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Semester:	*9h Semester*		
Exam Title:			
Name, Date of birth/ Names, Dates of birth of group members:	Name(s)	Study number	Date of birth (not CPR number – only 6 numbers: dd/mm/yy)
	Inesa Matuliauskaite	*20152627*	*18-05-1992*
Hand in date:			
Project title /Synopsis Title/Thesis Title	*Master Thesis*		
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Greenland representation
in Danish and United States travel agencies websites

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Number of Keystrokes: 110 264

May 31, 2017

Master's Degree in Culture, Communication and Globalization

Aalborg University

Acknowledgment

I would like to thank and give a special acknowledgment to my supervisor Lill Rastad Bjørst, for her constant support, motivation and help. She spend a lot of her time her time in giving me helpful feedback and advices which have improved my Master's thesis greatly. I am happy that I had the possibility to work with you.

But most of all, I would like to thank my family and few close friends for supporting me during the writing process. This thesis wouldn't have be possible without your input and support!

Abstract

The aim with this Master thesis is to discover and analyze how Greenland is represented as a travel destination. The main idea is to explore Greenland representation in two different websites which represent Danish and United States picture of Greenland. In order to do so the websites were analyzed by looking at visual as well as textual representation in the websites.

In order to analyze the representation of the Greenland this thesis used semiotic method. Triadic Piercean Model was used as a tool that provided a framework for understanding how the representations convey meanings. It helped to outline fundamental elements of representation and to discuss the relationship between its components.

Having reached analysis and conclusions, the research can be summarized by the following statements: representation of Greenland as a tourist destination in both travel agencies websites from Denmark and United states are quite similar. Greenland is represented as wild and undiscovered land that is identifiable by iconic symbols such as icebergs, sledding dogs, whales and ox. The tourist itself takes an important part in the representation of the destination and is presented as an active individual in the static environment. However, there were some representations distinct to Greenland. The Danish travel agency presents Greenland as a place where tourist can go and explore and know more about climate, while the United State travel agency created a distinction between local community and tourist culture.

Key words: Greenland, representation, travel destination, travel agencies.

Contents

1. Introduction

Visibility of the Arctic in the past few years has been growing all around the world. When president Obama spoke at the closing session of the #GLACIER conference in Anchorage, Alaska, August 31, 2015, he stated that "the Arctic is the leading edge of climate change" (White House Office of the Press Secretary, n.d.). Climate change is making the Arctic more and more noticeable in the entire world. Greenland in particular has been among the main focus points in the international climate-change debate and "the Ilulissat icefjord as a climate symbol is only one of many more or less controversial sites in the international climate debate, sites which are populated by climate symbols and witnesses such as melting mountain glaciers, low-lying islands, polar bears, penguins, and Inuit" (Bjørst & Ren, 2015: 99).

However, the Arctic is changing, and so are the perceptions of it. Narratives of the Arctic are depicting it as a frontier, homeland, no man's land, paradise, frozen death, field site, lab, ecosystem, heritage, tourist destination, treasure trove, wilderness, climate change messenger and a new global hub (MCCannon 2012: 8). Greenland receives more and more attention from the world - it is no more just a representative of the climate change, but it is being discovered as a new trending tourist destination. In 2015 Greenland was added to the Lonely Planet Top 10 of "Best in Travel 2016" and the National Geographic Traveler's Top 20 in "Best Trips 2016" list ("Tourism Strategy 2016-2019 Visit Greenland," 2016). Greenland has witnessed a huge growth in the tourism industry growing during the past few years and can now expect a bright future and an excellent growth scenario for the number of tourist arriving in Greenland. ("Tourism Strategy 2016-2019 Visit Greenland," 2016).

In the Kingdom of Denmark Strategy for the Arctic "it is highlighted that today, tourism, second only to fisheries, is the most important export industry in Greenland, and the tourist industry has potential for growth in the future" ("Denmark, Greenland and the Faroe Islands: Kingdom of Denmark Strategy for the Arctic 2011-2010," 2017). Now Greenlandic "economy remains depended for 60% of its budget revenue on a 3.5 billion DKK (around 470 million EUR) annual block grant it receives from Denmark" . However Greenland is demostrating their ambition to become more independent from Denmark. "The Act on Greenland Self-Government was granted to Greenland on June 21, 2009" (Politics in Greenland, n.d.). By granted Home Rule as well as Self-

Government Acts Greenland has the rights to "elect its own parliament and government, the latter having sovereignty and administration over the areas mentioned in the Self-Government Act such as education, health, fisheries, environment and climate" (Politics in Greenland, n.d.). However, one of the main challenges is to secure better self-government with revenues generated from within Greenland and growing tourism industry is one of the ways to do it.

As it was mentioned before, Greenland has many different narratives of presentation. Gartner argued that the image of a tourism destination is a key factor when choosing a destination (Gartner, 1993). Therefore it is important to identify what kind of representations depict Greenland has as a tourist destination.

2. Problem formulation

The role of the Arctic as the leading edge of climate change can be seen as a valuable opportunity for identification and representation. This Master thesis seeks to explore what kind of representations there are of Greenland as a tourist destination. Therefore this thesis will be guided by this question:

How Greenland as a travel destination is represented by Danish and United States' travel agencies?

Fundamental part of tourists to Greenland are coming from Denmark. ("Tourism Strategy 2016-2019 Visit Greenland," 2016). The relationship and history between Greenland and Denmark is complicated and mixed with various feelings. These two reasons are the main basis to choose to analyse websites from Danish travel agencies. The main reasons for taking the United States as another object of the analysis was because of it has opportunities of having growing number of tourists. Moreover, the United States tourists take third place in total number of tourist visiting Greenland ("Tourism Strategy 2016-2019 Visit Greenland," 2016).

Greenland has long history with struggling with representation and identity. Therefore representation of Greenland as a tourist destination could be one of the meaningful narratives to investigate. As it was mentioned before, the image of a tourism destination is a key factor when

choosing a destination. Greenland representation on Danish and United States website could influence tourism industry and at the same time influence the possibility of Greenland to become stronger self-government country.

3. Literature review

This chapter will present relevant to the topic literature. In order to clarify research topic of this Master thesis, literature about tourism in Greenland and Greenland representations will be discussed.

3.1 Greenland Tourism in Numbers

"In 2016 there has been a total of 89,215 international passengers on scheduled and chartered flights, which is a 10.3 pct. Increase compared to 2015" (*Statistics Greenland*, n.d.) The top international passengers are from Denmark (30,11%), Germany (5,5%), US(4,11%) and Canada(2,9%). Increase in international passengers could be directly related to new routes and increased air service. For the 2016 summer season Air Greenland added more departures from Kastrup (Denmark) to Narsarsuaq (Greenland) and opened a new summer route Keflavik (Iceland)-Ilislissat (Greenland) ("Tourism Strategy 2016-2019 Visit Greenland," 2016). Moreover, Air Iceland added one more summer destination to Kangerlussuaq (Greenland) ("Tourism Strategy 2016-2019 Visit Greenland," 2016).

In 2016 there was a total of 24,244 passengers visiting Greenland by cruise. In 2015 there was a huge 10.8% growth in the number of cruise passengers in Greenland compared to 2014. However, in 2016 there was a 3.2% decrease compared to the number of passengers in 2015 (*Statistics Greenland*, n.d.). The top countries visiting Greenland by cruise ship were Germany (29%), UK (8,5%), US (5,4%) and Canada(4,3%) (*Statistics Greenland*, n.d.). It was expected that changes in cruise taxation would reduce a significant amount of expenses. For this reason it is expected will strengthen the growth in the cruise industry and bring more tourist to Greenland("Tourism Strategy 2016-2019 Visit Greenland," 2016).

Tourism industry in Greenland is growing along with attention from all over the world. Travel agencies can use their power and provide their consumer with certain pictures and texts which shapes particular narratives about Greenland

3.2 Slogans from Greenland about Greenland

Greenland Tourism and Business Council, the Employers Association of Greenland and Corporate Social Responsibility Denmark launched a slogan "Future Greenland, People-Planet-Profit". According to Thisted "the slogan aims to combine two otherwise opposite discourses: a global discourse, emphasizing ecology, and sustainability and a local discourse, emphasizing development and economic independence."(Thisted, 2016: 244) The slogan "Future Greenland, People-Planet-Profit" was launched alongside other slogans of tourism industry: "Pioneering Nation" and "Taste of Greenland"(Thisted, 2016: 244). Expression "Pioneering Nation" draws narratives about adventure, exploration and discovery(Thisted, 2016: 244).

3.3 Greenland Picture

Images of Arctic people have been created during a long period of time. People living in the North have been seen as primitive people living in inhospitable homeland, sleeping in igloos with an extraordinary surviving skills (Briggs, 1997). These narrative from the past still persist today (Andreas, 2013: 130). As the Mads Nordlund marketing coordinator of the Greenland tourism and Business Council and member of Branding Greenland said: "People think there are polar bears wandering around in the street and people living in igloos… Well, yes, there are, but we're also a very modern society" (Andreas, 2013: 130; Briggs, 1997). Static picture of the Arctic rise a question that representative image needs to be changed during the time. According to Briggs, the "true inuit" picture can be no longer identified by habitual way of life or survival skills (Briggs, 1997). This means that traditional way of living and modern way of living are being more and more combined and Greenlanders represent themselves as cherishing the traditions of their culture as well as living in an innovative country. In the movie "Eskimo weekend" filmmaker Inuk Silis Høegh (b. 1972) presented a portrait of typical urban youth life of the weekend with integrate humour, irony and self-reflection (Pedersen, 2008: 99). "For example, the connotation of "Eskimo" - a term Greenlanders only use when abroad to explain what kind of people they belong to - is self-ironic with an underlying appeal to the "us-ness." (Pedersen, 2008: 99). However, Greenland is still being seen as a place for adventure tourism where you can be in real wild nature, experience adventures such as dog-sledding, hiking, and to see whales, seals, icebergs, ice cap and other natural attractions (Fay & Karlsdóttir, 2011: 70; Thisted 2016: 250).

3.3.1   Arctic as a climate change representative

During the past few years representations of the Arctic and Arctic people have changed. The main reason of this are issues of climate change, which have put the Arctic on the map in new ways (Sejersen, 2015: 1). Arctic Climate Impact Assessment (ACIA) represents indigenous peoples as an exotic and endangered society. Moreover, they are presented as people who are in risk of losing their livelihoods, cultural and spiritual practises, language and connection between nature and Inuit. However, according to M.L. Martello, Arctic communities play two different roles as both representations and representatives of climate change (Martello, 2008: 353). In climate change debates the Arctic people often appear as a victims rather than as a manifestation of globalization (Martello, 2008: 355). The Arctic people see themselves as a symbol for the climate change and as a spokesperson of environmental or world voice (Martello, 2008; Sejersen, 2015).

3.3.2   Greenland as a symbol for global climate and new "climate tourist" attraction

"Findings from Bjørst's doctoral thesis (2011) indicate that from 205-2009 media, politicians, scientists and NGO's were using the Arctic and the Ilulissat Ice fjord as a climate symbol, and they create narratives about arctic climate change more than Greenland's local population and politicians did" (Bjørst & Ren, 2015: 92). In COP15 held in 2009 the debate about Greenland and Ilulissat icefjord as presented as an iconic symbol of climate change debate. Debates about climate change, heartbreaking pictures of mountain glaciers melting , polar bears and penguins got worldwide attention. Discussions about climate change through global media, politics and science spread the word about an already forgotten frozen land. Anders Valhl, deputy director of Visit Greenland said that "the effects of climate change have "put us on the map". The challenge now is to convince more people that Greenland isn't really that far trip" (Bjørst & Ren, 2015: 96; Almassy 2012).

