



So, to Whom do the Waves Belong?

A Discussion on Localism, Identity and Otherness in the Surf Culture of Sri Lanka

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Reading Instructions

This is a Master Thesis produced by a 10th semester student at Aalborg University, Copenhagen. It has been compiled in the summer/autumn of 2017 and handed in on November 14, 2017. Here, brief explanations for the lay-out of the project will be described.

Throughout the thesis, two kinds of quotation marks have been used; first of all, the single quotation mark (') is used to present concepts; and secondly, the double quotation mark (") is used for direct citations, either from the field work presented in the appendix or quotes from theorists, and the page number of the original source will be applied to the reference. Long quotations are indented as to create a clear indication of them, and if a word or part of a citation is omitted, [...] will be applied.

Moreover, italic font is applied literature titles or headlines throughout the project (e.g. *Surf localism in Costa Rica: exploring territoriality among Costa Rican and foreign resident surfers*, 2.2: *Grounded Theory*) and capital first letters have been used for specific job positions that are used instead of names due to anonymization (e.g. Camp Manager, Surf Instructor).

The APA Sixth Edition is used for references, which means that sources will be written as (Author, Year) in the text. If a reference is applied more than once, only the year will be written in parenthesis after the sentence. Furthermore, if the author is mentioned by name in the beginning of the sentence, the year will be written immediately after the name (e.g. Eriksen (2015) claims ...). At the end of the thesis, all of the references utilized throughout the project are listed alphabetically.

In addition, the various parts of the thesis are numbered in accordance with the List of Content in order to create a cohesive and clear structure of the project.

Furthermore, in the transcription of the interviews, [] is used to define implicit comments as well as actions during the interviews (e.g. [laughing]).

Lastly, the reader should be aware that these Reading Instructions as well as Abstract, List of Content, List of Appendices, List of References and Appendices are not included in the total number of characters as stated on the front page. Appendix can be found separately.

With these reading instructions in mind, I hope the project will appeal to the reader.

Abstract

The developing tourism in Sri Lanka and the increase in surf tourists visiting the destination has led to some encounters and challenges within the surf industry. Due to the surf spots getting more and more crowded with surfers, notions of localism arise and, thus, inevitable conflicts about who has the right to surf the waves occur.

In this thesis, the surf scene in Sri Lanka has been investigated and examined through a case study based on an ethnographic field work within the surf milieu on the southwest coast of Sri Lanka and a thorough investigation of a foreign owned surf camp, where the researcher worked as a Camp Manager. The findings of the field work have been supported by interviews with managers and owners of other surf camps in the area, an interview with a local surfer, an online survey for foreign surf instructors working in the area and an e-mail correspondence about intimidation and violence in the surf scene. Subsequently, the findings of the research have been analyzed and discussed on the basis of a theoretical framework on concepts of localism, identity and difference. A post-structural methodological framework has been applied with the aim of gaining knowledge to the already existing material on the topic through a grounded theory approach.

The analysis of the empirical material led to general patterns about challenges with local employees at the involved surf camps. Through a grounded theory approach it was established that localism in Sri Lanka distinguishes from other destinations as presented in the theory review in the sense that it to a great extent regards ownership of job opportunities in relation to the rising surf tourism industry rather than ownership of a certain surf spot and the waves.

Furthermore, it was evident that local surfers are not to be identified as the same as they all have different narratives that have shaped their self-identities. As it has been demonstrated throughout the thesis, some local employees at surf camps have proven to be very efficient and valuable workers in comparison to local employees at other surf camps, leaving food for thought as to how power relations have been applied and handled in the various circumstances.

Finally, it was found that difference is important in the perception of the self and others in the sense that encounters might be perceived differently through the eyes of locals than through the eyes of a foreign owner of a surf camp. Furthermore, power relations and appreciation and influence of these proved to be essential in the various conflicts that has emerged from the increase in surf tourists within the surf industry in Sri Lanka, as well as in possible settlements to the conflicts.

List of Content

Part 1: Introduction	7
1.1: Background for the Research	8
1.2: Research Question	8
Part 2: Methodological Framework and Research Methods for Empirical Data Collection	9
2.1: Methodological Framework	9
2.2: Grounded Theory	10
2.3: Methods for Compilation of the Empirical Material.....	11
2.3.1. Confidentiality, Pseudonyms and Ethical Approval	11
2.3.2: Field Work.....	11
2.3.3: Interviews with Owners and/or Managers of Surf Camps.....	12
2.3.4: Interview with Local Surfer.....	14
2.3.5: Online Survey for Foreign Surf Instructors	14
2.3.6: E-mail Correspondence Regarding Intimidation and Violence in the Surf Scene.....	15
2.4: Analysis of the Empirical Material	16
2.4.1: Credibility as a Researcher.....	17
2.5: Reflections on the Data Collection	17
Part 3: Theoretical Framework	19
3.1: Surf Tourism, a Literature Review.....	19
3.2: Does Anyone Own the Waves? Localism in Surfing as a Concept.....	21
3.3: An Introduction to Self-Identity, Impacts of Societies and Power Relations.....	24
3.4: Producing a Perception of the 'Other'	26
Part 4: Analysis	28
4.1: Surfing in Sri Lanka.....	28
4.2: Localism in Sri Lanka	28
4.2.1: Codes of Conduct and How to Behave in the Water	29
4.2.2: Localism's Impact on Surf Instructions	31
4.2.3: A Different kind of Localism	31
4.2.4: Should Waves be for Sale?	33

