All-inclusive hotels’ packaging of the northern coast of Jamaica: creating and maintaining an environmental bubble

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Abstract

This study contributes to the existing discussion about international tourism by exploring the role of all-inclusive hotels in the creation of an environmental bubble on the northern coast of Jamaica. Moreover, it examines what type of Jamaica is being sold by the hotels and who is included and who is excluded from the environmental bubble. The purpose of this study is to analyze how all-inclusive hotels on the northern coast of Jamaica are selling their travel packages. In order to do that, this study makes a qualitative media analysis of digital website advertisement from all-inclusive hotel’s websites. Social scientists agree that one characteristic of all-inclusive type of tourism is the separation between guest and host. I argue that the website advertisements by all-inclusive hotels are contributing to this separation.

Keywords: Jamaica, local community, all-inclusive hotel, ‘environmental bubble’, websites
# Table of contents

- Introduction ........................................................................................................... 4
- Literature review .................................................................................................. 6
  - A definition of tourism ...................................................................................... 6
  - The creation of an environmental bubble ......................................................... 6
- Tourism trends in Jamaica ..................................................................................... 8
- Theoretical framework .......................................................................................... 10
  - The pleasure periphery theory ......................................................................... 11
  - The purification of space theory ....................................................................... 12
- Methodology .......................................................................................................... 14
- Implementation ...................................................................................................... 15
- Findings and discussion ....................................................................................... 17
  - Theme 1: Reggae as a tourist product ................................................................. 18
  - Theme 2: Comfort combined with strangeness .................................................. 20
  - Theme 3: All-inclusive and the exclusion of the local community ....................... 22
- Frame 1: Jamaica - a tropical paradise ................................................................. 25
- Frame 2: Racial representation .......................................................................... 26
- Conclusion .............................................................................................................. 29
- References ............................................................................................................ 31
Introduction

There is something special about going online to book the next trip to a new destination. Seeing photos of happy families, white empty beaches and exotic looking parties makes us visualize this new place and wonder how it would be to spend our vacation there. The growing emergence of the “all-inclusive” travel-packages has made travel easier and more comfortable, particularly for people in Western developed countries. Staying in an all-inclusive hotel often means that as a guest, one is guaranteed security, one has access to a private beach, varied choice of international restaurants, souvenirs shops inside the hotel, private transportation and entertainment every night (McFarlane-Morris 2019: 2). This may sound comfortable and convenient but the structure of this type of tourism comes with complications, it might put the tourist in something that social scientists have called the ‘environmental bubble’. This theory, coined by Erik Cohen in 1972, indicates that there are organized barriers like heavy security presence, souvenirs shops and restaurants owned by the all-inclusive hotels, that will keep the tourists within their environmental bubble and thus isolate them from the local community and its members. This separation is created in response to the psychological need of familiarity and comfort of tourists when experiencing a new place. The all-inclusive hotel industry, through their services, provides an experience of a new place through the protective walls of the bubble. This has consequences for the local community (Cohen 1972: 166).

Travelling back and forth to Jamaica for several years and doing a five-month long internship on the island through Stockholm University, I got the opportunity to experience two complete different sides of Jamaica. On one side, I was a part of the local community and its members, meeting Jamaican people and experiencing Jamaican culture on an everyday basis. I was working with Jamaicans, eating typical Jamaican food in Jamaican owned restaurants, renting a room in Jamaican woman’s house and using the public transportation system every day. Two months later, I was a guest in a luxury all-inclusive resort in Ocho Rios, a city on the northern coast of the island famous for tourism, completely isolated from what had been my previous perception of Jamaica. Being a guest at the resort included different amenities, for instance, access to five different restaurants offering international food, access to the hotel’s private beach with hired guards whose mission was to ensure that no one outside the hotel could trespass, private drivers ready to drive us wherever we wished to go and entertainment every night, hearing pop music and Abba songs playing while unlimited drinks were served.
The shift between these two contrasts of Jamaica made me wonder: How is the separation between tourists and the local community created and what type of Jamaica is being sold by the hotels? Who is included and who is excluded in the environmental bubble?

The purpose of this study is to analyze how all-inclusive hotels on the northern coast of Jamaica are selling their travel packages. In order to do that, this study makes a qualitative media analysis of digital advertisement from all-inclusive hotels’ websites. I suggest that way all-inclusive hotels represent Jamaica, by using specific words and pictures on their websites, can attract a certain type of tourist. This kind of representation can contribute to increase the already existing separation between tourists and the local community. This study examines the representations of Jamaica and the products and services being sold by the all-inclusive hotels and who is being included and not included in these representations. It does not examine who is included or not included in the actual hotel work, but it does discuss potential implications that could come with this form of tourism.

In the late nineteenth century, the first hotels were built on Jamaica and, although still being limited, the tourist industry started to become organized (Dunn 2002: 4). Since the 1980s, the number of tourists has exceeded one million in a year and in 2019, 4.3 million tourists visited Jamaica with the majority going to the northern coast (Jamaica Tourist Board 2018). The white-sand beaches and pleasant weather of the northern coast of Jamaica has made cities like Montego Bay, Ocho Rios and Negril the main destinations for tourists and will therefore be the focus for this thesis. With this thesis, I hope to make a small contribution to the already existing, but small, research of the environmental bubble theory by Cohen (1972). By connecting this theory to the case of the all-inclusive hotel industry on the northern coast of Jamaica, using a qualitative media analysis of hotel websites, I hope to fill a gap in this field.

This study is divided into five main parts. The section below contains previous research and existing debates regarding international tourism and the specific case of Jamaica. Theories and concepts about international tourism and tourism in southern developing countries are discussed in the second part of this study. Following, the third part is an explanation of the method being used in order to answer my research questions and how it is implemented in this study. Finally, the fourth part is a description and analysis of the results followed by a conclusion where a recap of the main ideas is presented, as well as a condensed version of the core arguments related to the research questions.
Literature review

The separation between the all-inclusive hotel industry and the local community has been identified as a problem by various social scientists (Akis 2011, Jordan 2009 & McFarlane Morris 2019). In this dissertation, particular attention is given to the main ideas of three leading authors within the field. In the first subcategory, a short definition of tourism presented by Page (2011), who is one of the leading scholars in the field of tourism, is shortly explained to demonstrate how tourism is understood in this dissertation. To narrow it down, I have focused on one of the major theories regarding international tourism and the most relevant to this research, the environmental bubble theory by Cohen (1972). The second subsection is focused on a research by Dunn (2002) about tourism in Jamaica, particularly the all-inclusive hotel industry on the northern coast.