Environmental change is driving a new travel phenomenon where individuals "rush" to "endangered destinations" in order to view and experience attractions and landscapes before they disappear (Dawson et al., 2011: 251). Last chance tourism has been defined as a phenomenon where "tourists explicitly seek vanishing landscapes or seascapes, and/or disappearing natural and/or social heritage" (Dawson et al., 2011: 251; Lemelin, Stewart, Maher, & LuØck 2010: 478).

According to Dawson et al. "Tour operators report [that] more and more travellers are asking for about trips to the Arctic, evidently believing that it might vanish at any minute. They want to get there before the ice cap melts and the animals – especially the polar bears – drown or disappear" (Dawson et al., 2011: 251).

Tourist manager for the local tour operator, Lila Berthelsen says that "several come to see the ice before it is too late. Some tourist talk about "the dying icebergs" even so there are not exactly dying"(Bjørst & Ren, 2015: 96; Rottboll 2013: 8). Climate change and temporality of nature have improved Greenland's visibility as a tourism destination. Pictures of melting ice and discussions about climate change work as an alternative advertisement for Greenland. Visit Greenland website is using headers as "Still lots of ice to see" and "The melting Greenlandic ice" to attract people with the clues of "last chance tourism"(*Visit Greenland*, n.d.). Last chance tourism means that tourist are traveling to see the place before it disappears.

According to Fay and Karlsdóttir, the most common reason to visit Greenland is "its natural scenery, with the Greenland Tourism board advertising Greenland as the 'last white spot on earth" (Rasmussen 2010). Adventure tourism covers activities such as hiking, dog-sledding, kayaking and admiring the wildlife as well as Greenland's natural attractions, such as icebergs and the ice cap(*Visit Greenland*, n.d.).

3.3.3   Greenland as a showroom for sustainable development

Greenland and Denmark together appear like two different showrooms for the world. While Greenland is telling the visitors about the climate change and the consequences and effects of, it Denmark is showing an example of sustainable development. In an interview the former Prime Minister Anders Fog Rasmussen said that "We try to make Denmark a showroom. You can reduce energy use and Carbon emissions, and achieve economic growth" (Bjørst & Ren, 2015: 94; Wash, 2009).

Between 2004 and 2015 Denmark showed a large fall in the reduction of CO2 emissions per capita and the country has committed to reduce the its greenhouse gas emissions by 40% compared to 1990 levels by 2020 ("Europe 2020 indicators - climate change and energy," 2016; Ryan, 2014).

In August 2008, the Canadian newspaper *The Globe and Mail* published a column with the headline "Call me an optimist, but if Denmark can go green, Canada can too" (Mason 2008:A6). Denmark is becoming a role model and a success case in sustainable development. Greenland was

presented as a place to witness the effects of climate change in August 2016, when Times Magazine released as article with photos of famous Greenland attractions (Worland & Gertz, 2016). Photos of the same objects taken 83 years apart show the effects of climate change on Greenland's landscape. Greenland and Denmark duet in showing the effects and at the same time proposing solutions for one of the world's biggest problem.

3.3.4 The opening up of Greenland

Because of the Climate change and melting ice the Arctic is opening up and thus becoming an interest for the whole world. According to Sejersen "this opening of the Arctic may have an impact on the economic, social, security and safety will need to be revisited" (Sejersen, 2015: 3). The emerge of the new Arctic and the melting of the ice are becoming interest of the world. Various countries have common interest in resource development and territorial claims in the Arctic region (Brosnan et al. 2011: 174).

Greenland is viewed as a frontier of resources, and Fraser Institute ranked Greenland as global number one in "Current Mineral potential index" in 2013. However, in 2016 Greenland had the greatest decrease and it is now ranked in position 55. This reflects its poorer respondent ratings for its taxation regime, labour regulations and political stability (Jackson & Green, 2017: 45).

As the Arctic continues melting, Greenland's multitude of minerals, such as nickel and iron and precious metals such as gold, silver, platinum and uranium are becoming more accessible. Therefore Greenland is being viewed as a frontier of resources that will supply Europe, Asia and North America with, among other things, oil, iron ore, rare earth minerals, uranium and thorium. Within Greenland the political debate over resource development is seemingly inseparable from the issue of autonomy and sovereignty. The extraction of hydrocarbons and minerals is also likely to become an issue of security and foreign policy for the Kingdom of Denmark, and the strength of Danish-Greenlandic relations might be tested and tried by potential uranium mining in south Greenland (Nuttall, 2013; Sejersen, 2015). "The Arctic is hot", Sweden's Arctic ambassador Gustaf Lind observed in March 2012. Lind's comment referred not to the warming climate, but to the flurry of commercial and political interest." (Roberts, Nilsson, & Avango, 2013: 431). New Arctic is a powerful symbol of a new age - it is no longer behind long distances, but has become an interest of the world.

3.4 Visibility online

It is not surprising that in the worldwide debates about climate change Greenland's name has frequently emerged and increased the interest of media and people. The national tourism portal Greenland.com captures the increase in traffic from 425,000 in 2010 to 1,090,000 annual users in 2015 ("Tourism Strategy 2016-2019 Visit Greenland," 2016). Two of the most influential travel medias mentioned Greenland as a following years must see places: in 2015 Greenland was added to the Lonely Planet Top 10 of "Best in Travel 2016" and the National Geographic Traveler's Top 20 in "Best Trips 2016" list ("Tourism Strategy 2016-2019 Visit Greenland," 2016). In other words, Greenland is becoming more and more visible online as a travel destination. Travel agencies have a power to introduce tourist destination and in the same way represent what tourist can find at the destination. By using textual and visual materials travel agencies create certain narratives about destination. Gartner argued that the image of a tourism destination is a key factor when choosing a destination (Gartner, 1993). Potential tourist perceptions about Greenland is influenced by travel agencies websites. Nation image created by other countries influence nation brand identity. Therefore it is important to analyse how Greenland as a travel destination is presented by foreign travel agencies.

3.5 The Future of Greenland

Both Air Greenland and Air Iceland are planning to increase their air service, reorganization of the cruise tax, political decision to made a new airport structure provide realistic expectation of tourism growth in Greenland ("Tourism Strategy 2016-2019 Visit Greenland," 2016). Visit Greenland "Tourism strategy 2016-2019" made "Growth scenario for the number of tourist arriving in Greenland by airplane with a 5% annual growth". As it was mentioned before, in 2016 there was an increase of 10,3% on tourist arriving to Greenland by airplane compared to 2015. It is double than what was expected (5%). Climate change has direct consequences for the Arctic in terms of changing circumstances for the tourism and transport ("Denmark, Greenland and the Faroe Islands: Kingdom of Denmark Strategy for the Arctic 2011-2010," 2017). Less ice coverage, especially in the summer months, has already led to a growth in maritime traffic. However, in the future longer periods of open water will probably result increased activity in tourism as well as

pose a risk of pollution and accidents ("Denmark, Greenland and the Faroe Islands: Kingdom of Denmark Strategy for the Arctic 2011-2010," 2017). Greenland's Tourism Board "is working on the development of a new national brand that more clearly defines Greenland as an adventure destination focusing on sustainable tourism and which to a greater extent appeals to the global market." ("Denmark, Greenland and the Faroe Islands: Kingdom of Denmark Strategy for the Arctic 2011-2010," 2017).

4. Theory part

This section will describe theoretical framework which will be used for the analysis of the collected data.

4.1 The Peircean Model

This thesis will use a semiotic method as a tool that will provide a framework for understanding how the representations convey meanings. Triadic Peircean Model will help to outline fundamental elements of representation and to discuss the relationship between its components (Picture 1).
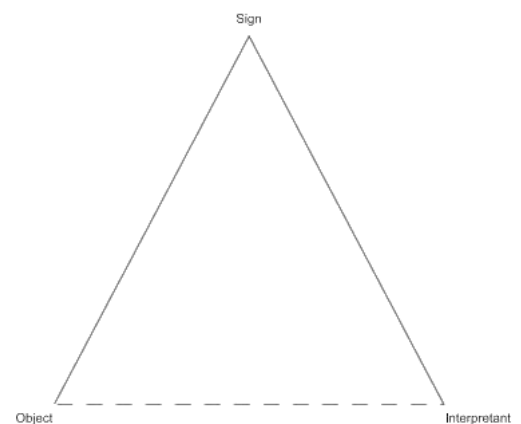
Peircean proposed a model that consists of three parts:

"1. The Representamen (sign), the form which the sign takes (not necessarily material, though usually interpreted as such).

2. An Interpretant: not an interpreter but rather the sense made of the sign.

Picture 1 Peirce's semiotic triangle

3. An Object: something beyond the sign to which it refers." (Chandler, 2007: 29)

In Pierce's own words: "A sign… is something which stands to somebody for something in some respect or capacity. It addresses somebody, that is, creates in the mind of that person an equivalent sign, or perhaps more developed sign. That sign which it creates I call interpretant of the first sign. The signs stands for something, its object"(Peirce, 1931-58: 228).

Each of these three parts must be present for the representation to take place. The Peircean model presents the relationship between the sign and the object as well as between the sign and the interpretant. The broken line "at the base of the triangle is intended to indicate that there is no necessarily any observable or direct relationship between the sign vehicle and the referent" (Chandler, 2007: 30).

The analysis of representation should begin with a sign-object relationship, because according to Peirce the "interpretation is based on a distinct relation of sign to object" (Pennington & Thomsen, 2010: 37). Existing sign-object relationship "makes meaning and interpretation possible" (Pennington & Thomsen, 2010: 37). The sign-object relationship affects the way the sign is interpreted. Picture 2 depict how the semiotic process is applied to a destination representation. This model will be use later in the analysis section.
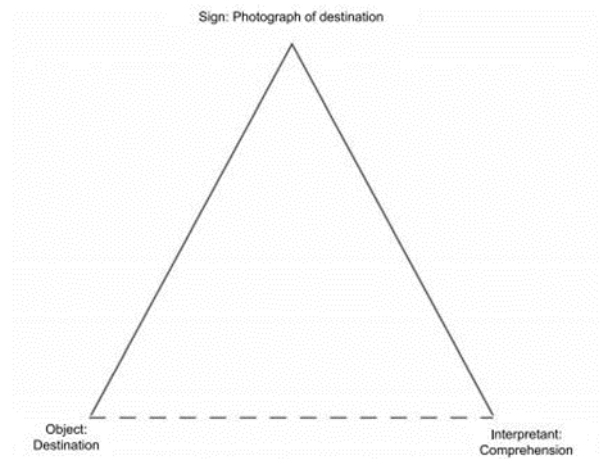
Picture 2 The semiotic process applied to a destination representation

The sign and object relationship is divided into 'types of signs', or more particularly 'modes of relationship' between the sign and what is signified (Chandler, 2007: 36). The different modes of relationship are:

Symbol/Symbolic - a mode in which the sign is a symbol and the sign-object relationship is symbolic. These "relationships must be agreed upon and learned" (Pennington & Thomsen, 2010: 36). This means that "symbols are based purely on conventional association"(Pennington & Thomsen, 2010: 38) In other words, symbolic sign and object relationship are based on social and cultural conventions.