4.3.5: To Involve or not to Involve Authorities.....	35
4.3: A Local Work Force.....	37
4.3.1: Attempts to Exert Power and the Influence of Power Relations	40
4.4: Opposites Attract.....	42
4.5: Pros and Cons of the Increasing Surf Industry	43
4.6: So, to Whom do the Waves Belong?	44
Part 5: Conclusion	46
List of References	48

List of Appendices

Appendix 1: Field Work in Sri Lanka	2
Appendix 1.1: Surfing in Sri Lanka	2
Appendix 1.2: Employment of Local Surf Instructor	4
Appendix 1.3: Paying for Waves	7
Appendix 2: Interview with Surf Camps	8
Appendix 2.1: Interview with Surf Camp 1	9
Appendix 2.2: Interview with Surf Camp 2	14
Appendix 2.3: Interview with Surf Camp 3	16
Appendix 2.4: Interview with Surf Camp 4	18
Appendix 2.5: Interview with Surf Camp 5	20
Appendix 3: Interview with Local Surfer	22
Appendix 4: Online Survey for Surf Instructors	25
Appendix 4.1: 1 st Reply to Survey	26
Appendix 4.2: 2 nd Reply to Survey	27
Appendix 4.3: 3 rd Reply to Survey	28
Appendix 4.4: 4 th Reply to Survey	29
Appendix 4.5: 5 th Reply to Survey	30
Appendix 4.6: 6 th Reply to Survey	31
Appendix 4.7: 7 th Reply to Survey	32
Appendix 4.8: 8 th Reply to Survey	33
Appendix 5: E-mail Correspondence with People in the Surf Industry	35

Part 1:

Introduction

Surf tourism has gained increased attention during the past decade, and with the industry becoming more and more mainstream, the number of tourists visiting surf destinations keeps growing. The surf tourism industry has gone from being a fairly narrow niche to something popular and trendy, tempting tourists, who have never surfed before, to follow the trend and learn the sport on one of the many surf camps around the world. Also, experienced surfers escape their own surf spots, that might be crowded due to the increase in surfers, and chase good waves around the world (Olivier, 2010).

One of the countries that has gained extra attention and developed as a tourist and surf destination due to the increase in the surf tourism is Sri Lanka. On the way to growth, the tourism industry in Sri Lanka has met several obstacles; apart from the long and bitter civil war rooted in ethnic tensions between the Sinhalese and the Tamil (BBC, 2017), one of the most recent and gravest situations was the Tsunami in 2004 which “devastated nearly two-third of the coastal areas and many of the tourist hotels located along the coastal belt” (P. Srinivasan, Kumar, & Ganesh, 2012), and where more than 30,000 people were killed (BBC, 2017). Since then, the coastline has been rebuilt, and since the civil war ended in Sri Lanka in 2009 (BBC, 2017) the tourism industry has boomed; Sri Lanka is now one of the world’s leading holiday destinations, elected top pick of countries to visit by Lonely Planet in 2013 (Townsend, 2015).

Apart from the stunning nature, tropical climate and amazing wildlife, one of the things that the country has to offer, which attracts many tourists, is surfing. Sri Lanka is especially good as a surf destination due to many hidden reef breaks for the advanced, mellow beach breaks for the intermediate, shallow water with almost no rips for beginners, and a water temperature that allows surfers to surf in nothing but board shorts or a bathing suit; something many prefer as it provides more freedom in the surf when the surfer is not tied into a tight wetsuit. In the southwestern part of Sri Lanka, several surf camps have been established during the past 5 years, and there are more to come. Foreigners with a passion for surfing have discovered the wonder of the waves along the coastline of Sri Lanka and have decided to share this wonder with the world; by offering surfing lessons and everything that belongs to it to surfing enthusiasts from all over the world (Appendix 1). It could seem, though, that a new obstacle for tourism is in the rise in Sri Lanka; with more and more surfers having to share the waves, the surf spots are getting crowded, a very demotivating issue in the surf industry, and with crowds in the water, localism and conflicts caused by it are practically inevitable. Such conflicts happen due to meetings with ‘the other’ and differences in societies, and if localism reaches a certain degree, tourists might be scared away, depriving the destination of a further increase in the number of surf tourists, and thus the economic growth of the country might be affected negatively (Ponting & O’Brien, 2015).