A definition of tourism

The international concept of tourism is being defined as the use of a person’s spare time to travel to or to visit a different place. Many people associate to have the possibility to travel or not with the quality of life, particularly people in the Western developed countries (Page 2011: 1). Phenomena like globalization and modernization have made it easier and cheaper for a person in the developed part of the world to travel due to the rise of low-cost airlines and easy access of booking travel-related products online (Page 2011: 2). Globalization has contributed to the growth of international enterprises being in control of parts of their host countries economic development. In the case of tourism, large multinational hotel chains use developing countries as the base for their tourist products (Page 2011: 20). Tourism in developing countries often indicates that tourists live with a much higher standard than the local population who often is working for a low wage with bad working conditions. This inequality puts many developing countries trapped in a situation of having an exploiting relationship to tourism. Low skills jobs and cheap labor are exchanged with the profits of tourism and the economic benefits are being returned to the host country of the multinational company (Page 2011: 21).

The creation of an environmental bubble

“When the experience become too strange, he will shrink back” is a quote by Cohen (1972: 166), a professor and researcher of social anthropology and tourism studies, about the characteristics of a tourist. In his research, Cohen (1972) proposes a general theoretical
approach towards international tourism. Since the aim of this thesis is to investigate the separation between the all-inclusive hotel tourists and the local community, the ‘environmental bubble’ theory is the most essential element of this thesis.

Cohen argues that the elements of ‘novelty’ and ‘strangeness’ are essential to tourism but most people need something familiar around them to enjoy the new environment, they need the environmental bubble. By that, he means that the majority of tourists require a strong base of familiarity in order to feel safe and to enjoy the strangeness of what they are experiencing. The base of familiarity in this case would include for example hotels, transportation and food which puts the tourist in an environmental bubble, a safe place where the person can function and interact in a similar way to his or her home habitat. The tourist views the people, place and culture of that society through his or hers ‘environmental bubble’ with little interaction with the local community of the host country (Cohen 1972: 166). A definition of the term ‘host country’ is “a country where a company that is based in another country has business activities” (Cambridge Business English Dictionary n.d). Aramberri (2001: 746) build upon Cohen’s concept of the environmental bubble claiming that “hosts are no longer hosts, just service providers, and guests are no longer guests, just costumers”, indicating that there is a problem within the mass tourism system of isolating the tourists from authentic experiences in the host country.

In his research, Cohen (1972: 167) divides mass tourism, which is being defined as a form of tourism that involves a large number of people going to the same resort, into two roles connected to the environmental bubble: the organized mass tourist and the individual mass tourist. Cohen argues that these types of tourists buy a travel-package that is being fixed from advance and stays almost exclusively in the environmental bubble during their travel. Cohen (1972: 168) calls these types of tourists for ‘institutionalized tourist roles’ which means that they are dealt with by the ‘tourist establishment’. The tourist establishment is being defined as the actors taking care of the tourist from beginning to end in forms of transportation, food and accommodation. These actors from the tourist establishment are, for example, hotels, air-line companies and travel agencies (Cohen 1972: 169). The package sold to the tourist by the tourist establishment offers an experience of novelty and strangeness from the protective walls of the bubble which Cohen (1972: 172) describes as a paradox since the main motive for tourism is the desire of experiencing something different from home. According to Cohen, this decreases within the ‘institutionalized tourism’. Cohen presents the environmental bubble
as being negative for the local community and its members. Moreover, he also suggests that it is created by the international tourist establishment for their own gaining.

What is missing in his research is the possible discussion of that perhaps the environmental bubble might also be created by the residents of the host country in order to protect their culture and identity from the consequences of mass tourism. Akis (2011: 294) argues that mass tourism has significant effects on cultural elements of the host country, for example, population structure, traditional lifestyle, changing in occupations and local values. Page (2010: 314) proposes that mass tourism, even though it can create an income, can lead to local and indigenous culture becoming commodified in forms of their art being sold by multi-national enterprises or cultural performance being required at the hotels by the employees. The possibility of this ‘counter-environmental bubble’ could be considered in Cohen’s (1972) research to broaden this initial perspective.

Tourism trends in Jamaica

Dunn (2002) did a research combining quantitative and qualitative research methods analyzing the public perception of the tourist industry in Jamaica. Dunn analyzes the industry by addressing different issues such as crime and violence, tourism and the economy, all-inclusive properties and hotel-owned business. The book contains gathered data from Jamaicans about their own perception of tourism as well as important information on the parts of the island that I have investigated in this study. Looking at other literature, the study of Dunn stands out by using a method which could provide a general perception of tourism in Jamaica by Jamaicans themselves. Dunn has gathered data by, using questionnaire survey for 1.025 Jamaican people divided in different focus groups like age, location, sex and level of involvement in tourism (Dunn 2002: 7).

The findings of Dunn’s questionnaire survey show that 56% of the Jamaican interviewees were dependent or had family being dependent on the tourist industry, the majority of these people lived on the northern coast, where the majority of the resorts were located (Dunn 2002: 11) Despite the big dependency on tourism, most interviewees believe that the benefits for their community are limited, 38 % of the interviewees believe that tourism is not providing any benefits at all and 36% believe that there are few benefits, which leaves only 26% feeling that their community is benefited from the tourism industry. In my opinion, the most significant findings in Dunn’s (2002: 12) research is the perception of who benefits most of
the tourism industry where a big part of the interviewees have the perception that the owners of the all-inclusive hotels, overseas companies and airlines are the ones benefitting the most. This idea of Dunn is similar to the theory of environmental bubble by Cohen regarding the existing separation between tourists and the local community and its members.

Dunn’s work contributes to the theory of the environmental bubble by highlighting the issues of visitor harassment and crime in Jamaica as well as the existing hotel-owned business, for example souvenir shops located within the hotel premises. Dunn presents the issue of visitor harassment and crime as limitations for sustainability within the tourism industry in Jamaica. Police reports show that between 1996-1998, a total of 718 crimes affecting tourists were reported (Dunn 2002: 6). Dunn’s research of visitor harassment in Negril, located on the northern coast of Jamaica, indicates that tourist harassment crosses social and economic barriers and starts from the airport until the tourist leaves the island (Dunn 2002: 68). Dunn brings up different factors that are identified as sources of harassment, for instance, the transportation system. Since many of the all-inclusive hotels in Jamaica provide the guests with private transportation, often through modern and luxury taxis, from the airport and to the hotels, the local taxis face hard competition. The competition can be stressful for tourists if they are not aware of it and put the local taxi driver in a desperate situation where he may harass the visitor by, for example, overcharging (Dunn 2002: 69). According to Dunn’s research, harassment also occurs when tourists walk on the streets or on the beach and are met by people offering different goods and services or by people begging for money. Another source of harassment according to Dunn’s research is the treatment of black people in resorts. Almost half of the interviewees had the perception of black and Jamaican tourists receiving worse treatment than overseas white tourists. To be a black tourist was perceived as receiving inferior treatment and suffering humiliation by the hotel staff at the all-inclusive hotels (Dunn 2002: 20).