Icon/Iconic - a mode in which the sign is an icon and the relationship is iconic. "Iconic sign presents its object 'mainly by its similarity'" (Pennington & Thomsen, 2010: 38). Icon represents familiarity by "recognizably looking, sounding, feeling, tasting or smelling like it" (Chandler, 2007: 36). According to Pennington, icons can prepare tourists to realize what it means to experience particular aspects of the culture (Pennington & Thomsen, 2010: 28). Iconic sign-object relationship is important for tourism marketing because "familiarity plays important role in destination image formation"(Pennington & Thomsen, 2010: 38). Familiarity of the object or the image can make a positive influence for the tourist and their decision making process. Moreover, icons can prepare tourists to realize what it means to experience particular aspects of culture (Pennington & Thomsen, 2010: 38).

Index/Indexical - a mode in which the object "is not arbitrary but it is directly connected in some way"(Chandler, 2007: 37). An index should indicate something. "Pierce refers to a "genuine relation between the sign and the object which does not depend purely on the interpreting mind" (Chandler, 2007: 42). Index functions as a promise for the tourist that particular elements that are visible in the picture will actually be found at the destination."From the perspective of the semiotic model, generica in cultural and heritage tourism can be countered by indexical representations, which emphasize authenticity and underline the documentary quality of a photograph"(Pennington & Thomsen, 2010: 38).

4.1.1   Criticism of Semiotic analysis

According to Chandler, in order to figure out the connotations in the text or the pictures, the reader needs to follow 'subject-position' (Chandler, 1994). This means that in order to understand the advertisement, the interpreter needs to adopt the identity of the consumer who is interested in the advertised product (Chandler, 1994). However, some of the researchers argue that the aforementioned 'subject-position' is already constructed in the codes of the text. For example in Arctic Friend website one of the trips is named "climate explorer" or in Visit Greenland website main slogan is "be a pioneer"(*Visit Greenland*, n.d.). In both of these cases the 'subject-position' is already constructed. In a such manner websites are showing the way of how the interpretant should understand the text.

Moreover, in some cases the semiotics are represented as a general-purpose tool. According to Chandler, semiotics is "based on subjective perceptions and grand- assertions" (Chandler, 1994). However, this research is using semiotics analysis in order to decode meanings of the texts and pictures. By doing this, deeper meanings behind the text can be found and the analysis helps to "realize that meaning is not attained passively but rather when only in the active process of interpretation"(Chandler, 1994)

4.2 Representation

According to Hall "language construct meanings" and it is "able to do this because it operates as a representational system"(Hall, 1997: 01). As is generally known, in language we use signs and

symbols which can be sounds, written words or produce images. Moreover "Representation is the production of the meaning of the concepts in our minds through language. It is the link between concepts and language which enables us to refer to either the "real" world of objects, people or events, or indeed to imaginary worlds of fictional objects, people and events" (Hall 1997: 17).Language is the main tool by which meanings are produced (Hall, 1997: 02). Moreover, language is using elements "which stands for or represents what we want to say, to express or communicate a trough"(Hall, 1997: 03). Meanings are being constantly produced in a variety of different medias. This Master thesis will look deeper into texts on two websites. The thesis will analyse what meanings are being produced and what kind of images of Greenland the travel agencies create for the readers.

Hall claimed that language not only produces meanings, but also the particular knowledge which construct identities and "defines the way certain things are represented" (Hall, 1997: 04). Therefore when doing semiotic analysis it is important to keep in mind the collateral experience. As Pennington and Thomsen stated, it is important to "recognize sign as sign of a particular object"and the interpretant has to have some degree of previous experience or knowledge of that object (Pennington & Thomsen, 2010: 36). For example, one of the websites suggests trip counting musk ox in Greenland wilderness. This animal which is an iconic symbol of the Greenland, but to know this the interpretant needs to have a certain knowledge about flora and fauna in Greenland. However "there is no law which can guarantee that things will have, one, true meaning, or that meanings won't change over time"(Hall, 1997: 09). I as a researcher will be concerned about how texts (from travel agencies websites) presenting Greenland produce meanings. Moreover, I will study how visual language reflects the truth about the Greenland that is already there. As it was mentioned before, language constructs meanings, and in the analysis part meanings of representation will be deconstructed and connotations of the primary meaning will be exposed.

4.3 Photographs as representations

According to Kaplanidou and Vogt, "tourist prefers to be confronted with simplified image and unique selling positions" (Kaplanidou & Vogt, 2003). A simplified image is usually presented by photographic representation. Photographic representations in tourism are the method by which "the original characteristics of a destination are transformed into simulations and conveyed by means of various media" in order to promote tourism destinations (Hunter, 2008: 354).

During 30 years of studies of destination image, the researchers have faced various problems concerning the dynamics of destination image and the discourses that convey it (Hunter, 2008: 354). However, despite that, destination image has been defined as "a combination of denotative (actual image represented) and connotative (metaphorical implications of the image) elements" (Edwards, 1996: 198) or as a collection of interpretations that are "complex multiple, relativities and dynamics" (Beerli & Martin, 2004: 658). Gartner argued that the image of a tourism destination is a key factor when choosing a destination (Gartner, 1993). Therefore this thesis will consider and analyse visual images represented in travel agencies websites. Photography is a representation which transforms landscapes, townscapes, lifestyle and historical artefacts into

simplified sense of recreation called "sense of place"(Hunter, 2008: 357; Hughes, 1995: 791; Urry 1990: 57). Photographic representations for a tourist is a "risk-reducing strategy" and a source of information that tells what in the world is extraordinary and worth viewing (Hunter, 2008:357 ; Urry, 1995: 143). This research will present what kind of photographic representation different travel agencies have chosen.

According to Hunter, the destination image research can have three range of directions:

- The Extrinsic direction- where the researcher is comparing representation to reality.
- The Intrinsic direction- where it is important what messages contain and and what kind of style are the images that the messages have.
- The Dynamic direction- "the power of texts and images to influence tourist experience, ways of seeing and perceptions of place" (McGregor, 2000: 29, Hunter, 2008: 355).

Considering the problem formulation of this research, the Instrinsic direction of destination image research will be used. The researcher will attempt to analyse different ways of seeing Greenland as a tourist destination. This means that the researcher will interpret destination images by considering the style of the image as well as the message it contains. Pictures will be taken from travel agencies based both in Denmark and in The United States in order to see different countries perception and presentation of Greenland.

5. Methodology

"The gendered, multiculturally situated research approaches the world with a set of ideas, a framework that specifies a set of questions that he or she examines in specific ways" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000: 18)

This quote from Denzin and Lincoln (2000) states that in order to gather data and to tackle the problem formulation, specific methods need to be used. It is important to select the most convenient ways and methodologies, since they influence profoundly on how and what sort of information is collected in the research. As a result, in the next part I will present and clarify my methodological choices on which this thesis is built.

5.1 Philosophy of science

The leading intention of this Master's thesis is to analyse representations of Greenland as a tourist destination. My research question focuses on the ways Greenland is represented and advertised as a tourist destination by travel agencies located in two different countries, Denmark and the United States. However, in order to do this it is important to discuss how I, as a researcher, perceive *reality*. It is essential because the paradigm that underlies in a study influences how the research is conducted (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Guba, 1990).

Guba defines a paradigm as "a basic set of beliefs that guides action"(Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Guba, 1990: 18). That is used in order to break down the complexity of the world and to provide "a view [of] how science should be done"(Punch 1998: 28). This Master's thesis will be guided by social constructivism approach, and in the next part I will present this paradigm and discuss how it is useful in answering the research question of this thesis.

5.1.1   Ontology

According to Guba, an ontology questions "what is the nature of the 'knowable'? Or, what is the nature of reality?"(1990: 18). Especially important is to question how I as a researcher perceive the reality around me? The ontological position of this thesis acknowledges the existence of multiple realities (Guba 1990: 27). The main argument of social constructivism is that no ultimate truth about reality can be found, because reality is constructed through people's interpretations

(Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Kukla 2000). Reality is influenced by social-cultural dimensions and can be interpreted in many ways (Guba, 1990). This means that there is no right or wrong explanation, since the reality can be understood in a variety of ways depending on how it is constructed by the person looking at it (Kukla 2000). While understanding and experiencing the world a person constructs his or her own reality "in relation to [his or her] beliefs or attitudes (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Guba, 1990)".

Consequently, in this study there is no such thing as the ultimate truth or one single reality about the representation of travel destination. There is no one unique way of presenting a travel destination. In the social constructivist approach it is recognized that each individual has personal images of other nations that she or he has developed over time. As for this thesis, each travel agency presents it's own, unique image of Greenland as a travel destination. Therefore in this thesis I will attempt to explore possible multiple realities and will likely display a diversity of meanings. Also in relation to that it needs to be acknowledged that I, as a researcher, am also part of the construction of these multiple realities and thus have an effect to the study.

5.1.2   Epistemology

Epistemology questions "the nature of truth" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000: 575) or, according to Guba, questions and defines "the nature of the relationship between the knower (inquire) and the known (or knowable)" (1990: 18). In this case the findings will be based on the process of interaction between the two (Guba, 1990: 27).

Von Glaserfeld (1995) argues that knowledge can only emerge from interaction among people. Therefore my thoughts and emotions as a researcher will have an effect on this Master's thesis (Bryman, 2012; Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). Interpersonal interaction influences the way phenomena are understood (Creswell, 2014; Guba, 1990). Therefore the research will be affected by me, because the materials are analysed and interpreted through my prism of thinking. In practice it means that the subject - Greenland as a travel destination - was introduced to me through books, observations and the Internet.

The aim of this study is to understand how travel agencies in two countries, Denmark and the United States, perceive and represent Greenland as a travel destination to a wider audience, and to identify different constructions of those representations and/or to find common patterns across

them. Moreover, this study will investigate whether there really are any differences between representations that are made in Denmark or or in the United States.

5.2. Research design

Research design provides the framework for collecting and analysing data. This framework reflects decisions about the research process (Bryman, 2012: 46). In this chapter I will present an overview of the method chosen in this Master's thesis and the reasons for that choice. This Master's thesis uses the qualitative research method in the process of data collection and analysis (Creswell, 2014). According to Creswell, there is no one right way to get superior knowledge, because all methods have strengths and weakness (Bryman, 2012; Creswell, 2014). In the next chapters I will clarify my strategy of research design.

This study is based on the comparative case study design. Case study is defined as "a detailed and intensive analysis of a single case"(Bryman, 2012: 66). The term "case" often indicates to a location or an organization (Bryman, 2012: 66). However, in this thesis the term "case" will refer to a travel agency, in particular to certain selected travel agencies located in Denmark or the United States. As Creswell states, a case study allows the researcher to collect detailed information of the case over a sustained period of time (Bryman, 2012; Creswell, 2014: 43; Yin 2009).

The purpose of the research is to disclose the presentation of Greenland as a travel destination in two different places. This aim requires in-depth analysis of the case as well as comparison between two representations of Greenland. The comparative case study design was found applicable for this purpose. By employing this design I study two cases using identical methods. According to Bryman, this way demonstrates the logic of comparison: "it implies that we can understand social phenomena better when they are compared in relation to two or more meaningfully contrasting cases or situations" (Bryman, 2012: 73). Therefore this method enhances the understanding of the image of Greenland as a travel destination by comparing representations made in two different countries.