1.1: Background for the Research

For six months, I was working as Camp Manager at one of the foreign owned surf camps that has opened up during the last 5 years. The surf camp has existed in Sri Lanka since 2013 and can be defined as a well-established surf camp. Furthermore, it is one of the largest surf camps in the area with a capacity of 42 guests, predominantly from a Scandinavian origin, but the camp also attracts guests from all over the world. While performing my tasks as a Camp Manager and exploring the local surf scene as a female surf tourist, I conducted a field work of the area; the surf milieu, the surfers as a group, the coastline of southwestern Sri Lanka and the local people working for the surf camp and other locals I met in the area. I was confronted with several conflicts and challenges during my time in Sri Lanka, both between guests and locals, but also between local and foreign employees. My curiosity was awakened by this and by how encounters between differences in background, education, manners and nationality sometimes created conflicts. Additionally, I found it interesting that an activity as surfing, which supposedly is soothing and good for mental health, can induce conflicts when various confrontations take place during surfing.

1.2: Research Question

At first sight, Sri Lanka seems like a country with big potential within the tourism industry, offering a wide variety of sights and activities as well as a tropical climate, while still developing as a destination. In addition, the surf tourism is growing rapidly, letting surfers from all of the world enjoy the great and diverse surf spots that the country has to offer. However, with these many surf tourists visiting the destination, incidents of intimidation and violence has occurred due to crowded surf spots and, thus, notions of localism arise; for local surfers in southwestern Sri Lanka, a sense of ownership of the waves occur when the surf spots get crowded with surf tourists, leaving some of these local surfers to intimidate non-locals in an attempt to drive them away from the area. According to research, such incidents might scare away tourists and thereby have a negative effect on the local communities and the economy of the country (Ponting & O'Brien, 2015), (Usher & Kerstetter, 2015). Therefore, this thesis seeks to investigate concepts and encounters in the surf industry in general and in Sri Lanka in order to comprehend how and why localism occurs through the following research questions:

Investigating the surf tourism of southwestern Sri Lanka through an ethnographic case study with focus on localism, otherness and identity, what are the main motives for localism to occur in this area? How do perceptions of and encounters with 'the other' affect the surf tourism in Sri Lanka, and what are the main challenges in the encounter between surf camps and locals? To what degree is 'difference' essential in the construction of the self, and how are notions of 'difference' applied in cultural encounters?

With these questions in mind, the next part of the thesis will provide an insight in the methodological framework and various methods applied to the research and subsequent analysis.

Part 2:

Methodological Framework and Research Methods for Empirical Data Collection

In this part of the project, the methodological framework applied to the research of the thesis will be presented. Furthermore, the methods used prior to and throughout the thesis will be introduced, explained and examined, and a presentation of the empirical data for the thesis will be provided and later on analyzed. The data consists of a field work, various semi-structured interviews, an online survey and an e-mail correspondence. Explanatory descriptions for use of each method will be presented in the following in order to obtain a better understanding of the groundwork for the project. Additionally, grounded theory will be presented as a base to the project.

2.1: Methodological Framework

Methodology can be defined as "the philosophical framework within which the research is conducted or the foundation upon which the research is based" (Brown, 2006, cited in Research Methodology, n.d.). In other words, the methodological framework is the way a project is framed and can be described as a project's research design. The research design can in a simple way be described as gathering of information with the purpose of creating new knowledge or build on already existing knowledge. In the following, an overview of the research design applied to this thesis will be presented.

The research framework in this thesis is related to previous research on the topic which has already been conducted and which will be presented in the literature review. Moreover, it is based on a post-structural epistemology and ontology. These two methodological approaches can be defined as how knowledge and identity is constructed from representations. Hannam & Knox (2010) emphasizes this social construction by stating that "language [...] is seen as a key contributor to the creation of personal realities, i.e. talking about something makes it real" (p. 177), supporting reasons for applying interviews to a research design. Furthermore, in a post-structural approach social entities are perceived as social constructions rather than objective. In addition, ontology can basically be described as the theory of the nature of existence and addresses how the world and phenomena within it are understood (Hannam & Knox, 2010). That is, reality itself is problematized through this methodology, which is how the empirical material from the ethnographic field work will be approached in the following since the research question of the thesis is based on theories with regards to identity and how we perceive others and difference.