Moreover, still according to Dunn, the existing hotel-owned business in Jamaica create a problem for the local vendors which could contribute to the existing separation between tourist and local residents. In Dunn’s research, he interviewed male and female craft vendors in Montego Bay and Ocho Rios and got the result that the majority of the vendors have the feeling of being seen as “second class”, meaning that the government helps the hotels with their advertising but not the local vendors. The majority of the interviewees had the feeling that the large hotels taking over the local craft vending and putting them out of business by
for example establishing large craft stores within the hotel premises with products cheaply bought from local craft vendors instead of encouraging the tourists to visit the local craft market (Dunn 2002: 28).

Both Cohen (1972) and Dunn (2002) are suggesting that the ones benefitting from the environmental bubble are the owners of the all-inclusive hotels that leave the local community excluded from the bubble with little benefits. They both mention the tourist establishments like, the hotel-owned craft shops, as being contributors for the separation between tourists and the local community. Dunn brings up the issue of visitor harassment and crime, coming from the host country, which could be a reason of the high security level in the all-inclusive hotels and therefore a contribution to the creation of the environmental bubble. Akis (2011), as mentioned, also presents an example of the host-country contributing to the creation of the environmental bubble with the case of the residents trying to protect their local culture and identity. This perspective is not mentioned by Cohen who presents the environmental bubble as only being created by the tourist establishment, not the members of the host country.

**Theoretical framework**

Two theories that have been building and contributing on Cohen’s (1972) foundations of the environmental bubble effects in the Caribbean tourism space are investigated in this thesis. The first theory investigated is the ‘pleasure periphery’ theory of Weaver (1988: 319), indicating that the mass tourism industry has become the dominant economic activity in the Caribbean and have turned the region into a ‘leisure-supply’ region. This means that the Caribbean countries has become destinations for western tourists to spend their spare time with little interaction with the local community. The second theory investigated in this thesis is the ‘purification of space’ theory by Sibley (1995). This theory is helpful when analyzing the websites of the all-inclusive hotels since it suggests that there is an existing dislike towards mixing people from different categories, for example, tourists and members from the local community. Contributing to the environmental bubble theory, Sibley (1995: 409) argues that the creation of the separation between tourists and the local community is due to the dislike of mixing people, which has resulted in the implementation of boundaries to keep the tourists separated from the local community and its members.
The pleasure periphery theory
In the Caribbean, agriculture has been the dominant economic activity since the European colonization. The pleasure periphery theory (Weaver 1988), emerging from the ‘underdevelopment theory’ by Frank (1967), indicates that agricultural production has been replaced by tourism. But, according to the theory, tourism has the same structure of a ‘plantation system’.

The theory of underdevelopment is suggesting that the reason why some countries have developed slower than others is due to exploitation and the unequal distribution of resources. In order to understand a country’s development, the economic and social history have to be considered (Oliverio 2015: 185). In the theory of underdevelopment, the subordinated exploited countries are called ‘peripheries’, they are being exploited by the dominating countries, called the ‘core’ countries. In the colonization process, Africa, Asia and America were in a global economic system dominated by Europe where Europe set the terms for their colonies and its population by establishing the plantation system (Weaver 1988: 321).

Beckford (1972: 7) presented the plantation system as being a major factor for a country’s underdevelopment in the Caribbean. The reason for this, according to him, is due to the characteristics of the plantation type of production power to extend beyond agriculture and affecting all socio-economic aspects of society. Beckford (1972: 15) argues that the plantation system can influence all aspects of human life because it is fully integrated with the economic and social sectors of that country. His criteria to identify the plantation systems are based on considerations of the plantation share of the national economy such employment, capital, income, land cultivation, plantation, contribution to government revenues and a country’s foreign exchange (Beckford 1972: 13). The Caribbean is the region with the greatest concentration of plantation system in the world and the problem of being a plantation society is bigger in sugar islands, such as Jamaica (Beckford 1972: 15). According to the pleasure periphery theory by Weaver (1988: 319), the tourist industry, just like the plantation system, has the power to affect the economic and social development of the host country.

This theory indicates that due to the large emergence of tourism, many developing regions, like the Caribbean, have become leisure-supply regions, destinations for the spending of spare time and vacation for tourists from Western developed countries.
As Weaver explains, tourism emerged in the Caribbean in 1945 as an alternative to the agricultural sector and was easily adopted due to the existing ‘core-periphery’ structure in the region. In his theory, Weaver (1988: 320) compares the modern mass tourism industry with the plantation agriculture production as having similar structures due to both of them including the dominant role of foreign investment, ownership and management. Both industries also require seasonal employment, a large number of local workers and is based on providing activities that satisfy external needs rather than local needs. Weaver (1988: 321) argues that the mass tourism industry maintains underdevelopment in the Caribbean due to the core-periphery relation.

According to Weaver (1988: 329), tourism is one of the few economic options for small peripheries. Strategies should therefore not be implemented to eliminate tourism but to improve the inclusion and benefaction of the local community by including local resources and local capital. The pleasure periphery theory, similar to the theory of the environmental bubble by Cohen (1972), indicates that the structure of the mass type of tourism is preventing interaction between the local community and the tourist industry. Weaver (1988: 330) suggests that by supporting for example, locally owned restaurants and shops, the benefits of the host-country and the impacts of tourism could be improved.

The purification of space theory
The ‘enclave’ is an area that is separated from the rest of society. Much similar to being inside the environmental bubble, one experience the world of the host country from the secure walls of the bubble. ‘Enclave tourism’ is the type of tourism that takes place within the bubble, separated from the community outside (Page 2011: 21). Enclave tourism is a way to segregate the tourists from the local residents. The enclaves are closed and contain the services that the tourists need, such as restaurants, beaches and souvenir shops which give the tourists little reason to leave the hotel (McFarlane Morris 2019: 5). Enclave tourism, especially common in developing countries, differ from the type of tourism done in the Global North, where there is more interaction between the tourist and the local community and where the all-inclusive package deal is not the general idea of tourism (Jordan 2008: 295).

The purification of space theory, coined by Sibley (1995), indicates that all-inclusive tourism, also called enclave tourism, is characterized by the implementation of specific boundaries created to keep out “the different kind of people who threaten disorder” (Sibley 1995: 46).
The core of the purification of space theory relates to the concept of the environmental bubble by Cohen (1972). Both theories indicate that there are organized barriers, like heavy security presence, created by the all-inclusive hotels that will strengthen the separation between tourists and the local community. The term ‘purification’ is used by Sibley (1995: 409) to suggest an existing feeling of dislike or hostility towards the mixing of people from different categories, for example form different socio-economic classes. In order to gain a deeper understanding of the purification of space theory, it is helpful to understand the meaning of the concept of the ‘others’. The concept of the others is often discussed in tourism research and focuses on the separation between local residents and tourists and the potential attitude from travelers romanticizing or look down on the others as being ‘exotic’ (Woosnam, Maruyama, Boley 2016: 568). Urry (2011: 7) argues that the economic and social differences between the tourist and the majority of the local residents contributes to the way these actors look upon each other.