One of advantages of case study is that it lets the researcher retain the holistic characteristics of real-life events while investigating empirical events. It is one of the most flexible research designs and does not require the use of a particular type of evidence (Yin 1981). Case study can be done by using either qualitative or quantitative evidence. However, this study will present qualitative data. One of the main reason why this specific case study design was chosen is because it enables

the process of "thinking deeply" (Bryman, 2012: 66). Case study design enables the production of detailed and intensive analysis on one specific case (Bryman, 2012: 66).

The aim of this thesis is to display a detailed analysis of how Greenland as a travel destination is pictured by travel agencies based in the United States and Denmark. To meet this aim the research analysis consist from two parts. The first case study presents the representation of Greenland as a travel destination as it is seen in Denmark. The second case study will display Greenland as a travel destination pictured the way it is made in the United States. After representing these two separate cases the research has a short a discussion section, where a comparison of these two studies is made. I use an identical method of analysis in both two cases. By analysing and comparing these two different cases the study will create a profound understanding of the social phenomenon.

5.2.1 Data generating and sampling

This section will define the techniques and procedures of collecting data in this research. As it was mentioned before, this Master's thesis uses the qualitative research method. I gather information from travel agencies' websites and then analyse and present this material as a case study. Sampling issues is also relevant for the research, because the cases have to be selected according to criteria relevant to the research (Bryman, 2012: 12). In order to create deep analysis and to gain a thorough understanding about the presentation of Greenland as a travel destination, I chose to analyse two travel agencies' websites from both countries. Websites were selected based on the following criteria:

- Travel agencies must be based in the United States or Denmark;
- Travel agencies websites must be available to be read in English;
- Travel agencies in the United States and Denmark need to sell identical or similar trips to Greenland

If travel agency met these three criteria, it was selected and named as a representative sample. As it was mentioned before, this research focuses on two travel agencies' websites from both countries. After having chosen the representative samples, I randomly picked two travel agencies' websites for one country.

5.2 Critical reflections

This chapter will discuss how the findings that have been developed are evaluated in the study. The evaluation is based on three most prominent criteria stated by Bryman: reliablity, replication and validity (2012: 46). As it was mentioned before, this Master's thesis will be analyzing textual as well as visual content. According to Bauer and Gaskell "elaborate discourse of quality, with the key concerns being the traditional reliability and validity "(2000: 141). Therefore critical reflection section will consist just of validity and reliability. Here I will present critiques of the semiotic analysis method in order to avoid providing a one-sided account of the choice of research design.

5.3.1 Validity

According to Glen Mick, validity is "the degree to which a measure is truthful - in other words, free of both random and systematic error". As to this thesis, measurement validity entails whether the accuracy of my interpretation and insight is determinded as accurate.   (Glen Mick, 1987: 568). In order to have an accurate interpretation, text and visuals will be analyzed.
This research is led with social constructivist approach, which implies that everyone constructs their own reality, and that reality can be understood in different ways depending on the person who experiences it (Kukla, 2000). Moreover, Cullum-Swan and Manning state about the interpretation of reality the following: "the process of linking or connecting expression and content is social and depends upon the perspective of the observer" (1994: 466). This means that interpretations and signs depend upon the perspective of the observer or interpreter. "When interpretant changes, signs change meaning" (Cullum-Swan & Manning, 1994: 466). However, Belk, Sherry, and Wallendorf also approach the validity of measurement through members' checks (Glen Mick, 1987: 568). For a purely interpretative research such as this, and because it is involving non-human subjects, I will share my interpretations with my supervisor. This sharing will function as an external auditor to check the truthfulness of the suggestions for interpretations.

5.3.2 Reliability

When talking about the reliability in semiotics, research is defined as "an agreement among interpreters." (Bauer & Gaskell, 2000: 143). According to Bauer and Gaskell, demonstrating

reliability requires doubling the effort, for example by making a second interpretation after a certain interval in time in order to "determine intrapersonal reliability, consistency, stability" (2000: 143). In this case I, as a researcher and interpreter, will make a second interpretation of the material in order to establish a more reliable analysis. Moreover, as Bauer and Gaskell state in their book "no content analyst expects perfect reliability where human judgment is involved" (1987 :144).

6. Limitations

One of the limitation of this research could be consider to be the time given for its writing. By having more time the researcher would have the opportunity to analyse more websites which represent Greenland as a travel destination. In that sense the researcher would have more information and maybe more accurate analysis of the representation of Greenland from United states and Denmark based travel agencies' websites.

Moreover, the by having more time the researcher could analyse one more travel agency's representation. One of the possible countries could be Germany which had the biggest number of tourists coming to Greenland by cruise in 2015("Tourism Strategy 2016-2019 Visit Greenland," 2016).

Also deeper and more detailed analyses would be presented if more researchers analysed this Master thesis problem formulation. Moreover, by having two or more researchers, more interpretations of the texts and pictures could appear. Last but not least, this way more reliable analysis would be established.

7. Analysis

This chapter has a main focus the analysis of the semiotic method tools which have been used in two websites. It is important to mention that websites from Denmark and United States will be analysed separately in order to make more clear and constructive analysis. The analysis will include textual and visual material analysis.

7.1 Denmark websites analysis "Arctic Friend"

The travel agency Arctic Friend, based in Denmark, has more than 20 years of experience of Greenland and the Arctic (*Arctic Friend*, n.d.). The focus of the company is on trips to Greenland. This part of research will analyse the content on the main page of of trips to Greenland on the Arctic Friend website and "Greenland Summer" and "Greenland Winter" main pages. The focus of this part of the analysis in the vast Arctic Friend website are the main page of the travel agency the Greenland Summer main page and the Greenland Winter main page (*Arctic Friend*, n.d.). These pages were chosen, because they represent an overall picture of Greenland and give a general picture of how the Arctic Friend is representing the country. Other pages focus more on specific trips and features, but the focus here is the overall representation of the country.

The focus of the latter part of the analysis is on the 14 Days Special Tour "Climate Explorer" in Greenland. This tour was chosen because it is one of the most appealing trips. While other trips are focusing on hiking or dog sledding this tour mainly talks about climate in Greenland.

When analysed through Pierce's model, the following elements can be found in the Arctic Friend site:

The Object: Greenland

The Sign: Photographs and text from the Arctic Friend website

The Audience: potential Danish customers
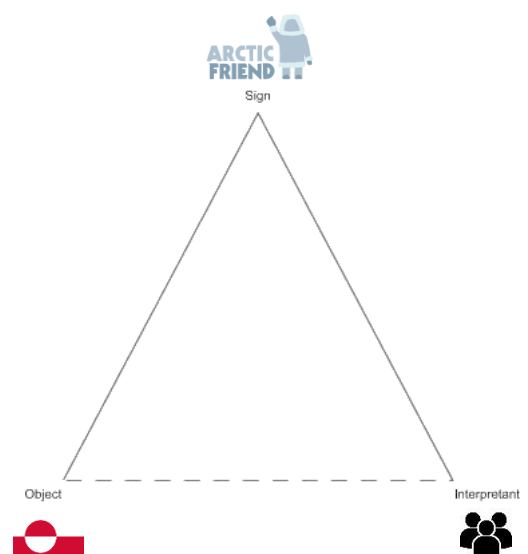
*Picture 3 Peirce's semiotic triangle for Arctic Friend website*

After having identified these three core elements of the model we will further discuss how representations occur and what are the forms in which these representations transfer particular meanings. Looking more closely to Pierce's triangle, it is clear that the main element to transfer meanings is the relationship between the sign and the object, as well as between the sign and the interpretant. It is essential to consider these relationships in order for the representation to occur (Pennington & Thomsen, 2010).

The analysis is carried out by applying the Pierce's model and looking through the website. The focus is especially at the used photographs and text within all relevant website pages which present Greenland on the site. The relationship of the sign and the object is a mix of indexical and iconic representation of the object. The researcher will represent and analyse each of sign-object relationship below.

7.1.1 Main page of the Arctic Friend "Greenland Summer and Greenland Winter pages"

Of the main page of the Arctic Friend website, this analysis if focused on the texts on the site as well as the main pictures on the page. In order to narrow down the analysis, the analysis of the main page of the Arctic Friend does not include the smaller pictures about specific trips. Also the pictures on the background of the page were ignored on all of the pages in Arctic Friend, since they are not completely visible and are same on every page.

There are eight main pictures in the main page, seven of them in a slideshow and one in the middle of the text (Picture 3). The third and the seventh picture in the slideshow are the same. The pictures on the slideshow depict various sides of Greenland. The first picture is
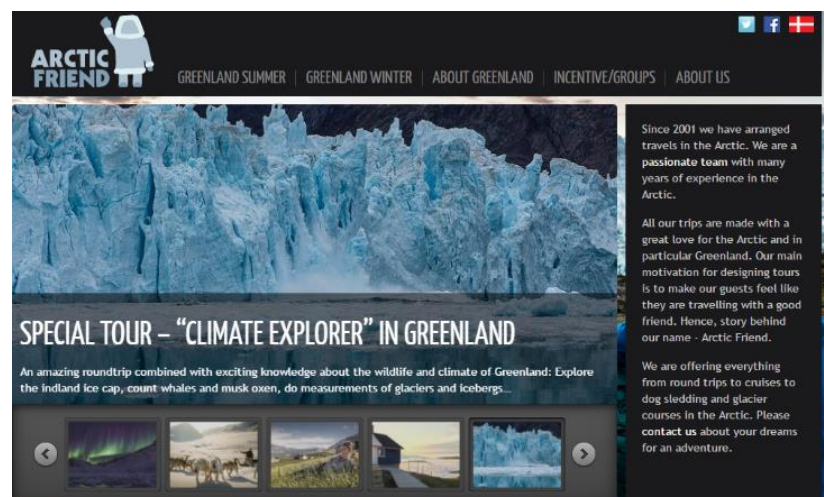
Picture 4 Arctic Friend main website page

a night landscape in the mountains. In the front of the picture there is a sea shore covered in bits of ice, and a mountain rises from there. The mountainside is covered in snow, but dark rock can be seen under it. The focus of the picture is at the starry sky coloured with green and yellow Northern

lights. The picture has a feeling of the majesticity of the nature, and the Northern lights, absence of humans and dark colours add a sense of mystique and adventure. This picture creates a vision for the interpretant of what he or she can expect for the visit in Greenland during winter. However, Northern lights is not an icon that represents Greenland. Northern lights represent Arctic tourist destinations as Finland, Iceland, Norway (Svalbard), Scotland or Canada (The

Thelegraph, n.d.) The second picture is about dog sledding (Picture 4).A herd of dogs is pulling a traditional sledge, where a person is standing and waving a whip. Snow covered, hilly ground is visible background, and sun is shining all over the picture. The dogs look eager but tired, and are clearly the sharp focus point of the picture while the person in the sledge is blurry. Dog sledding is an iconic symbol of Greenland. It was the main way of traveling in the past and it connects Greenland history when hunters used dog slides as the transportation.