The research of this thesis was based on an ethnographic approach, which according to Bernard (2002) refers to descriptive writings about a particular group of people based on a thorough field work. Such a field work traditionally involves participant observation but can often include interviews, surveys and surveys as well (Bernard, 2002, cited in Salazar, 2011). In the ethnographic approach to this thesis, I as a researcher sought to participate in cultural contexts with the aim of gaining an understanding of people, their activities and their motivations. Additionally, both interviews and surveys were conducted, giving me the opportunity to obtain a

more thorough research. Through in-depth encounters in the field work, ethnographic knowledge of the research question and related topics has been gained, and in the subsequent analysis, a significant use of quotations from interviews and field work will be applied, which is distinctive for research design with an ethnographic approach (Hannam & Knox, 2010). The specific methods applied to the field work and interviews will be presented in the following along with explanations of the underlying reasons for applying these methods. Additionally, the post-structural approach will be applied generally throughout the thesis.

For the initiation of the project, notions from grounded theory has been applied as a tool in an attempt to theorize from the gathered material. This tool will be further developed in the next part.

2.2: Grounded Theory

Grounded theory is a qualitative research method that includes simple systematic coding and analysis technics where the purpose is to detect, develop and theorize based on the empirical data (Boolsen, 2016). Since it is a general research theory, that does not belong to a certain discipline, all data, both qualitative and quantitative, can be included, making the approach flexible. Through grounded theory, it is possible to formulate theories and theorize during the process of the analysis by a constant movement between induction, qualitative research, and deduction, quantitative research, which is why this theory is called an 'exploratory theory' that is grounded in empirical material. Hence, since the ground is taken in the collected empirical material, no primary theory is used for framework of the project (Grounded Theory Online, 2017), and grounded theory lets the data speak for itself (Martin & McKinney, 2013). This means, that the data collection, analysis and theoretical framework are closely connected and that a theory might originate from the results of the data collection. Such a theory will most likely resemble the reality that theories are formulated from concepts about how some believe that the reality should be (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, cited in Boolsen, 2016). Furthermore, the researcher is allowed to bring in his or her own experiences and apply new knowledge and angles into the research throughout the entire process. This way, new knowledge might result in a reformulation of the original research question (Brinkmann & Tanggaard, 2016).

With notions from grounded theory as a tool, I will attempt to find patterns and structures in my research area and to ground my theoretical framework in the empirical material collected during the field work in Sri Lanka. The empirical material has been analyzed with an unprejudiced mindset with the purpose of detecting repetitions and similarities in the data. The aim of applying this research method is therefore to be able to theorize based on the analysis of observations, data collection and field work.

The original research question predominantly regarded conflicts with local employees and local surf instructors at foreign owned surf camps as well as challenges with locals during surf lessons. It was, however, reformulated and elaborated during the research process due to the knowledge obtained from the empirical material.

2.3: Methods for Compilation of the Empirical Material

As presented earlier, for this thesis the data consists of various empirical material to study the encounters within the surf culture in Sri Lanka, namely; a field work from a researcher's, Camp Manager's and female surf tourist's point of view in Sri Lanka lasting from March till August 2017 (six months); five interviews with managers and/or owners of other foreign owned surf camps in the area; an interview with a local surfer and surf instructor from the area; eight replies to an online survey from foreign surf instructors; and lastly, an e-mail correspondence regarding violence and intimidation in the local surf scene between two surf camps and the owner of a surf school close by. The five different approaches to gathering of empirical material and the methods used for choosing and subsequently analyzing will be described in the following. All of the material can be found in the Appendix.

2.3.1. Confidentiality, Pseudonyms and Ethical Approval

During the field work and interviews, it was emphasized to the participants that all material would remain confidential, and that all participants would be anonymized. This was to create a safe environment for the participants and to clarify that none of the information would be used in the work of the surf camp that I worked for.

All informants and participants in the field work have been given a pseudonym as to keep them anonymized and at the same time clarify to the reader what participants are being quoted or mentioned. The managers and owners from the interviews have been named after their title (e.g. Front House Manager = FHM) and the surf camps have been named after the order they were interviewed (e.g. Surf Camp 4). The surf camp that I worked for and that is described during the field work has been named Ahangama Surf Camp, and will throughout the thesis be mentioned as ASC in order to clarify when statements and examples from this camp are employed, and the Local Surf Instructor who was involved in a conflict with ASC will be mentioned as LSI. Furthermore, the local surfer who has been interviewed is called LS, the respondents to the online survey have been named after the order of responding (e.g. 3rd Reply), and finally, the participants in the e-mail correspondence were named after amount of importance to the matter (e.g. Participant 1 = P1 (Surf Coach, Owner of Surf Camp in the area and in contact with the Sri Lankan government)).

Prior to commencing this study and the related research, ethical approval was obtained from the headquarters of ASC as to clarify that the study would not affect my work, nor be used in competitive strategies towards the other surf camps involved.