The ‘tourist gaze’ refers to the expectations that tourists have on local residents when they participate in tourism. It is the search for having an ‘authentic experience’ that is different from home. This results in the local residents often act according to the ‘gaze’ due to financial benefaction, meaning to act or dress in a certain way in order to meet the tourist expectation (Urry 2011: 8). Cohen argues that the main purpose of mass tourism is the visiting of attractions, no matter if they are genuine or contrived. The tourist attractions are transformed and manipulated to be suitable for the mass tourists and as a result, they lose their originality (Cohen 1972: 170). An example brought up by Cohen (1972: 170) are Hawaiian dancing girls. He argues that the Hawaiian dancing girls have to be dressed in a certain way in order to fit into the tourist expectation. They should dress decent to fit the public eye but at the same time remain attractive and exotic. The expectations of tourists are affected by the advertisement of tourist establishment such as tour operators, hotels, travel agencies and local government, contributing to the creation of the tourist gaze (Urry 2011: 10).

Connecting the pleasure periphery theory (Weaver 1988) and the purification of space theory (Sibley 1995) to the environmental bubble theory (Cohen 1972), the ‘others’ are being viewed as a “different kind of people” and are interesting for the tourists due to their search for an authentic experience. But, according to Sibley and his theory on the purification of space, the mass tourism industry does not let the tourists experience the destination by interacting with the host country. Cohen (1972) argues that in order for a tourist to have an authentic
experience in the new destination, organized mass tourists’ activities needs to be rejected. His argument is that mass tourism involves a type of structure that is built to separate tourism from the local community. He means that another way of doing tourism is needed in order to make the benefits of this exchange stronger. Urry on the other hand, argues that the existence of the environmental bubble allows many people to visit places which they otherwise would not. He argues that even though the interaction is limited within the bubble, at least some contact with ‘the others’ and with the unusual places take place. So, in this sense the environmental bubble would enable this type of contact (Urry, 2011: 7).

In this analysis, I have looked through the lenses of these theories and concepts when using a qualitative media analysis of different all-inclusive hotel websites in order to understand weather and how the website advertisements contribute to the creation of an environmental bubble, what type of Jamaica is being sold by these hotels and who is included and who is excluded from it. The next chapter of this thesis deals with the methodology applied to obtain answers to this study’s questions.

Methodology

Qualitative media analysis is a modern method used to study mass media, including digital media such as television, radio, social media, newspaper, websites and more, based on qualitative data collection and analysis (Altheide & Schneider 2013: Ch 2 p.2). A qualitative media analysis is a way of obtaining data to measure frequency, extent and level and meaning of media, it is needed in order to understand how media is constructed and being used to affect the masses (Altheide & Schneider 2013: Ch 2 p.3). The key categories in most qualitative studies of media are meaning and emphasis. “Communication formats” are the concepts used to capture the meaning and emphasis of media and are called frames, themes and discourses. In mass media, the communication formats refer to selection, organization and presentation of the information of the media being analyzed (Altheide & Schneider 2013: Ch 3 p.12). I use these communication formats as tools when analyzing the websites of all-inclusive hotels. In what follows, I present an explanation of some important communication formats.

Frames determine in which way a subject will be discussed and what kind of discourse that will follow, “frames focus on what will be discussed, how it will be discussed, and, above all,
how it will not be discussed” (Altheide & Schneider 2013: Ch 3 p.13). The basis of framing suggests the way something is presented to the target affects how the target will process the information. Frames function like borders that determine what will be mentioned and not mentioned. For example, to discuss “tourism” as an “exploiting industry” as opposed to a “fun spending of your spare time” will affect the way of discussing the subject and what kind of discourse that will follow (Altheide & Schneider 2013: Ch 3 p.14). Framing tourism as an “exploiting industry” it is more likely that a discourse of “globalization”, “working conditions” and “core-periphery relation” will follow. On the other hand, to frame tourism as a “fun spending of your spare time”, it is more likely followed by a discourse of “relaxation”, “beach” and “tourist attractions”.

While frames work to identify, locate and label the information and are the focus and boundaries for discussing a specific event, themes can be viewed as ‘super-frames’ or viewed as a “point of view” or “angle”. Themes are the general definition of media. For example, within the field of politics, it is common to use the “underdog theme” in a political campaign. Within the field of tourism, a common strategy to attract tourism is to use the “authentic theme”. Themes and frames are related, and different frames can be used within the same theme (Altheide & Schneider 2013: Ch 3 p.14). The term discourse refers to the specific words and direct message of media and can be tracked in both frames and themes. In qualitative media analysis, the approach to the study of discourse is particularly focused on terminology and on how points of view will appear and change the meaning of the media. For example, “safety” is a common frame of tourism. Tracking the discourse on “safety” in a document will give meaning to that specific frame and reflect the general definition or point of view of the document (Altheide & Schneider 2013: Ch 7 p.3). In qualitative media analysis method, frames, themes and discourse are essential to analyze media (Altheide & Schneider 2013: Ch 3 p.16).

**Implementation**

The steps in doing a qualitative media analysis moves from finding and gaining access to media, collecting data from them and analyzing the data. (Altheide & Schneider 2013: Ch 3 p.17). “The major emphasis of qualitative document analysis is to capture the meaning, emphasis and themes of messages and to understand organization and process of how they are presented” (Altheide & Schneider 2013: Ch 3 p.17).
In order to do a qualitative media analysis, it is necessary to include a wide range of messages in the samples. Due to the time limits of this thesis, I will use what is called a ‘progressive theoretical sampling’ which means that the selection of specific material is based on gaining information related to my research question (Altheide & Schneider 2013: Ch 3 p.17). The specific problem that will be investigated in this case is how all-inclusive hotels on the northern coast of Jamaica are selling their travel packages in order to understand the role of all-inclusive hotel in the creation of an environmental bubble. Moreover, investigate what type of Jamaica is being sold by the hotels and who is included and who is excluded in the bubble. In order to answer my research questions, I have chosen to analyze hotels websites. The material was gathered among hotels with a focus on exclusiveness and luxury and one hotel that focus on affordability. In order get a broad collection of data I chose to analyze different types of hotels. I have analyzed the websites by nine all-inclusive hotels located on the northern coast of Jamaica in the cities of Ocho Rios, Montego Bay and Negril. The hotels are selected due to their geographic location on the northern coast and being all-inclusive. The key words that I have used in finding the sources are: Jamaica, “all-inclusive” hotel, Negril, Montego Bay and Ocho Rios.