Picture 5 Arctic Friend website main page image

In the third and the seventh picture a woman is lying in the grass in a beautiful landscape (Picture 4). Behind the woman the interpreter can see buildings on a hillside, dark blue fjord and mountains on both sides of it. The sky above is blue and the sun is shining. The woman is wearing active wear and looks calm and relaxed, her gaze is directed somewhere in the landscape. Both of these pictures imply a sense of adventures in the nature. While the dog picture has more energy and speed in it, the picture of the woman has a sense of calmness and tranquility. These picture give a sense of two different experiences the interpreter can have in the nature. In this picture a woman is sitting on a rock at the top of a hill. She is looking at a beautiful landscape in front of her - blue sky, under it rocky shores and a glacier that are next to blue sea. Western looking woman is tanned, wearing active wear and carrying a huge, modern backpack. Sun is shining, and there is a feeling of contentment and adventure in the picture.

Picture 6 Arctic website main page image

The fourth picture in the slideshow is a picture of a guest house the travel agency is advertising. A small, dark green and sturdy looking house is standing on the seashore. Ice covered sea is glimmering in the sun and dark rocks in the shores are visible. A similar setting is in the sixth picture of the slideshow (Picture 6). In this picture a bunch of small, colourful houses stand in the seashore. The sea is sparkling in the clear sunlight and mirroring the mountains behind the water.

Some bits of ice and snow are visible in the sea and mountainsides. No peoples are visible in either of these pictures, but the houses represent human presence. In this case Arctic Friend overlooked active town life. The pictures give an impression of idyllic, clean and quite traditional place, where life is peaceful and close to the nature. Especially the presence of the sea underlines this close connection of human habitat and nature.

Picture 7 Arctic Friend website main page image

The fifth picture in the slideshow is a picture of a mountain glacier. Light blue and white ice is rising from the sea. Some dark rocks are visible behind the glacier, and in the light is gloomy. In the middle of the picture some ice is tearing apart from the glacier and falling to the sea, throwing away some mist and snow in the process. Some more ice is floating in the water. There are no humans visible, not even the sky, and thus the

Picture 8Arctic Friend website main page picture

focus is solely on the glacier and the way it is breaking down. The angle of the picture creates a sense of impressive nature and cold, isolated place. However, the ice breaking down is an act that makes the picture also carry meanings of global warming and climate change. By having this kind of picture in the website, the Arctic Friend is implying that the traveller can experience the direct effects of the global warming. The landscape mode af all the pictures also adds the sense that the interpreter can join in the things depicted in them.

The main page in the Greenland Summer page is the same picture as picture three and seven in the slideshow on the main page, and thus will not be described again. Other pictures in the Greenland Summer page are six small pictures depicting different trips to Greenland (Picture 8). Of these pictures picture number two is the same as picture number six in the main page, and also will not be described here.

| 7 Days - Arctic Paradise DKK 18.980,- | 8 Days - East Greenland and Iceland Kombi - SPECIAL PRICE: € 2190 | 8 Days - Wonders of Southern Greenland DKK 17.190,- |
| 11 Days - Greenland Adventure on a budget from DKK 16.980,- | 12 Days - Climate Explorer in Greenland DKK 31.600,- | 13 Days - Coastal Cruise from North to South Greenland DKK 23.900,- |

Picture 9 Arctic Friend website presentation of summer trips

Three of the small pictures (1 and 3 and 4) depict a landscape, where one can see mountains, open water with some bits of ice in it, and some people in the front of the picture (Picture 8). In all of these pictures the weather is good and the people seem happy, if their faces are visible. Some camping equipments are visible, but no other traces of human habitat or infrastructure are anywhere to be seen. These pictures give a sense of adventure, since the humans are out in the wilderness, experiencing Greenlandic nature. The absence of human habitat underlines the sense of wilderness, and the good weather and happy faces give a feeling of easy conditions and safe travels. The two other pictures about the trips (5 and 6) represent views to the sea (Picture 8). In both pictures a hillside is in the background, but the sea spreads through the whole picture. The colours are dark and yellow, and the sea looks cold and deep. In picture five there are some whales rising from the water, blowing water to the air. In picture six a small ship is sailing through the picture. Apart from the ship, no human traces are visible. The focus of the pictures is solely on the nature, as they represent different sides the traveller can experience while going to Greenland.
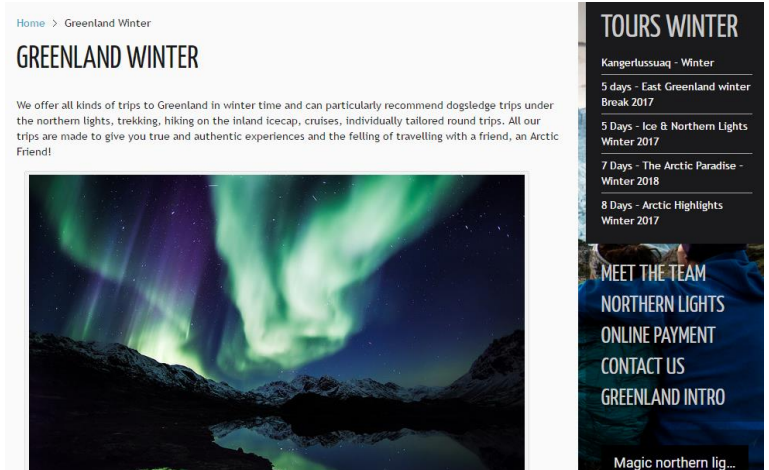
The page Greenland Winter has four pictures in it (Picture 9). One of them is a main picture and three are related to specific trips. The main picture and the first of the three pictures are quite similar - they both represent a night landscape with a sky coloured with Northern lights. In both of the pictures the impressive effect is acquired with having some

Picture 10 Arctic Friend website page of winter trips

water in the front of the picture, mountains on the side of it and green, blue and yellow Northern lights filling the darks sky and mirroring from the still water.

Picture 11 Arctic Friend website presentation of winter trips

The main focus of the pictures is in the Northern lights, and the stunning and rare experience of seeing them. The other two small pictures on this page are pictures of dog sledding in the snow (Picture 10). In the first of these two pictures there is a traditional sledge in the front of the picture. People dressed in what seems like quite traditional Inuit clothing are sitting in the sledge. This indicates full presentation of Greenland past iconic dog sledding and traditional clothes. The Arctic Friend website is ignoring modern Greenlander who wears simple or well-known global brands clothes.

In the background there are dogs connected to the sledge and snowy hills, and sunny sky covers everything and lights the picture. In the other picture a sledge is being pulled up a hill by dogs. Some peoples are sitting on the sledge, and behind them the there are hilly grounds covered in snow. Also in this picture sun is shining from a blue sky. Both of these pictures create a picture of

adventures in untouched wilderness. No signs of humans habitat are visible, and the humans in the picture are well equipped for the environment. The absence of human infrastructure and the traditional clothing and transportation create a picture of experiencing Greenland in a traditional way, getting really close to the nature.

When reviewing the Arctic Friend website and looking at the photographs on the main page which presents Greenland and trips in Greenland, as well as the main pages of Greenland Summer and Greenland Winter, the Arctic Friend travel agency is inclined to establish an indexical relationship between the sign and the object. The form of photographs at the Arctic Friend main page act as a promise for the tourist that the signs and sceneries in pictures can actually be found in Greenland. Most of the pictures depict icebergs and ice sheets, Greenlandic landscapes and nature, colorful towns together with ice or snow. Such an indexical representation gives the potential tourist a clear impression of the existing elements of the destination. After these observations it can be stated that the main focus of the website is the representation of nature and experiences which the tourist can have in Greenland. In order to create a taste of what tourist can expect to see the Arctic Friend website incorporates Greenlandic icons in addition to the indexical features.

 Some photographs, like the picture (Picture 11) present Greenland "mainly by its similarity"(Pennington & Thomsen, 2010: 38). In this way the Arctic Friend website creates a sense of familiarity of the object and shapes positive attitudes towards the destination (Pennington & Thomsen, 2010). Looking through the whole webpage, the interpreter can find several icons. The Arctic Friend main page presents photographs with certain animals, such as dogs and whales, specific experiences, like walking on the ice sheet, dog sledding and sailing with the boat around the icebergs (Picture 8 and 10).The Arctic Friend website is separated into two parts according to summer and winter seasons. By this separation they present different kinds of trips and activities.

Picture 12 Arctic Friend website image

However, "the sign's perceived relationship to the object, the person's collateral experience and the context of interpretation" need to be acknowledged (Pennington & Thomsen, 2010). In other words, the collateral experience of the audience is fundamental. In this case icons require special knowledge of certain animals or experiences. This can affect the way the Danish traveler perceives

the representation in terms of the Pierce model. Icons can prepare the tourist to realize what it means to experience particular aspects of culture (Pennington & Thomsen, 2010: 38). This means that iconic sign-object relationship helps to create the main indexical relationship when "the relationship is based on the sign's resemblance to or qualities it shares with the object" (Pennington & Thomsen, 2010).

7.1.2 "Special Tour - Climate Explorer"

One of the most appealing trips in Arctic Friend website is the "Climate Explorer". The travel agency from Denmark is using climate as the centre of interest for the trip.

The main page of Climate Explorer page has only one picture (Picture 12). As described in the analysis of Greenland Summer, this picture represent a view to the sea with some whales rising from the water, blowing water to the air (Picture 12). A dark
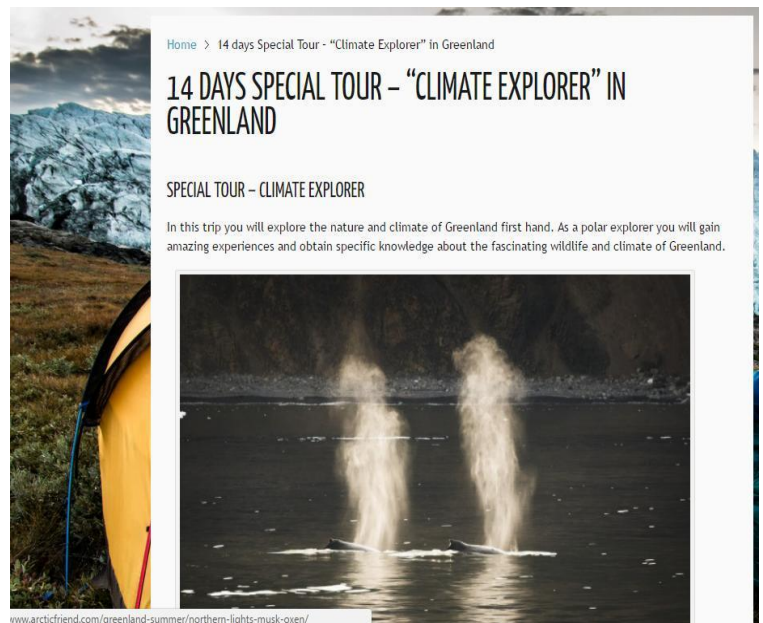
Picture 13 Arctic Friend website "Special Tour- Climate Explorer"

hillside is in the background, but the sea spreads through the whole picture. The water the whales are blowing to the air is of a lighter colour than the dark brown hills and sea, and thus creates a centre point for the picture. The whales are of the same colour as the water and barely visible above the surface, and the water blown to the air makes them more recognizable. No humans or traces of them are visible, which brings the nature closer to the interpreter. The meanings related to the picture are meanings the interpreter connects to whales, since the rest of the picture is relatively neutral.