2.3.2: Field Work

During the 6 months that I stayed in Sri Lanka I was working as a Camp Manager for ASC, and at the same time I conducted a field work based on encounters which I met as a Camp Manager and patterns of happenings and experiences that I had and that I witnessed both as a researcher and as a tourist and surf tourist in the country. The field work lasted six months and was conducted between March and August 2017, which is considered off-season for surfing in the southwestern part of Sri Lanka. The field work gave me as a researcher great insight in local conditions and the culture of Sri Lanka, and it allowed me to better understand reasons for challenges

that I met as a Camp Manager. By conducting the field work continually during my stay in the country, I gained more and more knowledge and my ability to understand local conditions and how to handle challenges as a Camp Manager was improved, which also improved my capability to ask better questions and obtain more comprehensive answers from the interviewees in the subsequent interviews.

The field work has been conducted in the area from Ahangama over Midigama to Weligama in the southwestern part of Sri Lanka. The surf camp that I worked for was located in Ahangama, but most of the surf lessons and surfing took place in Weligama because of the season.

The field work was composed as participant observation, which allowed me to interrelate with the surf milieu and its involved characters and topics within the context of their everyday lives, and because of my different roles, my position changed between observer and participant in the local surfer milieu, which is quite common in a field work according to Hannam & Knox (2010). My role changed between researcher within the field of surf tourism, localism and various encounters, Camp Manager for a foreign owned surf camp in Ahangama, and female surf tourist in Sri Lanka. Observations regarding the focus area of the project during my stay in Sri Lanka were continuously written down in notes and later on in the field work transcribed and gathered in Appendix 1. The observations will be used in the analysis and will help to improve the understanding of the topic as well as provide insights in the challenges I experienced as Camp Manager and my encounters and experiences as a female surf tourist in Sri Lanka. The field work has been divided into three narrative descriptions; *Appendix 1.1: Surfing in Sri Lanka*, *Appendix 1.2: Employment of Local Surf Instructor* and *Appendix 1.3: Paying for Waves*.

The interviews conducted during the field work were in the shape of informal conversations with the participants in the field to grant me access to observe and be with them (Brinkmann & Tanggaard, 2016). They have not been transcribed as traditional interviews but are rather a part of the narrative descriptions from the field work.

The field work was a valuable approach to the research, and the outcome was strengthened with interviews and a survey, which will be described in the following.

2.3.3: Interviews with Owners and/or Managers of Surf Camps

As a big part of my empirical data and approach to the subject, interviews with owners and managers of various foreign surf camps in the area were conducted as to obtain knowledge of possible challenges with locals. Interviews were chosen as method because of the flexibility of it and because of the fact that an interview can be adapted any situation and any interviewee (Guthrie, 2010), granting me the option of adjusting the interviews to each informant and the specific situation. Furthermore, as McGehee (2012) explains, when the researcher wants to capture an informant's ideas, thoughts, and experiences in their own words, interviewing is a valuable tool, which is exactly what I wanted with these interviews as well as the interview described in the next part.

The aim of the interviews was to obtain knowledge of experiences and encounters from other managers and owners of surf camps in the area. Nine different surf camps, all some that I was acquainted with during my stay, were contacted either through social media (if I knew the interviewee in advance) or via the official e-mail address of the surf camp as found on the surf camps' webpages. Five of the contacted surf camps replied and all agreed

to participate in an interview. The age of the informants ranged from 28 to 37 years old and the participants had worked as managers and/or owners in Sri Lanka between three and 18 months. Two of the interviewees were female, and three were male.

The interview questions were focused around surf tourism as this is the main focus of the project, and since all the interviewees are surfers themselves, it would possibly be natural for them to talk freely and openly about this topic. The interviews were formed as semi-structured interviews in order to open up the possibility to change the order of the questions, open up for new, additional questions and to create a more flowing conversation about the topic (Kvale, 1997). At the same time, I still functioned as the interviewer in order to make sure all of the themes of the interview guide were covered. Another important reason for conducting semi-structured interviews is that the surfer milieu is a very laid-back culture where a structured interview might be too standardized and formal (Guthrie, 2010). Also, a structured interview would not provide qualitative answers which was the aim of the interviews rather than quantitative. As Brinkmann and Tanggaard (2016) mention in *Kvalitative Metoder*, since the interview guide was built on knowledge of the topic that I wanted to investigate, by letting the interviewee talk and listen to him/her, several of the themes from the prefabricated interview guide were covered without me asking.