This analysis is based on the three important communication formats used when doing a qualitative media analysis: themes, frames and discourse. I created a protocol which has been my tool in order to collect data and to understand and interpret the websites. The protocol is divided into three categories and seven items. The categories used in the protocol are: 1) Themes of the website advertisement 2) Framings of the destinations 3) Discourse used to describe Jamaica. The findings and result of this analysis are divided into themes and frames, with the discourses being imbedded within these two categories. I used seven items that contribute to the meaning of the categories which are the following: a) The name of the hotel b) The location of the hotel c) What actions take place in the website advertisement? d) Who are the figures shown on the website? e) What environment is shown on the website? f) Who is the target for the website advertisement? g) What provided services are outlined on the website? 1

The information about the three categories and seven items was found on the websites of the hotels. Some of the information was accessible directly on the frontpage of the website while

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1 The full analysis protocol is available on request if there is an interest to see that part of my study Contact victoriaericsson@hotmail.com for access
some information was found in subcategories on the websites. I have analyzed both texts and pictures but will not use the pictures in the protocol or in the results due to copyright reasons. The information gained from the hotel websites does not have a date or author. I have chosen to anonymize the names of the hotels. The real hotel names are therefore not presented in this study and are removed from the reference list. I have collected information about each category and item for the selected hotels, placed the information in the protocol, analyzed the gathered information by making summaries and comparisons for each category and studies them with the help of the main theories of this thesis, the environmental bubble (Cohen 1972), pleasure periphery (Weaver 1988), and purification of space (1995). The categories were implemented when analyzing the websites, the protocol was my tool and was used when writing the description and results of my findings. The final steps of the analysis contain the presentation of the data analyzed, to compare the results and key elements and to make a summary with a focus on themes, frames and discourse (Altheide & Schneider 2013: Ch p. 29).

I have chosen to analyze three hotels in each of the cities Montego Bay, Ocho Rios and Negril. These hotels have different sizes and prices. My hope was to gain a general idea of the all-inclusive tourism industry on the northern coast of the island. The three hotels being analyzed located in Montego Bay are: Hotel 1, Hotel 2 and Hotel 3. The hotels located in Ocho Rios are: Hotel 4, Hotel 5, Hotel 6. In Negril, the hotel being analyzed are: Hotel 7, Hotel 8, Hotel 9. In what follows, my findings about the websites and their connection to the environmental bubble will be presented.

Findings and discussion

This essay investigates the creation of the environmental bubble on the northern coast of Jamaica by analyzing how different all-inclusive hotels are selling their travel package. I suggest that by presenting Jamaica in a specific way, it attracts a certain type of tourist that moves within the mass-tourism industry which in turn is strengthening the power of the environmental bubble. As explained in previous section of this thesis, this part contains an analysis of the collected data based on the three important communication formats, themes, frames and discourse, found on the hotel’s websites. The discourse is being embedded in the first two.

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2 The presented hotel names are pseudonyms.
When doing the analysis, I have looked through the lenses of the environmental bubble theory (Cohen 1972), the pleasure periphery theory and (Weaver 1988) purification of space (Sibley 1995) theory in order to answer my research question. I have also used more recent ideas that has been developing the theory of Cohen. But, as will be shown, the material analyzed indicates that the idea of an existing environmental bubble still is accurate regarding contemporary all-inclusive tourism on Jamaica.

As explained in the previous chapter, themes are the general idea or hypothesis of the document being analyzed while frames function like borders that determine what will be mentioned and not mentioned in the document. The discourses have been imbedded and both sections in order to find the meaning and direct message of the website advertisement.

The first part of the analysis contains a summary of the overall themes found in the hotel’s website advertisement. As will be shown, the first main theme found is the use of Jamaican culture as way for the hotels to attract tourists. The second theme presented is wellness and comfort, indicating that by giving the tourists the feeling of novelty and strangeness but within a safe bubble of familiarity, the needs of the organized mass tourist are fulfilled. The third theme discovered on the website is that being a big all-inclusive hotel, compared to being a small one, seems to go hand in hand with the exclusion of the local community in the website advertisements. The second part of the analysis is a collection of the frames used to present Jamaica and the specific destination where the hotels are located. The common frame used on the website is to portray Jamaica as “tropical paradise” with white empty beaches where one can relax and enjoy one’s vacation in privacy, separated from the local community and its members. Another frame is racial representation where a big majority of the photos illustrate white middle-aged tourists with little representation of black people.

Theme 1: Reggae as a tourist product

One theme that the analyzed hotel-websites have in common is the offering of “the real Jamaican experience” to tourists, in forms of words and photos. In different ways, a big majority of the hotels are using the culture of Jamaica as a way of selling their all-inclusive tourist products by, for example, using Jamaican slang, Bob Marley, the Rastafarian culture and reggae as will be shown below.
On the website, Hotel 2 in Montego Bay present a visit at the hotel as an “an authentic Jamaican experience” together with the using of local Jamaican slang like “Irie”, meaning “good” or “pleasant”, and “Mobay”, meaning Montego Bay. In one of the photos used on its website, a white woman is laying down on a bed in a luxury hotel room, holding a book with the reggae artists Bob Marley on the cover, who is a recurring theme used to frame Jamaica.

Hotel 8, located in Negril, is also using reggae as a way of attracting tourists to the hotel by offering organized tours to the Bob Marley Museum and using the slogans “Pure Jamaica” and “idyllic Caribbean settings”.

Hotel 1 is giving the option on its website to learn about the Jamaican traditions and lifestyle by visiting an authentic Rastafarian village.

Hotel 2 in Ocho Rios shows a black Rasta man wearing clothes in the Rastafarian colors of red, green and yellow holding up the Rastafarian flag. The Jamaican motto: “Out of Many, one people” is stated on their website. This motto was created in 1962 and is usually used to celebrate the independence of Jamaica but in this case is used on the hotel’s website to attract tourists.

Hotel 7 in Negril is showing a photo of black Rasta man smiling playing guitar on an empty white-sand beach.

A photo on Hotel 3’s website, located in Montego Bay, illustrates four black woman and one black man dancing in traditional Jamaican costumes. Another photo on the website is of the hotel’s chef cooking while wearing a toque in the Jamaican flag-colors black, yellow and green.

The slogan of Hotel 6, on the frontpage of the website is: “Come experience the heart of Jamaica, the pulse of reggae, and the soul of luxury”. One of the photos shown on the website illustrates drinks in the colors of reggae, yellow, green and red. The hotel has posted a video of three black men playing drums, wearing traditional Jamaican costume in the Jamaican colors black, yellow and green.
This use of reggae as a way of identifying Jamaica by the hotels is not a coincidence and according to Niaah and Niaah (2008), the marketing of Jamaica’s culture is exploiting the reggae and the Rastafarian culture as a way of selling their tourists’ services. The idea of ‘reggae aesthetic’, coined by Dawes in 1999, indicates that reggae work as a way to identify Jamaica, by Jamaicans themselves and by foreigners, with Bob Marley as a significant role in the construction of reggae as being authentic to Jamaican culture. This idea emphasizes that, reggae and Rastafarian culture are the dominant portrays of Jamaica and of the Caribbean in general (Niaah & Niaah 2008: 47). According to Niaah and Niaah (2008: 49), media, including the website advertisement by the hotels, are using stereotypical symbols of Jamaica as a way of selling their tourists products. The reggae culture is a major part of this commodification of Jamaican culture and is visible on the hotel websites by, for example, using the colors of Rastafari: red, yellow and green. Other stereotypical symbols used on the websites are a tropical sun, white-sand beaches, smiling faces and tropical fruit to frame Jamaica as a tropical paradise.