There is also another picture related to the Climate Explorer page, the picture that signals it on the main page of the Arctic Friend. This is the picture of a glacier that is also already described above. In the picture light blue and white mountain glacier is rising next to the sea and bits of ice are tearing down to the water. No humans are visible, colours are gloomy, and the focus is solely on the glacier and the way it is breaking down.

Potential travellers are called "climate explorers" and "polar explorers" which directly refers to a person who explores a new or unfamiliar area, a person who travels to a specific place where no one has ever been. The Arctic Friend tour invites the tourist in some sense to discover the Greenlandic nature and gather new knowledge. Using words as "explorer" the Arctic Friend compares potential tourist with the first explorers of Greenland.

The focus of this exploration trip is Greenland's climate and nature, which are usually connoted with wildlife. In the webpage Greenland is presented as an uncharted land, as the Arctic Friend website ignores certain aspects of Greenland, such as development and modern society (Andreas, 2013: 130). All descriptions of the trip are focusing on Greenlandic nature. Even if the text provides cues about Greenland, the credibility of the statements is questionable. According to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark, "56,700 people live in Greenland" and "most of the population – around 47,000 – live in the towns". This means that 60% of the population lives in the 6 biggest towns (*Factsheet Denmark – Greenland. February 2010*, n.d.). There are large towns that offer a rich choice of shops, schools as well as educational and job opportunities (*Factsheet Denmark – Greenland. February 2010*, n.d.). By presenting this trip in this way, the Arctic Friend website is "selling" Greenland as unexplored wild land which interpretant could discover. At the same time they conceal the fact that Greenland is well developed country with an active political life and which is seeking an extensive independence of the Kingdom of Denmark as well as focusing on economic development and close collaboration with Denmark (Politics in Greenland, n.d.). In this case Arctic Friend website is forgetting about diversity of the Greenland.

The Arctic Friend promises that in this trip the tourist will "explore the nature and climate of Greenland first hand" as well as that this trip "will increase your passion for nature and give you a deeper knowledge about wildlife and climate in Greenland". As it was mentioned before in literature review, Greenland is still seen as an adventure tourism place where you can find real wild nature and other natural attractions (Fay & Karlsdóttir, 2011:70 ; Thisted, 2016: 250). The Arctic Friend draws narratives about adventures, exploration and discovery. Towns, people and social life in Greenland are all overlooked in the description of this trip. Greenland is presented as a land with lakes, rivers, ice and wild animals running around and the travel agency promises "search for groups of musk ox, reindeer and polar fox" (*Arctic Friend*, n.d.). Nature takes substantial part of the presentation of the picture of Greenland, but however the tourist position

is in focus as well. The tourist is represented as the main active object in contrast with that the environment is characterized as passive.

The Arctic Friend creates an iconic object-sign relationship. Even the main picture of the trip represents two fin whales in Greenland coast (Picture 12). In this case, the icons require special knowledge of certain animals. Last but not least if tourist won't have any prior experience or knowledge about Greenland, the representation of this trip will create an image of wild and unexplored land.

Additionally, the Climate Explorer trip brings climate as an attraction of Greenland. The Arctic Friend page draws Greenland as a representative of the climate change. They invite people to "discuss how both the grassing and climate in this arctic environment influence the vegetation growth and diversity" as well as to "discuss the climate changes and the influence this creates on the local wildlife and population with your local guides that experiences the changes at first hand" (*Arctic Friend*, n.d.). Nature - the flora and fauna - are still the main focus on the trip. However people who live there - in this case the local guides - play two different roles as both representations and representative of the climate change. Tourist are invited to discuss "climate changes influences the conditions for the wildlife and local hunters". Martello argued that Arctic people see themselves as a symbol for the climate change or as a spokesperson of the environment (Martello, 2008). And in this case the local guide is sharing his experiences of how climate changes affect the Arctic community and nature. Despite the fact that the discussion involves the Arctic community, the main attention still remains the environment. Nevertheless, the representation of the local people appears on two aspects of this trip: one of them is in terms of how environmental impact of hunters, the other is history of "first settlements in this area and their cultural heritage and behavior"(*Arctic Friend*, n.d.). It seems that in the representation of Greenland on the Arctic Friend page the time is stopped. The talk on the page is about the past (or concentrating on hunting culture which is an iconic sign of Greenland) while ignoring the current time.

The Climate explorer page is representing adventure tourism, such as hiking, dog sledding, and admiring the wildlife, as well as depicting Greenlandic landscapes and natural attractions, such as icebergs and the ice cap. According to Rasmussen, these are the most common reasons to visit Greenland (Rasmussen, 2010). The attractions like whales (which are represented in the main

picture of this trip) can be easily confused with other attractions from other countries, such as Iceland. However, the dog-sledding attraction can be icon, index or a symbol depending on each tourist's collateral experience.

However, within the representation of the trip the interpretant can get an impression of the sense of the temporality and changes. The trip offers For example taking pictures *"which can be implemented in climate models focusing on melting speed of the icecap through glaciers"* or "understanding of the visible changes in the area and in Greenland". As it was mentioned before, debates about climate change have put the Arctic on the map. Moreover, according to Dawson the enviromental changes are driving a new travel phenomena where tourist travel to"endagered destinations" in order to view and experience attractions before they change or disappear (Dawson et al., 2011: 251). The Arctic Friend is using this alternative advertisement for Greenland in order to interest potential tourists and boost tourism numbers. The Climate Explorer trip in the main website page is presented with a picture of a mountain glacier which according Bjørst becomes a climate symbol and creates narratives about the Arctic climate change (Picture 13).
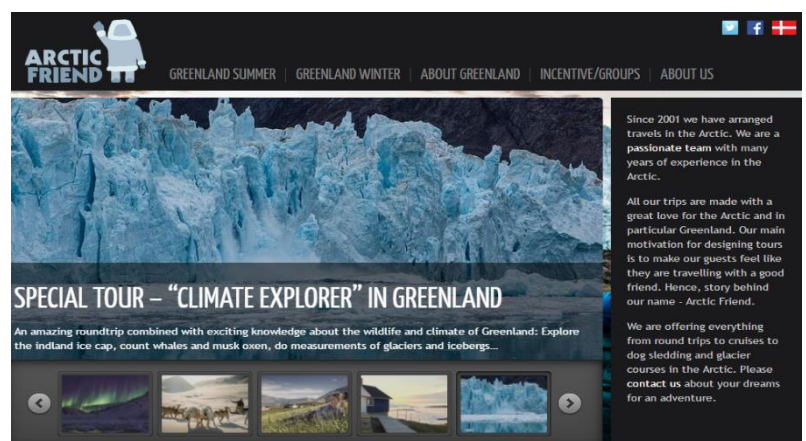
Picture 14 Arctic Friend "Special Tour- Climate explorer"

In order for the representation to occur, the sign-interpretant relationship should also be considered. This trip invites the tourist to explore climate and wild nature, to discuss the climate change and the effects it has on the Arctic community as well as the flora and fauna. In order to do so, the potential tourist should have collateral experiences and knowledge about it. The trip includes discussions and several meetings with local scientist who share information and open discussion about the environmental changes. By having prior knowledge about Greenland, the Danish consumer would be able to recognize the previously mentioned signs from the texts and images provided and would directly link that to the object - Greenland.

The main object of this trip is to explore climate and substantial part of the trip is concentrate on discussions about the climate change and how it shapes the environment and life in the Arctic

community. Considering this fact, the potential travelers should be anxious about the climate change. However, there is a paradox. According Oniell text "while climate change was seen by participants as a generally important issue, it was not something that participants tended to consider personally salient" (O'Neill & Nicholson-Cole, 2009: 370) By traveling thousands of kilometers to know more about climate change and how it affects the nature and locals in Greenland, the tourists are at the same time polluting even more. According to Dawson "It appears that destinations are increasingly being prioritised and marketed based on vulnerability in order to take advantage of the economic opportunities associated with 'disappearing' attractions" (Dawson et al., 2011: 251). A question emerges: are the tourists going to this trip doing it to explore and gain knowledge about how climate in Greenland or they are "climate tourist", who want to see Arctic landscapes and wildlife before it disappears.

## 7.2 United States websites analysis „Intrepid Travel"

The US based travel agent the Intrepid Travel was founded in 1989, and it has over 100 000 yearly travellers across the globe (*Intrepid travel*, n.d.). The company offers many different kinds of trips to Greenland. This research will analyse the content on the main page of trips to Greenland, "Greenland tours & travel" as well as on the Greenland's Disko Bay trip –page, "Greenland's Disko Bay" (*Intrepid travel*, n.d.).   The Disko Bay trip page was chosen because it is focused solely on Greenland – many of the other trips were circulating also in other countries such as Iceland and Canada, or had a specific focus, such as the Northern Lights. The Disko Bay page represents a trip that is happening and that focuses only in Greenland.

When analysed through Pierce's model, the following elements can be found in the Intrepid Travels site:

The Object: Greenland

The Sign: Photographs from the Intrepid Travel website

The Audience: potential United States customers
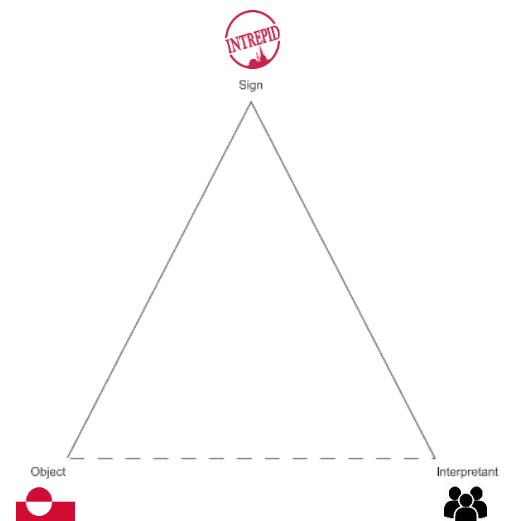
Picture 15 Peirce's semiotic triangle for Intrepid Travel

According to Pierce, the way the Sign is related to the Object is affecting the way the Interpretant sees the Object. Thus this relationship between the Sign and the Object is the point where this research will focus in the analysis of the representation process. As Pierce explains, this relationship can be either indexical, iconic or symbolic. (Thomsen & Vester, 2015: 258)[1] This research will now define what kind of object-sign relationship is found in the Intrepid Travels site.

7.2.1 Greenland tours & travel

The main mage of Greenland tours and travel introduces Greenland from the early beginning "About 4,500 years ago, early man migrated thousands of perilous miles from Canada into Greenland." The first part of the text concentrates on what the first inhabitants saw in Greenland:

"ice-covered mountains, glaciers and resident polar bears". The presentation of Greenland by the Intrepid Travel brings everything in the picture: history and the very beginning of the discovering of Greenland, wilderness and animals living in there, weather conditions and recent time. Moreover, by the first sentence of the presentation of Greenland the Intrepid Travel creates a bond between the interpretant and the object. Creating a relationship between Greenland and the people from North America could increase willingness to travel to Greenland because of the common connection to the land.