During the interview, I attempted to remain as objective as possible but at the same time to show understanding towards the informants by nodding and otherwise reacting to what they had to say. When needed I remained silent to let the informant think and recall specific happenings or information, or to simply let them talk freely about whatever topic they desired (Brinkmann & Tanggaard, 2016). Follow up questions were asked when there was a need to clarify certain things, and sometimes these follow up questions were interpretative in order to fully understand the opinion of the informant and to start the analysis of the interview statements already while the interview is happening (2016). An example of this is during the interview with Surf Camp 1, where Owner 2 mentions that a challenge is that the locals envy them, where after I ask, "So what you mean is that they get jealous of you?" (Appendix 2.1, p. 10), followed by a more thorough explanation from the informant.

The interviews have all been transcribed and can be found in Appendix 2. All unnecessary parts of the interviews such as long pauses, filling words, interjections, agreeing sounds etc. have been left out of the transcriptions since they are not necessary for the analysis of the interviews (Brinkmann & Tanggaard, 2016). The interviews have been transcribed as full sentences with the content from the informants to make the transcriptions clear and comprehensible.

When finding informants, almost half of the contacted surf camps did not reply to my enquiry about interviewing them, leaving me with only five participants. These five owners and managers were quite willing to participate in the interview and showed interest in the topic. However, some were more reluctant to answer the questions than others, and some were very focused on the process being anonymous, whereas others gave out names and didn't seem to care about it being published anywhere. I made sure to clarify, though, that the interviews would remain confidential and that they would not be used neither in my work as Camp Manager, nor to handle issues with locals on spot.

2.3.4: Interview with Local Surfer

In connection to the previous interviews, an unstructured interview was conducted with a local surfer, who worked as a surf instructor. He neither worked for my surf camp, nor for any of the ones I interviewed. I became acquainted with this surf instructor after a few months in the area, and started conversing with him every time I met him. I mostly met him while surfing, so most conversations took place while sitting on the surf boards in the water, waiting for waves to come. As opposed to many of the other local surfers I met, this guy spoke well English, was very friendly and kind and was eager to give me advice and feedback on my surf technique without expecting to get anything back in advance. I had considered conducting interviews with several local surfers or surf instructors as to get their point of view on the focus area, but I was afraid it would affect my work and that they would not understand that the interview would purely be used for this thesis, and not for my work as Camp Manager. Also, since many of them did not speak well English, and since several showed hostile behavior towards foreign surfers and foreign employees at surf camps, it did not seem like a good idea to attempt interviewing any of them. However, the before mentioned local surf instructor showed credibility and genuine interest in getting to know me and my colleagues, so I started trusting him and decided to conduct an interview with him.

One day while surfing I asked the guy if he would be willing to participate in an interview. I was very careful to emphasize that the interview had nothing to do with my work position, and that it would not in any way be used against him or any other. He was very eager to help out and said yes immediately. We agreed that I should contact him on WhatsApp to set the time and place for the interview. I send him a few messages but without any reply, so I prepared myself to conduct an impulsive interview with him the next time I met him; a few weeks went without meeting him, and I tried contacting him through several media once again. But then one day I met him just as we were both getting up from the water; I had been surfing with a friend and he had been further out on the big waves, surfing with some local friends. I asked if he had time to conduct the interview right away over a cup of coffee, and he said yes.

In preparation for this interview, I wrote down a few questions, but since I wanted the interview to feel more like a conversation with the surf instructor, I planned on conducting an unstructured interview to get in-depth data and to get the interviewee to talk as much as possible and to control the interview (Guthrie, 2010). I had written a few notes down on a piece of paper that I carried around in the tote bag I brought for surfing, so that I had the questions when I met him. During the interview, we were sitting the three of us around a table, drinking coffee, and the atmosphere was very relaxed. I took notes while asking a few questions, and then the surf instructor just talked. He had a lot to tell and was eager to talk about the subject. The notes from the interview were subsequently transcribed to a full interview and can be found in Appendix 3.

2.3.5: Online Survey for Foreign Surf Instructors

Next, an online survey was created with the purpose of composing a quantitative analysis of foreign surf instructors' views of and experiences with the focus area. After the interviews with the managers and owners of various surf camps, each interviewee was asked to send out the link for the survey to their foreign surf instructors to gather anonymous answers to the survey. The main focus of the questions regarded surf instruction in the

area and whether the surf instructors ever encountered any challenges or issues regarding local conditions while giving lessons. With the questions, the aim was to get an overview of the extend of the challenges with surf lessons that I experienced as a manager and that I had heard stories about in the area.

As it will be described more thorough in chapter 2.4: *Reflection on the Data Collection*, the result of the online survey did not turn out quantitative but rather qualitative since it was only possible to find 8 participants for the survey due to the time being off season. This amount of data is not enough to create a statistic but will instead be used to obtain an overview of the extend of incidents with locals and to get an idea of what was done to handle these incidents from a foreign surf instructor's point of view. Furthermore, it will support the field work and the information obtained from the interviews in the subsequent analysis.