Theme 2: Comfort combined with strangeness

Another common theme of the websites by the all-inclusive hotels on the northern coast of Jamaica is comfort combined with strangeness. The hotels are highlighting that the tourist get the opportunity to do tourist activities while being close to the hotel’s amenities. Recurring activities and actions taking place on the websites by Hotel 1, Hotel 2, Hotel 5 and Hotel 8 is wellness, exercising, couple-activities, eating, drinking and partying, within the hotel premises. The hotels highlight these elements as being the focus of the travelling, which is not surprising since going on vacation is associated with well-being and relaxation, but the fact that these activities are located within the hotel area and tend to be where the all-inclusive type of tourists spend their time could be problematic for the members of the local community.

Dunn’s argument (2002: 12), presented in the literature review section of this thesis, indicates that the ones benefitting from tourism in Jamaica are the all-inclusive hotels and overseas companies. Most of the time spent on the island by an all-inclusive tourist seems to be within the hotel premises. The focus on these all-inclusive hotel’s websites is on the activities located within the hotels. This way of advertising tourist products excludes the locally owned business outside of the hotel by not mentioning them in the advertisement.
Hotel 1 is offering the experience of Jamaican culture on the website in forms of reggae music entertainment every night at the hotel but at the same time highlighting that the hotel is surrounded by a 40,000 m² garden and present security.

The website of Hotel 8 is suggesting that as a tourist, one can enjoy privacy at their beach but still have the opportunity to experience “the islands way of life” in “lively bars and restaurants” on the public part of the beach.

Hotel 5, located in Ocho Rios, points out, continually on the website, that it is a top luxury hotel with a private “calm” beach, mainly accessible for the hotel guests. The activities that it highlights are all located within the hotel premises, such as bars, restaurants and a souvenir shop.

Hotel 2 is presenting a stay at their hotel as an “authentic Jamaican experience with an abundance of tourist attractions positioned within close proximity to the hotel”.

“With our Jamaica all-inclusive package, we hope to bring everything under one roof” is a quote from Hotel 9, located in Negril. The hotel does mention tourism activities outside of the hotel on their website, such as river rafting and mountain bike riding, but with the intention that the guests do the booking arrangements through the hotel by stating out “We take care of everything”.

These examples bring to mind the theories of the purification of space by Sibley (1995) and the environmental bubble by Cohen (1972), indicating that as a tourist, one is separated from the others but still get to experience something different from home in a safe environment. The argument of Cohen is that the core of mass tourism is safety and comfort together with the wish for a different experience. The hotels offer safety, comfort and wellness for their guests by highlighting the services within the hotel premises, but they still mention that it is possible to leave the hotel where one gets the chance to experience something strange and authentic compared to the experiences of home. Connecting these examples to Cohen’s argument, this form of tourism is suitable for the needs of the mass tourist and can contribute to the separation between tourists and the local community.
Theme 3: All-inclusive and exclusion of the local community

Food is the one outlined service that the all hotels have in common. It is common for big all-inclusive hotels to have “themed restaurants”, indicating that the hotels often have more than one restaurant with different international themes. I suggest that this is another strategy to keep the tourists within the hotel premises and what Cohen (1972) called the environmental bubble. The 24 hours offering of food and the different choices of restaurants could be a factor in the exclusion of the local community. When purchasing a package-deal that includes food for the whole trip, it is more likely for the tourist to eat and drink at the restaurants located within the instead of leaving the hotel to visit locally owned restaurants and bars.

When analyzing the hotel’s websites, I have noticed that small size hotels tend to include the local community more in their website advertisement compared to the big hotels. I have also come to understand that there is a clear connection between being an all-inclusive hotel and the separation with the local community compared to being a non-all-inclusive hotel. For example, Hotel 1 has more than 900 rooms. It is a part of a big all-inclusive hotel chain which one of the biggest in the Caribbean with six hotels located on Jamaica. As will be shown below, Hotel 1 do not mention activities outside of the hotel premises nor do encourage their guests to leave the hotel during their stay in Jamaica. The small hotel, Hotel 7, on the other hand, offering both all-inclusive services and a “room-only” plan, promote locally owned business on their website and do encourage their guests to interact with the local community.

Being a guest at Hotel 1 includes a 24-hours all-inclusive food service. Its all-inclusive food package contains breakfast, lunch and dinner buffed at their main restaurant every day. It also offers the opportunity to eat at four of the other themed restaurants within the hotel premises. The guests are guaranteed unlimited snacks and beverages every day and a minibar in the room. The hotel offers a daily “day entertainment program” and shows and parties in the evenings, a wellness center, sport activities, access to five swimming pools and a private beach.

Hotel 2 uses this slogan on their website, offering a 24-hours food package-deal: “Fresh, local, Jamaican. Sophistication and Irie are balanced with local authenticity at our 4 restaurants and bars”. This is another example where a theme of the website advertisement is the offering of an authentic experience but still with high quality, luxury and variety. Other
services highlighted within the hotel are a wellness-spa, that is being described as being a “Jamaican heritage” and multiple swimming pools.

Hotel 5 highlights its all-inclusive food service by stating out that: “When you´re thirsty or ready to eat, the staff is ready to assist you”. As a guest at the hotel, one has unlimited access to food and drinks from 7.20 a.m. to 12 p.m. during the whole stay, with no additional charge. Breakfast, lunch, dinner, snacks and beverages are included in the package-deal bought by the tourists before the trip, excluding locally owned restaurants. The hotel offers private transportation instead of encouraging the guests to use the local taxi-system.

Hotel 3 offers its guests an all-inclusive food service containing unlimited drinking and dining at three different restaurants. The hotel has their own tennis court, beach club, gym, spa, giftshop and nightclub, which they point out are all located on the hotel property, accessible mainly for the hotel guests.

Hotel 6 also offers the guests a 24-hours all-inclusive food service that includes breakfast, lunch, dinner and beverages. As a guest, one has access to watersports activities, a nightclub, spa, multiple pools, a game-room and a private beach, everything included in the price. The hotel offers guided tours that can be booked through the hotel, but it does not mention either the city of Ocho Rios nor the specific tourist attractions.

Hotel 9 promotes its all-inclusive services as “Everything you need to have a great time”. The slogan itself indicates that the tourists do not need to leave the hotel in order to enjoy their vacation. The all-inclusive package includes breakfast, lunch and dinner at the hotel’s three different restaurants and unlimited beverages and cocktails. As a guest, one is offered daytime and evening entertainment, access to the hotel’s private beach, a tennis court, a coffee bar and a gym. The quote “Our Jamaican all-inclusive packages at Hotel 9 cover the majority of your vacationing needs” indicates that the needs of a tourist can be fulfilled within the hotel. The hotel does not promote interaction with the local community nor encourage their guests to do tourists activities on their own, but to book it through the hotel.