Picture 16 Intrepid Travel website "Greenland tours & travel" page image

The main page holds two pictures on it's own and ten pictures that are there to represent each of their nine trips and one article. This analysis will focus on the two main pictures, since the others represent the specific trips or articles, not Greenland in general. The first of the pictures is the main picture at the top of the page. This picture depicts a Greenlandic landscape, a glacier by the sea (Picture 14). The colour of the ice is cold and blue, and the ice curves in beautiful shapes, forming caves and arches. Behind the ice there looms snow covered mountains and dark coloured sky. The picture represents solely nature – there is nothing human-related visible in the picture. The messages this picture conveys are messages of pure and cold Arctic nature, a wilderness where there are no human present, beautiful and fragile environment and remote and even threatening place. Also the landscape mode of the picture conveys the vastness and grandiosity of the Arctic nature, at the same time giving the feeling the viewer can enter the picture and experience the environment. These messages increase the feeling of Greenland being a special and interesting place and the sense of adventure. Another thing the pictures of the glaciers in here and in later pictures are connected to is the environmental aspects. Several authors stated that icebergs and melting ice are becoming a symbol of climate change (Bjørst & Ren, 2015; *Giant icebergs are slowing climate change, research reveals*, n.d.). According to O'Neill, most of the

investigated participants in his study conceptualize climate change as the melting of glaciers and icebergs (O'Neill & Nicholson-Cole, 2009: 368). In addition to this, it is mentioned in the literature review that Greenland is becoming a symbol for the climate change and has become a new climate tourist attraction. In there one can experience unique natural phenomena before it disappears, before the ice melts (Dawson et al., 2011: 251; Lemelin, Stewart, Maher, & LuØck 2010: 478). These pictures of glaciers are linked to this growing phenomena - a "phenomenon where individuals 'rush' to 'endangered destinations' in order to view and experience various attractions and landscapes before they are perceived to diminish or disappear."(Dawson et al. 2011" 251)The melting ice is becoming an interest for the whole world, and representing this for the tourists helps to get their attention (Dawson et al., 2011: 251).

The other picture on the main page is a picture about Inuit children (Picture 15). There are two kids in the picture sitting next to each other on white snow. Both kids are holding a small dog puppy in their hands and smiling widely. Sun is shining and colours are warm, and in the background there is nothing but snow visible. These kids are in the page in order to represent the Inuit people. Compared to

Picture 17 Intrepid Travel website "Greenland tours & travel" page image

the traditional narrative about the Arctic people presented in literature review, this picture gives a more modern take on the Inuit people. Traditional survival skills or clothes are not pictured, instead the kids are wearing modern and colourful clothes. Their happy smiles and colourful clothes convey an idea of a generous and welcoming people, who live a happy life (Pennington & Thomsen, 2010: 39). This is also conveyed by the way the children are close to the camera and looking at the viewer. The setting, sitting in the snow, tells how these people are grown in connection to their surroundings and are at home in snow. The small puppies in their laps underline this connection to the nature, as well as create a warm feeling people are tend to feel when they see baby animals. Dogs are an iconic symbol of Greenland, and greenlandic children holding them creates even stronger iconic representation.

In the travel site this picture conveys a promise of connection to the local people when travelling, modern Inuit people living in harmony with the nature, not minding about tourists but welcoming them with smiles. According to Pennington and Thomsen smiles are symbolic content associated

with having a quality experience (Pennington & Thomsen, 2010: 39). The text near this picture encourages tourists to be responsible as well as to "be considerate of Greenland's customs, traditions, religion and culture" and that as a travel agency the Intrepid Travels is "committed to travelling in a way that is respectful of local people, their culture, local economies and the environment"(*Intrepidtravel*, n.d.). Moreover, the Intrepid Travel says: "please ask and receive permission before taking pictures of people, especially children". Interpretants are immediately introduced with the company's idea of travelling to Greenland. In some ways the Intrepid Travel is protecting and caring about the local people, their privacy, welfare and economic factors. This can be seen by few travel tips that the Intrepid has include to the list of advices. One of them is "for environmental reasons, try to avoid buying bottled water", which shows the company's concern about the environmental impact of tourists. They also advise people that "supporting local artists helps keep traditional crafts alive". All these traveling tips for the interpretant can be interpreted as indirect reminders about the climate change, which conveys the idea that the Intrepid Travel cares about the environment.

The Intrepid Travel presents a guide for the interpretant about how he or she should act: "Be considerate" "try to avoid" "support locals" "please ask". It seems that the Object - Greenland - is represented as a distinctive, special destination. "It's important to remember that what may be acceptable behaviour, dress and language in your own country, may not be appropriate in another." These instructions can give an image that the local people, their culture and their traditions are extraordinary and that the interpretant needs to be extra cautious when visiting Greenland. This creates a distance and in some sense separates the object and interpretant. Moreover, it be argued that the Intrepid Travel is assuming that the interpretant does not have any degree of previous experience that includes some prior knowledge of the object. The Intrepid Travel is trying to fill this missing gap of collateral
inexperience.
In the pictures on the page (described above) Greenland is the object and the landscape and the children are the signs. For the interpretants these features have an indexical connection between them. Having an indexical relationship between the sign and the object means that the sign has an actual, real connection to the object. (Thomsen & Vester, 2015: 259) Both the landscape and the Inuit children are directly linked to Greenland – they can both be found from there. As explained in the theory part, indexical relationship functions as a promise for the tourist that these places can

be found at from the destination. These photographs rely on the authenticity and documentary qualities mentioned in the theory, and thus act as a promise for the tourist that the signs and sceneries in pictures can be actually found in at Greenland. Interpretants do not need to interpret and imagine, they can directly imagine themselves to the settings of the pictures. They can expect to find pure and harsh nature and friendly people, which are both very positive things for someone planning a trip to Greenland.

Despite the fact that most of the text is talking about the wilderness of Greenland and of responsible travel, in one of the sentences the Intrepid Travel presents Greenland's political situation: "technically still part of Denmark, Greenland is now self-governing and has a proud Inuit culture". The next sentence presents it as a destination "with no crowds, little crime and only a few roads to break up the endless ice flow". By these sentences the Intrepid Travel presents picture of nowadays Greenland. This is a quite accurate and recent picture of Greenland.

7.2.2 Greenland's Disko Bay

Picture 18 Intrepid Travel website "Greenland's Disko Bay" page image

The Intrepid Travel agency webpage of the trip to Greenland's Disko Bay contains six pictures. One of them is the main picture, and the five others are in the gallery in the middle of the page. Not all pictures in the gallery are visible at once, but the interpretant can scroll to the sides to see more pictures. This analysis will focus on all of these pictures.

The main picture is perfectly linked with the headline of the trip "Explore Greenland and discover the whales and icebergs of the Arctic"(Picture 16). The name of the trip highlights what the interpretant is going to find in Greenland: "whales and icebergs". The Intrepid Travel combines two symbols in the name of the trip and invites the interpretant to "discover" it. The word "discover" refers to being "the first to find or observe place, substance or scientific phenomena" which invokes a sense of Greenland being undiscovered and land" (English Oxford Living

Dictionaries," n.d.). According to Dawson, "the history of tourism is replete with 'firsts'" it was related with discoveries and the first race who reach the North pole first (2011: 251).

The main picture of the page represents a landscape from Greenland (Picture 16). It is an ice-covered shore with open water on the front and glacier at the back. Above the ice there is a clear, blue sky, and sun sparkles on the snow. Small bits and pieces of ice and snow float in the water, and a red boat is sailing in the water. The boat seems to be heading towards the shore, and it has several peoples aboard. Text near the picture is talking a lot about the nature of Greenland "around fascinating Disko Bay" and "spectacular Eqip Sermia glacier" (*Intrepid travel*, n.d.). However, the interpretant is the main focus. Tourist is portrayed as active, to "explore", "learn", "do some hiking", "zip along" "see", "kayak" and to experience Greenland nature (*Intrepid travel*, n.d.). Nevertheless, no photographs are presenting the local people. The text about the trip is promising that the tourist will "learn how to say hello in small Inuit communities" as well as to learn about the traditions.

Picture 19 Intrepid Travel website "Greenland's Disko Bay" page gallery

The first picture in the gallery depicts a small dog (Picture 17). This puppy is light coloured and looking towards the camera. It is standing on some vegetation, which is surrounded by rocky ground. Green grass and hay can be seen behind the dog, but nothing else is visible in the background. The next picture in the gallery is a picture of some habitation from Greenland. It is a landscape picture that has a view to very far. In the distance one can see mountains that are partly covered in clouds, and blue sky covers the view. In the front, several colourful and quite traditional wooden houses stand in a valley. A road leads from the front of the picture to the shore on the right. The ground is green and rocky, and no humans are visible. However, the round and the houses indicate that humans are living in here. This photo is directly related with a text which promises "different side of the landscape with the colourful houses of Uummannaq."

The next three pictures are all landscape pictures from Greenlandic wilderness. The first of these is taken from a boat on the sea. There are two people in the front of the picture, gazing to the sea, covered in yellow weatherproof clothing. The sea is tranquil and mirrors the blue sky and its

clouds. Some icebergs are floating in the water. After this picture there is a picture of a rocky hillside. A human is standing in the middle of a picture, looking straight to the camera, smiling. The person is wearing hiking clothes and a camera, and is holding a climbing stick in the hand. Behind the person a steep hillside rises. The hill is rocky but also covered in colourful plantation, and two more people are walking there. In the upper west corner there is some blue sky. The last picture in the gallery depicts a glacier. Steep blue and white ice wall rise towards the sky, and no human are present. Blue sky overcasts the landscape, but the nature seems harsh and cold.

Greenland is pictured as a stable or frozen, not just in ice but in time as well. Written representation of the Greenland is not talking about any history or development of Greenland from economic or social point of view. Static Greenlandic representation presents the country as if it was isolated from all world problems or politics. Greenlanders (or fairer speaking Greenland nature - wilderness) is like living peacefully in a bubble.

Indexical relationship can be found also between these signs and the object. Just like it was with the pictures on the main page of trips to Greenland, also on the Disko Bay page the pictures represent actual places and things in Greenland. The places and landscapes as well as activities presented in the pictures are things the interpretant can experience in Greenland, and the pictures have a real connection to the things they represent. This kind of indexical representation gives the potential tourist a clear impression of the existing elements of the destination. For example the main picture is a straightforward index of what the tourist can experience in a boat trip. There is a genuine relationship between the object and the sign which is not depend purely on the interpretant's mind (Chandler, 2007: 42). The landscape mode, clear weather and impressive glacier are there to make the experience even more inviting. The setting also emphasises the above mentioned interest towards climate tourism, as it depicts melting ice, a symbol for the global warming (Bjørst & Ren, 2015). The lonely boat underlines the massiveness of the wilderness and the fact that humans are only visiting this place. The indexical relationship and this impressive and beautiful picture of Arctic wilderness creates a promise of a unique adventure in a one of a kind place.

This promise of an adventure is even more present in the pictures in the gallery that include humans in them. The presence of a human dressed in outdoors clothes is a clear sign that this is what the trip will be like. The humans in the pictures are there to enable the interpretants to imagine themselves in the situation. There is a maximum of three persons in one picture, which

conveys that there are not many tourists around, and that this kind of trip is one of a kind experience that only a few will experience. The contrast of a few humans surrounded by the nature also underlines the vastness of the wilderness. The happy face of the person on the mountain and the persons gazing to the sea on the boat imply, that the traveller will be able to get close to the nature and to enjoy this experience. As it was written text on the website mainly represents active tourist who can get physical experience Greenland. However, all photographs represent middle age couples. By looking to the pictures it can be seen that they do not present any young people or families. Considering the outfits of the pictures, trips to Greenland require investment in special equipment. It creates an image that visiting Greenland is not for everyone.