Of the eight participants, six were males and two were females. The age ranged from 18 to 34 years old and the participants had worked as surf instructors in Sri Lanka up to 12 months.

2.3.6: E-mail Correspondence Regarding Intimidation and Violence in the Surf Scene

Finally, an e-mail correspondence between me in my position as a Camp Manager, a Marketing Manager of another surf camp and the Owner and Surf Coach of a nearby surf school has been included in Appendix 5. The Marketing Manager (in the interview and hereafter mentioned as P2) has worked in Sri Lanka for six months and lives there permanently, and he is part of the correspondence because he has experienced intimidation and violence towards his employed surf instructors. The Owner of the surf school (in the interview and hereafter mentioned as P1) is a significant person in the surf milieu, and apart from owning a surf school in Sri Lanka, P1 also has a surf school in Lanzarote. P1 is 60 years old and has worked as a surf coach for more than 30 years. P1 initiated the correspondence as he found it was time to do something about intimidation and violence against surf schools in Sri Lanka, and since he is in the National Olympic Committee in Sri Lanka and has a great network within the surf industry in the country, P1 is, in his own opinion, able to bring the issue to the top of the tourism industry in Sri Lanka. The aim of the e-mail correspondence is to approach and hopefully handle the issues with intimidation and violence against surf schools and clients, and the process was initiated by P1.

The first step of the process was a meeting between P1, P2 and myself (P3). It was desired that more surf camps had participated, but due to various complications, restrictions from owners and issues with confidentiality, no other surf camps were present. At the meeting, P2 revealed that he had involved the police in more than one matter with intimidation and violence against the surf instructors employed at the surf camp he worked for. He explained, that even though the police had seemed genuine and had taken the issue serious, nothing had happened, and the involved did not receive any consequence of their aggressive actions.

As the e-mail correspondence shows, the process of finding a solution to the issues regarding surfing in Sri Lanka is long and complex, and there still has not been any results in the matter. What the correspondence shows, however, is that the challenges are taken seriously by important people in the business, and this will be included in the analysis.

2.4: Analysis of the Empirical Material

The material gathered during the field work and interviews has both during the interviews, while transcribing and subsequently been analyzed. The interview guides as presented in Appendix 2 and 4 have been produced with the purpose of receiving narratives about the informants' experiences (Brinkmann & Tanggaard, 2016). At the same time, however, it was sought to avoid pre-determination of the themes of the data. In other words, themes were enabled to emerge from the data itself, resembling grounded theory. Since all the gathered data is qualitative rather than quantitative, no statistics have been produced from the material. Rather, general patterns of narratives and attitudes concerning the research question and related topics have been extracted from the informants' statements and will in the analysis be elaborated on.

The analysis was approached with notions from content analysis since this, according to Martin & McKinney (2013), is "a way of studying social behavior without directly affecting it" (p. 316) and is valuable in systematical examination of communication. A content analysis is flexible (2013), and thus, as I became more and more familiar with the data, patterns emerged and were shaped into larger conceptual frameworks. These frameworks were subsequently used to analyze and discuss topics within the research question. One of the first approaches to a content analysis is coding, hence examining, comparing and interpreting data, and one of the primary ways of doing this is through a grounded theory approach (2013), which was presented earlier. However, rather than directly coding, consistent clusters of challenges with encounters, conflicts within surf camps and employees and various examples of power relations emerged and enabled me to group the factors releasing conflicts between nationalities in the surf milieu. Next, the theoretical framework presented in the following has been collated with these findings in order to conduct an in-depth analysis and discussion.

Additionally, to tell a story is quite common in everyday conversations, and, according to Mishler (1986), it is not less common that informants tell stories if the interviewer gives them the opportunity of talking. Furthermore, a narrative as told by a person, can be defined as events or incidents that the narrator wants to connect in order to shape a sequence that emphasizes the meanings that the narrator wants the listeners to extract from the story. The narrator selects, organizes, connects and assesses the incidents that he or she finds important to the audience (Riessman, 2017). Therefore, the interviews were shaped as conversations with room for in-depth answers and narratives from the interviewees as to produce subsequent analyses with focus on common clusters in the informants' narratives. During the field work, all informants were, despite their anonymization, given a character rather than just being mentioned with their gender and age. This allowed the interviewees to begin their narrative already with the introduction of themselves. By informing gender, age, nationality, work position and duration of this work position, an idea of who they are and what their perspective of the matter is was shaped. As an example, the Manager of Surf Camp 5 explained during the interview that he has held the position as manager for 8 months, and one month ago he also became partner in the surf camp that he managed. This means that he has great insight in the work of the camp and that he will have a significant part in important decisions regarding the camp. Also, as he mentions "I am gonna be a big part of the new camp opening up soon" (M, Appendix 2.5, p. 20), signifying that he is an essential part of the surf camp. By creating this narrative, M appears more trustworthy and to have more knowledge of the matter as he has great experience within the

field, and similar narratives were created about the other interviewees depending on what information they provided about themselves, their backgrounds and their position at the specific surf camp. In this way, the beginning of a narrative has already been produced, giving room for further analysis of the interviewee's stories.