The small all-inclusive hotel, Hotel 8, stands out from these examples in the website advertisement of the food. While the other hotels are highlighting the many choices of dining at the hotel, Hotel 8 only has one restaurant within the hotel area which serves both local
Jamaican food and international food. Hotel 8 presents itself as a small all-inclusive hotel in their description and encourage their guests to leave the hotel area to visit local bars and restaurants. It is stated out on the website that the hotel works together with the local taxi-drivers instead of offering private transportation and encourage the guests to “take a stroll” in the streets.

Hotel 7, in Negril, is also a small hotel with only 50 rooms. The hotel, similar to Hotel 8, has a way of including the local community on its website. Hotel 7 stands out from the other hotels due to the offering of both an all-inclusive package deal but also a “room-only” plan. The hotel only has one restaurant for their guests. Thus, it provides an alternative for those tourists that are not interested in staying exclusively at the hotel premises. On the website, it is highlighted that the hotel’s location is “walking distance to town” whereas a tourist, one can “mingle with locals” and “pick up some Jamaican slang”. Similar to Hotel 8 and different from the previous mentioned examples, Hotel 7 encourages the guests to interact with local residents. An example of this is shown on the website by stating out that as a tourist “maybe get invited to a Jamaican home family dinner” when walking around in town. The hotel also encourages the guest to use the local taxi-system and to visit tourist attractions outside the hotel. A list is available on the website containing tourists’ attractions within the area of Negril.

The small hotel, Hotel 4, promotes activities outside of the hotel more than the all-inclusive hotels mentioned. First of all, the theme of Hotel 4 is “affordability” together with “comfort”. The hotel is a set-up of studio apartments with equipped kitchens which I interpret as their quests can find it important to be able to cook their own food instead of buying all meals in restaurants, proposing that there is another type of tourists visiting this hotel. The hotel promotes its good location by highlighting the “walking distance to local markets, lively nightlife and dining”. The services outlined are mainly based on the city of Ocho Rios, that being activities not located in the hotel premises, such as waterfalls, local craft-market and local restaurants. The hotel does not have its own private beach but is encouraging the guests to visit the public beach, located in front of the hotel. The photos on the website shows people of different colors, white, black and mixed which is also different from websites of the all-inclusive hotels. It is clear that the Sandcastle hotel, not only offering all-inclusive services, has more interaction with and promotion of the local community. Although the framing of Jamaica is similar to the other all-inclusive hotels, being a “slice of paradise” with “white-
sand beaches”, the website of Hotel 4 is more including and could perhaps benefit the local community and its members more than the closed all-inclusive hotels.

Frame 1: Jamaica – a tropical paradise
The most common frame used by the hotels in presenting Jamaica and its specific destinations is by describing the destination with expressions such as “Calm beaches” (Hotel 1) “turquoise water” and (Hotel 8) “tropical adventure” (Hotel 2) and “paradise” (Hotel 5). The ‘pleasure periphery’ theory by Weaver (1988), indicates that developing countries in the Caribbean have become leisure-supply destinations, tropical paradises where western tourists can enjoy their vacation. This is observable on the website by the hotels that tend to frame Jamaica as a place where one can relax on white empty beaches, isolated from the world outside of the hotel. Connected to the pleasure periphery theory of Weaver (1988: 320), this is problematic due to the existing core-periphery structure of the Caribbean, meaning that the peripheries, in this case Jamaica, are being exploited by the core countries and maintains underdevelopment.

Hotel 7 has the beach as the main attraction with a focus of calmness and relaxation as a way to frame Jamaica. One example of this from their website is: “Open your eyes now and then to scan the sea – you may well spot a school of glittering fish skipping across the waves, a turtle coming up for a breath, or dolphins spiraling into the air”. This quote can be read as a romantization of the destination and a framing of Jamaica as being a “Caribbean paradise”.

Hotel 5, on the hotel website, associate a “tropical paradise” with privacy which is visible in the slogan in the frontpage of the website: “Escape to a private Jamaica beach resort”. The website presents the hotel with “champagne colored sand welcomes the gentle waves of the Caribbean Sea on our private beach” and “here, it’s so romantic and relaxing, it whispers paradise”. By choosing photos and a discourse of “privacy”, it could be that the hotel aims to frame Jamaica as being a carefree place for relaxation and where one will not be disturbed by ‘the others’.

Hotel 3 has a private beach club described as a “snorkeler’s paradise”, only accessible for their guest. The private beach reinforces a discourse about “endless horizon”, “rhythmic melody”, “sundrenched white sand” and “warm golden rays”.

25
On the website, Hotel 6 uses the slogan: “Make the crystal blue Caribbean your personal playground”. The hotel also shows two photos of smiling kids playing with two dolphins.

The quote below is taken from Hotel 9 and is a description of the hotel’s private beach. “Stoll the windswept, white-sand beaches and let the sea breezes tingle your skin while you gaze across the warm, azure waters of Bloody Bay”. The hotel’s website describes the destination of Negril as the “capital of causal” and the location of the hotel as the “island finest white sand beach”. This example below is also a quote taken from the Hotel 9 website. “Enjoy acres of untouched, pristine and private beach club, where you can unwind in quiet, serene surroundings”. The hotel shows a picture of white beach with eight empty sunchairs on it with the turquoise water in the background. Similar to the previous mentioned examples, the main focus of the website is that enjoyment is being associated with privacy.

Indeed, as shown in these examples, all-inclusive hotels portray Jamaica as being a “tropical paradise” by showing photos of white empty beaches and using a discourse of privacy. The beach is in most cases the main focus of the website and is used in a discourse followed by “calm” (Hotel 1), “relaxed” (Hotel 8 & Hotel 2) and “carefree” (Hotel 8). The material confirms what Weaver (1988) suggested in the pleasure periphery theory about many developing countries in the Caribbean has become destinations for fun spending of one’s spare time.

Frame 2: Racial representation

In my opinion, it is possible to draw conclusions of who is excluded and who is included in Cohen’s environmental bubble by looking at who the person illustrating the photos were or were not. Examining my samples, it becomes clear that there are very few members of the local community and black tourists in the photos. Some of the hotels do have one or two photos where local staff member in shown in the background or hosting a tourist activity, but the majority of the persons presented in the photos are white tourists, often middle-aged couples. This adds weight to the argument made by Cohen (1972) that the all-inclusive type of tourism goes hand in hand with the separation between the tourists and the members of local community.

McFarlane-Morris (2019: 5) proposes that the all-inclusive type of tourism in southern developing countries is market by the separation between the guest and the local host
community which, according to her, strengthens issues of inequality. McFarlane-Morris (2019: 4) gives the example of cruise ships in Jamaica by explaining how the movement of cruise ship tourists is limited to souvenir shops and restaurants on shore that are owned by the cruise ship company and therefore prevents the tourist from interacting with the local community. An analogy can be drawn between her example of cruise ships tourists and the example of the “all-inclusive” hotel tourists. In both cases, the tourist’s movements are being limited to the services provided within the hotel and cruise ship premises.