When the pictures discussed above focused more on the experiences, the last three pictures, of the dog, the village and the glacier, focus more on representing Greenland. With the absence of a humans, these solely represent Greenlandic phenomena, such as animals, culture, nature and environment. They all convey a closeness of the nature, the two landscape pictures also underlining the vastness of the wilderness . The text is talking about "landscape with the colourful houses of Uummannaq", though the Intrepid Travel website is not mentioning the fact that most of the people are living in big cities where they have local and international business, infrastructure and educational opportunities (Axmark, n.d.; Pennington & Thomsen, 2010). Especially in the picture of the village the contrast between the cut, colourful houses and the vast mountains behind them create a feeling of a place where the nature is uniquely present. All of the pictures portray their topics in a very beautiful way, with no dark colours or negative aspects, which creates a very charming and interesting picture of the country. The combination of pictures with a domesticated animal, human habitat and a natural phenomenon creates a sense that Greenland is a country that has many sides – traditional culture, close connection to the nature and majestic wilderness.

The pictures on both Greenland tours & travel and on Greenland's Disko Bay pages do however also have another kind of connection between the sign and the object. In addition to the indexical relationship, they also have some iconical features. Iconic relationship is one where the sign resembles the object by for example sharing some qualities with it. (Thomsen & Vester, 2015: 259) Iconic pictures are for example pictures about glaciers. They are something the interpreter can recognise and feel some closeness to – it is a thing about Greenland that is generally known and thus familiar. Other iconic signs are pictures of animals, the dogs in the pictures. Also these are

generally known and familiar aspect of Greenland, and create a sense of familiarity to the reader. One more iconic sign is the picture of Inuit children. The Inuit people are a well-known aspect of Greenland, and showing them in a picture enhances the interpreters sense of familiarity and thus promotes the destination. As explained in the theory part, this iconic relationship is important in the tourism because the familiarity has an important role in the overall image formation and a positive effect in the decision making process.

8. Discussion

The aim of this study is to present and analyse the Greenlandic representations as a travel destination in travel agencies websites based in the United States and Denmark. By using Pierce's triangle model researcher to define how representations occur, and what the are the forms in which representation transfers particular meanings. In order to do so text and visual analysis was made. According to Hall "language construct meanings" and it is a representational system (Hall, 1997). Photography is representational system that constructs meanings as well by using images. In both cases in the analysis the object was Greenland, the sign was photographs and text from the websites and the audience was either Danish customers (for the Arctic Friend website) or United States customers (for the Intrepid Travel website). After applying theoretical framework to the analysis of representation of Greenland as a travel destination in Denmark and United States, some complementary reflections will now be added. Findings from the analysis part will be gathered and discussed in order to answer the original problem formulation. This part of the thesis will be divided in two sections which declare representations of Greenland as a travel destination.

8.1 "Arctic Friend" - representation of the Greenland by a Danish website

The Arctic Friend website establishes an indexical relationship between the sign and the object. In the website the travel agency presents pictures of sceneries that can actually be found in Greenland. Most of the pictures depict icebergs and ice sheets, Greenlandic landscapes and nature, colourful towns together with ice or snow. However, the main focus of the website is in the representation of the nature and experiences the tourist can get in Greenland. The iconic signs, such as glaciers, ice, whales, dogs and ox, or specific experiences, like walking on the ice sheet, dog sledding and sailing with the boat around the icebergs. The picture of Greenland created by the Arctic Friend concentrates on wilderness and nature while ignoring local people and cities that "like Ilulissat have surprisingly much to offer in terms of fine dining and nightlife" ("Greenland Benchmarking Report," n.d.). The website creates an impression of Greenland as uninhabitable, cold land which tourist are invited to explore. Moreover the pictures give a sense of adventure, since humans in them are out in the wilderness, experiencing the Greenlandic nature. The Arctic Friend website creates a picture of an active tourist as an "explorer" of Greenland. In some sense they are creating the feeling that the interpretant as a tourist discovers a new land in

the same way as the first inhabitants coming to Greenland. Maybe because of that the Danish travel agency is overlooking the social and developed side of the Greenland. By the generating Greenlandic picture as wild and uninhibited land in some sense they creating exotic destination with feeling of adventure and new discoveries.

Pictures made by The Arctic Friend create contrast between the static Greenlandic nature and an active tourist. However, the Arctic Friend portrays very specific images of the tourists. In most of the pictures tourists are middle age couples with specific clothes and equipment. This representation refers that Greenland is not for everybody, as you cannot see young people or families. Travel agency Arctic Friend refers to Greenland as a specific place for certain people. This is in line with the claim that "Greenland is still regarded as an exclusive holiday destination that caters to travellers seeking an extraordinary experience" ("Greenland Benchmarking Report," n.d.).

The analysis was focused on a trip called "Climate Explorer", which was organised by the Danish travel agency to visit Greenland. The main feature of this trip is climate. Danish travel agency represents Greenland as a state and a representative of climate change. Despite the fact that the discussion about climate change which involves the whole Arctic community, the main attention still remains in the the environment. Nevertheless, the representation of the local people related to this trip is mostly concerning the environmental impact climate change for Greenlandic hunters. There is no considerations of how the climate affects people living in the Greenland today. Also there is no discussions about how it affects the country's economy, how the climate change opens new opportunities for Greenland for example when it comes to mining and having new sea roads. Even if the text provides clues about Greenland, the credibility of the statements is questionable. The main object of this trip is to explore climate and substantial part of the trip is concentrated on discussions about the climate change and how it shapes the environment and life in the Arctic community. Considering this fact, the potential travellers should be anxious about the climate change. And as it was mentioned before in the literature review section, Denmark is showing an example of sustainable development. The question is if the Arctic Friend website is using this "climate travel" trend as an opportunity in terms of increasing sales? And this consciously representing Greenland as climate change symbol where the tourist can see how climate change affects the nature. This creates a conflict between actually traveling to see climate change and caring about it.

However, in this case the Arctic Friend overlooks Greenland's communities and economic development, politics and the history of the nation. By doing this in some ways the Danish travel agency ignoring people who are living there.

Last but not least, the only photograph with local people is with them wearing traditional clothes. This refers to past and history of them and does not represent present time and people in Greenland. Greenland is presented as a place isolated from all the world. By overlooking the economic development, big town's infrastructure and people's way of life there the representation creates a picture of wild land, untouched by human presence. It is good to consider whether the Arctic Friend is intentionally keeping a representation of wild Greenland in order to maintain interest of Greenland as a tourist destination.

8.2 The Intrepid Travel- representation of Greenland by a United State website

Similarly to the Arctic Friend website, the Intrepid travel agency creates an indexical relationship between the sign and the object. The pictures and texts represent actual places and things in Greenland. Static representation of the Greenland presents the country as if it was isolated from all the world's problems and politics. Greenlanders (or actually the Greenland nature - wilderness) seems to be living peacefully in a bubble. With the absence of humans, the sole representations of Greenlandic phenomena are animals, culture, nature and the environment. The contrast is made by photographic representations that present tourists surrounded by the nature which underlines the vastness of the wilderness. However, the interpretant is the main focus. The tourist is portrayed as active, able to "explore", "learn", "do some hiking", "zip along" "see", "kayak" and to experience Greenland nature (*Intrepid travel*, n.d.). Greenland is pictured as a stable or frozen, not just in ice but in time as well. Written representation of the Greenland is not talking about any history or development of Greenland from economic or social point of view.

However, the first paragraph representing Greenland mentions historical and political aspects. The first sentence informs the interpreter about the time when the first inhabitants arrived in Greenland and about what they saw: "ice-covered mountains, glaciers and resident polar bears". This presents an iconic relationship between the sign and the object. The Intrepid Travel website displays a lot of pictures of ice and snow but never mentions the melting of ice or the climate situation. An appealing discovery was the explanation of the Greenland-Denmark relationship: "Although technically still part of Denmark, Greenland is now self-governing and has a proud Inuit

culture". It was the only place where Greenland political situation and relationship with Denmark was mentioned. Moreover it is exclusive because it represent current situation of Greenland. One of the most interesting and unexpected part of the Intrepid Travel website is the way it presents a guide for the interpretant about to act in Greenland: "Be considerate" "try to avoid" "support locals" "please ask". It seems that the object - Greenland - is represented as a distinctive, special destination. "It's important to remember that what may be acceptable behaviour, dress and language in your own country, may not be appropriate in another." The Intrepid Travel website creates a distance between the interpretant and the object by reminding the readers that they are different from each other. The Intrepid Travel is assuming that the interpretant does not have any degree of previous experience that includes some prior knowledge of the object. Despite the fact that the Intrepid Travel points out cultural differences between the interpretant and the local people of Greenland, the travel agency is at the same time protecting and caring about the local people, their privacy, welfare and economic factors. The interpretant is encouraged to support local businesses and to buy from local people as well as to care about environment and encouraged to recycle and to think about buying decisions they make. Explanation about Greenland-Denmark relationship and all advices and tips about traveling to Greenland can be directly related with lack of collateral experience with the object. Seems that Intrepid travel assumed that potential tourist have particular baggage of the knowledge and they need to provide contextual representation and information. That would explain previous mentioned distinction between United States and Greenland cultures which Intrepid travel created by presenting information about destination. However, it pose a question if in the end we are so different?

The main limitation of this study is it's scope. Only two websites of the representation of Greenland were analysed. In order to produce more accurate findings which can be in some sense generalized further studies research should look in additional websites from Denmark and United States. After writing this thesis, I would recommend for the further studies to take more time for thinking and going back and forward in the literature as well as analysis after some time.

9. Conclusions

Language and photographic representations construct meanings. Representations in tourism are the method by which "the original characteristics of a destination are transformed into simulations and conveyed by means of various media" in order to promote tourism destinations (Hunter, 2008: 354). With understanding that every person as well as every culture sees things through the prism of their own perceptions, researcher analysed two representations of Greenland, from United States and Denmark. Both of the websites present Greenland as a place of wilderness and pure and cold Arctic nature, beautiful and fragile environment and remote and even threatening place.

Websites ignore the presentation of local communities, economic development of the country and politics. Despite the fact that both travel agencies put Greenlandic nature as the main focus of the trips, representations of tourists also hold a very important part. By establishing indexical relationship between the sign and the object, the two travel agencies are showing the potential tourist what they are going to experience if they choose to travel to Greenland. Pictures of tourists in wild Greenland natures are reinforced by texts that invite the interpretants to see, touch, learn and etc. The tourists are portrayed as active explorers. However, the websites creates an image that tourists in Greenland are a very specific- middle age couples with specific clothes and equipment. This signifies that Greenland is an exclusive destination. Where were two main differences between the Danish and the United States travel agencies representations of the Greenland as a travel destination. By presenting Greenland the United States based website - the Intrepid Travel - makes a distinction between the interpretant and local people. The website provide the guidance how to act in Greenland by reminding people that local communities and their culture can be really different. However at the same time by giving 'responsible travel tips' of traveling to Greenland the Intrepid Travel website creates a clear point that they care about the local communities' economy and the environment. Last but not least, the Danish travel agency Arctic Friend suggest that the whole trip is targeted to people who are interested in environmental changes of flora and fauna in Greenland. Despite these differences of representation of Greenland as a travel destination, the results are mostly the same in Danish as well as in the United State based website.

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