism characteristics through its' modest structures and nudist policy, the houses on the Bojana River have brought in a new kind of visitor and expanded the location of tourist activity. Firstly, AB has spread beyond the island and tourism looks differently in these other areas of the landscape. The island and its nudist legacy serve as the focal point of AB, but visitors continue to connect it with mainland areas. Secondly, these areas could become more home-like than holiday-like.

Places are not fixed points with strict boundaries and tourism does not involve a standard set of activities and practices. Rather, places and tourist activities represent a fluid, dynamic flow of interactions that are performed spontaneously (Coleman & Crang, 2002). As tourism draws various individuals to a landscape, the place becomes even more complex. People on AB constantly negotiate and reformulate its identity through their activities and stories. The holiday space is a complex network of positions and social spaces; all people are situated based on their "age, income, race, class, gender, marital status, and so on" (Heimtun, 2007, p. 123).

Through day-to-day interaction we continuously create meaning in places and develop a sense of self through our environments (Williams & McIntyre in Uysal et al., 2012). Each of us develops unique relationships with places, explaining why "a place acquires varied and competing

social and political meaning as a specific locale becomes associated over time with particular activities, interests and social groups” (Williams & McIntyre in Uysal et al., 2012, p. 214). Because we identify so strongly with places, but are increasingly leading mobile lives, we need to look at how people create and define identities and lifestyles that are adjusting to new concepts of place and society (Meethan in Meethan et al., 2006).

After discovering AB and turning it into a nudist holiday destination that catered mainly to Western European guests, the place today serves a wider range of purposes and holds a much broader scope of social and cultural meanings than it did before. As domestic guests dominate the scene and nudism gets slowly pushed to the side, the peace and quiet of the landscape continue to pull people from the country’s capital and from more crowded seaside destinations. The meaning of islandness, tourism and nudism continue to change, bringing new identities to the fore.

Encompassing this small place, events happening on a larger scale provide the social and political context within which all of this change has been occurring. The breakup of Yugoslavia beginning in 1991 was arguably the single most dramatic interruption to life on AB, and the shifts in its identity, landscape and image are at least partially dependent on it. It is difficult to say what would have happened to life and tourism on the island if the social, economic and political situation in the country had remained stable.

As globalization causes the density of time and space to increase, places all over the world are changing (Massey in Oakes & Price, 2008). On a global scale we can see the effects of this through increased nationalisms and regional separatist movements. If we look on a small scale, such as AB, we can also see how people are on a quest to find places where they belong to and feel well. Although AB began as a holiday spot for nudist tourists, it is also turning into an alternative home of sorts, for people seeking a different life.

Thus, by examining our relationships with places, and paying attention to all their complex elements, we can better understand ourselves. “If we pay heed to these relations between locations and spaces, between spaces and space, we get a clue to help us in thinking of the relation of man and space” (Heidegger, 1971, p. 4). Through this understanding we can better plan for the future and change places in more sustainable and inclusive ways.

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<http://www.wttc.org/research/economic-impact-research/country-reports/m/montenegro/>

CURRICULUM VITAE

EDUCATION

University of Vienna & Ljubljana

October 2011 - 2013

CREOLE: Cultural Differences & Transnational Processes (<http://creole.univie.ac.at>)

A joint Master's program in Social & Cultural Anthropology at 6 European universities

My coursework emphasized identity processes, global mobility, and visual ethnography. My MA thesis is on tourism development on Ada Bojana, Montenegro, and shall be completed in January 2014.

Malta Summer Field School

July 2011

Research in Applied Anthropology (<http://www.anthropologyfieldschool.org>)

A 25-day field school on the island of Gozo, Malta

Each researcher was required to write an ethnographic paper. I inquired about inclusion and exclusion of foreigners in a local Gozitan cafe. I investigated ideas of integration, tolerance and cross-cultural communication. A photographic essay accompanied my essay.

Oxford TEFL Training

May 2006

Trinity College (<http://www.oxfordtefl.com>), Prague, Czech Republic

I earned a TEFL certificate validated by Trinity College through a 4-week program in the Czech Republic. I completed over 155 hours of input and teaching sessions with teachers, foreign students, and colleagues.

University of San Francisco

May 2004

Bachelor of Arts in Political Science (emphasis in European Studies)

Minor in German Language (one-year study at Ludwig Maximilians University (see below).

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Project Manager

May 2013 –

Green Culture Conference 2014

The conference promotes environmental sustainability in the arts and cultural sectors in Southeast Europe and will be held in Montenegro in May 2014. I coordinate planning activities with the director, including fundraising, creating website content, managing social media sites, drafting conference schedule, and networking with regional partners.

English Language Trainer

June 2012 – September 2013

ABCi Austria (<http://www.austriabci.at>)

ABCi is a non-profit organization that brings native English speakers to middle schools throughout the Austrian countryside. As a head trainer, I led weeklong intensive English programs for teenagers, focusing on travel, culture, pronunciation, sport, and health.

Intercultural Communication & English Language Trainer

May 2012 – June 2013

Barabara Groessl (<http://www.active-learning.at>)

I led workshops in English to prepare high school students in Austria for their final graduation exams. Topics included cultural differences and cross-cultural communication, with a heavy emphasis on stereotypes, diversity and tolerance.

English Editor and Proofreader

September 2006 –

I have worked on various texts in the Social Sciences (Phd dissertations, scholarly articles for journal submissions, and edited book volumes), web content, marketing materials, fiction and poetry.

Program Assistant

August 2009 — April 2011

University of San Francisco, California

I supported two graduate programs in the School of Business with student affairs, faculty support, curriculum design, course scheduling, faculty contracts, admissions and event preparation. I organized and led student trips to Las Vegas and New York.

Assistant Editor

January – August 2008

Cord Magazine (<http://www.cordmagazine.com>), Belgrade, Serbia

In addition to editing, I accompanied journalists on assignments to record interviews and later transcribed them. The magazine covers social, political and economic issues in Serbia and focuses heavily on Serbia's relations with the global community.

EFL Teacher

September 2006 – June 2007

Anglo American High School, Belgrade, Serbia

As a TEFL instructor, I prepared students for their language exams so that they could continue onto higher education abroad. I also served as the home teacher and coordinated the school magazine.

Personal Assistant

August 2005 - March 2006

Michelle Vignes, San Francisco, California

I assisted documentary photographer Michelle Vignes personally and professionally. Mainly, I helped her with household chores and provided physical and emotional support. I also helped with organizing & archiving photographs and exhibition openings.

Photography & Research Assistant

August 2004 – 2005

Jim Doukas (<http://jdoukas.com>), San Francisco, CA

As a laboratory and travel assistant to fine art photographer Jim Doukas, I developed and printed photographs, organized photo sessions with models and collaborating artists, carried out field research in Guatemala and Baja California, and prepared exhibitions.

El Salvador Study Tour

June 2004

University of San Francisco and La Universidad Centro Americana

I carried out month-long field research to study the political, economic, social and cultural issues of El Salvador. My final paper focused on the transitioning society after the civil war.

Study Exchange, Munich, Germany

September 2002 - July 2003

I continued my Politics studies at Ludwig Maximillians Univeristaet while also learning the German language. Courses were taught in German and English.

Languages – I am fluent in Serbian/Montenegrin and German, and have basic Spanish comprehension.