The existing separation between tourists and the local community is often performed in images and discourses with the purpose of showing safety and calmness of the tourist experience with an underlying existing sense of fear, meaning that tourists need to stay within the environmental bubble in order to enjoy their tourist experience (McFarlane-Morris 2019: 6) Similar to what the purification of space theory (Sibley 1995) indicates, this study’s analysis of photos shown on the websites confirms that the all-inclusive type of tourism is characterized by the separation of people from different categories. Based on the analyzed material, I argue that there is an underlying message indicating that as a guest at the hotel, one is safe by being separated from the others without implying the specific barriers like, for example, heavy security presence. This idea will be illustrated in the different examples mentioned below.

For example, Hotel 5 portrays a visit at the hotel with the word privacy. On the website, it is constantly pointed out that the hotel has a private beach that only is available for the hotel guests. The hotel’s description is a “intimate hotel” where one can escape lively bars and restaurants and highlight that their private beach is never crowded. The majority of the photos on the websites shows empty beaches. One of the photos is of a long white-sand beach with only one white person laying on a sunchair and getting a drink served by a black staff member. There is also another photo of a group of people, all of them being white middle-aged people.

The majority of the pictures used by Hotel 3 on the hotel website shows white middle-aged tourists. Some photos have staff members in them, but the majority of the persons illustrated in the photos are white. The only two pictures of the hotel’s private beach both contain two white persons.
When analyzing the website of Hotel 6, I noticed that this hotel, similar to the previous mentioned ones, uses photos illustrating white tourists. The frontpage shows a big photo of a family of white persons having fun at a white sand beach with the turquoise ocean in the background. Looking through their photo gallery, all ten photos that are illustrating people are white persons. There are two photos on the website containing one black staff member in the background, serving the white hotel guest.

The majority of people presented in the photos of Hotel 9’s website is also white and middle-aged. One of the photos illustrates a white middle-aged couple in the hotel bar, another shows four white middle-aged persons having fun by the hotel pool bar and one photo is of the hotel’s private beach, with only white persons in it. Out of the eight photos illustrating people in the “photo gallery” section of the website, only one of the photos shows black persons. The only photo with a representation of black persons is a photo of four middle-aged couples in the pool, where of two of them are black.

The small hotel, Hotel 7, on the other hand, which is a hotel promoting interaction with the local community on their website, shows a variety of people in their photos on their website. A photo of the public beach outside of the hotel is crowded with both white and black tourists and locals.

Moreover, the other small hotel, Hotel 4, also provides a broader representation of black and mixed people in the photos. The majority of the photos used on the hotel website illustrate both black, white and mixed people. For example, one photo used on the website of the hotel pool contain eleven people, of which nine of them being black persons.

The over representation of white persons in the majority of the photos, made me draw the conclusion of who the website advertisement is meant for. Using my protocol and summarizing the categories: “Who are the figures shown on the website?” and “Who is the target for the website advertisement?”, it becomes clear that the overall framing of Jamaica as a tourist destination is mostly directed towards white persons, particularly middle-aged couples. I suggest that the fact that the majority being middle-aged could be connected to the question of class. Perhaps the all-inclusive hotels aim to attract people from a higher class that can afford to spend more money during their visit at the hotel, compared to, for example,
families with small children. They could use a discourse of “luxury” and “exclusive” and choose to target middle-aged couples.

These findings can be connected to the purification of space theory by Sibley (1995) regarding the dislike of mixing people from different categories and to separate the tourists from ‘the others’. Nevertheless, I suggest that there is a gap in this analysis regarding the issue of little representation of black and mixed people in the field of tourism. All the all-inclusive hotels on the northern coast of Jamaica analyzed in this study, with the exception of the two smaller hotels, lack in the representation and inclusion of black and mixed people in their photos on their websites. This aspect within the field of tourism is not brought up by any of the theories used in this study. I suggest that this aspect is important due to the existing inequalities within the mass-tourism industry. The exclusion of locally owned business and activities outside of the hotel on the websites seems to go hand in hand with the exclusion of black and mixed people illustrated in the photos. The hotels that tend to promote the local community on their websites, for instance Hotel 4 and Hotel 7, also tend to have a bigger representation of black and mixed people in on their websites. This idea could be continuation of this study where a type of tourism that is more including, both in representing and promotion of the local community, than the discussed mass tourist industry could be examined.

**Conclusion**

This analysis indicates that how the all-inclusive hotels on the northern coast of Jamaica are selling their travel packages on their websites could contribute to the already existing separation between tourists and the local community. The offering by the all-inclusive hotels of multiple choices of restaurants and bars, privacy in closed forms of beaches and transportation, services like gym, spa and entertainment contributes to the creation of an environmental bubble on the northern coast of Jamaica. The mass-tourism industry targets and attracts a type of tourist that will most likely stay within the hotel premises and experience the destination through the bubble with little benefits for the local community. Big and small hotels differ in the way they encourage activities outside the hotel and whether they are promoting the local community on their website or not. Non-all-inclusive hotels and small all-inclusive hotels have a way of promoting local tourist attractions and business on their websites and target a more diverse customer base than the big all-inclusive hotels.
This study has examined the creation of an environmental bubble on the northern coast of Jamaica by analyzing how the all-inclusive hotels are selling their travel packages. Another step in the investigation of the subject could perhaps be to examine other factors for the separation, for example national and international policies. An interesting continuation of this thesis could be to examine other possible forms of tourism that do not include the exploitation of the host-country but do include the local community more than the one of organized mass-tourism.

As shown in Dunn’s (2002) research, more than 50% of the Jamaican interviewees answered that they were dependent or had family being dependent on the tourism industry. Agreeing with the argument of Weaver (1995), the goal should not perhaps be to eliminate tourism in the Caribbean, but to improve the inclusion and benefaction of the local community and its members. This study does not criticize tourism itself but particularly forms of tourism. As shown in my findings, there are ways of tourism that could be more beneficial and supportive of the local community than the case of the all-inclusive hotel industry. The examples of two hotels offering non-all-inclusive services, Hotel 4 and Hotel 7, presented in this thesis, show a type of tourism that encourages interaction between guests and hosts and provide greater racial representation on the website and an attempt to include the local community. In my opinion, the all-inclusive hotel industry can be viewed as an “old-fashioned” idea about tourism that, agreeing with the mentioned authors, perhaps should be criticized and developed in order to improve the existing core-periphery structure in the Jamaica and in the Caribbean in general.

The world is currently in an ongoing international crisis due to the spreading of the coronavirus which strikes hard on countries dependent on tourism. With travel restrictions and closed boarders, Jamaica is now facing major social and economic challenges. Future studies regarding the consequences of the current crisis and tourism could be an interesting continuation in this field. Perhaps to examine what could be the consequences for countries dependent on tourism during times of international uncertainties and what challenges these countries are facing due to the dependency of tourism.
References