2.4.1: Credibility as a Researcher

Speaking of patterns and clusters in the interviews, something that was clear was, that already while interviewing and during the latter transcriptions of the interviews I realized that there is a general pattern in the extent of the answers to the questions in the interviews; the interviewees that I knew in advance seemed keener to open up and share stories and in-depth information than the interviewees I had never met before. I knew the two owners of Surf Camp 1 and I had met the Managers of Surf Camp 2 and 5 beforehand, and the interviews with these informants are more elaborated and longer than the interviews with the managers from Surf Camp 3 and 4, who I did not know in advance and who I had never met before. Especially the interview with Surf Camp 1 is longer and more detailed than the others since I knew one of the interviewees quite well in private. It was clear that this informant trusted me and therefore were willing to share more stories and information from their surf camp than some of the other interviewees. He ascribed me credibility as a researcher and shared more than he might had done, had he not known me beforehand. The managers of Surf Camp 3 and 4, on the other hand, seemed very reserved and would not share a lot of information, nor elaborate very much on the questions. This was even though I made sure to clarify that everything would be completely confidential, and that the information would not be used in my work as a Camp Manager. The interviewees that I knew in advance had already created a narrative towards me, the interviewer and researcher, since I knew them in private. In a situation like this, no matter how objective the interviewer is, it is inevitable to not get affected by personal knowledge. And to my luck, it provided me with very valuable information for the compilation of the thesis.

2.5: Reflections on the Data Collection

Upon first contact with the informants it was made clear from my side that I would attempt to remain as objective as possible, and that the interviews and surveys would not be used in my work as Camp Manager for ASC. Rather than performing as Camp Manager, during the interviews I attempted to appear in the role as a researcher. My objective was to create a safe and professional environment for the interviewees who were working for competitive companies to ASC. I wanted to inform the interviewees of my intentions with the interviews thoroughly in order to reassure that no information would be used against them or to improve the competitiveness of ASC towards the other surf camps. In general, there was a very relaxed atmosphere amongst the surf camps in the area, and I regarded myself friends with several of the employees and owners of competitive surf camps after having met them in the water while surfing and around the area. However, if I were in their position I could easily suspect them to use the information provided during the interviews for work related tasks, which is why I made sure to clarify that the data was exclusively used for my project. Furthermore, I explained to all interviewees beforehand that the interviews would be completely anonymous as a method of creating an even safer environment for them and to urge them to participate and provide as useful and

elaborative answers to the questions as possible. As it turned out, most of the interviewees did not think to doubt my intention and candidly shared information and narratives from their experiences.

I was met with a surprisingly open-minded response from almost all interviewees that replied to my enquiry about interviewing them. However, as earlier mentioned, only about half of the contacted surf camps replied. All of the surf camps that replied to my enquiry were willing to help out and showed great interest in the topic and my project. A downside, nevertheless, was that due to the time of the year being off-season for surfing in that area, not many managers and owners were available, limiting the number of interviewees. Also, since most surf camps only have few guests that time of the year, not many foreign surf instructors were employed. This meant, that I was not able to collect as many answers to the surveys as desired, limiting my possibilities of making statistics of the results and, thus, identify quantitative data. However, as it turned out, the generalized patterns and various attitudes retrieved from the qualitative data proved to be very valuable to the research and subsequent analysis.

Part 3:

Theoretical Framework

Here, the theoretical framework for the thesis will be introduced. It consists of examinations, comparisons and discussions of localism, theory of identity and the perception of others, and how we can use difference to understand ourselves and others. Various aspects of the theories will be stated from different theorists, anthropologists and sociologists, and their perceptions of the concepts and theories will be discussed and subsequently applied in the analysis.

3.1: Surf Tourism, a Literature Review

As an introduction to the theoretical framework, this chapter presents a literature review of surf tourism as an industry with a special focus on Sri Lanka. The purpose of this part is to offer knowledge about the topic for better understanding of the subsequent analysis and discussion. The literature review consists of articles from popular culture about surfing and surf tourism, academic articles, journals and publications on the topic from theorists and researchers, as well as observations from the field work conducted in the preparation for the thesis. The latter is included as it provides insider knowledge of surf tourism in Sri Lanka. All of this has been studied in order to provide this literature review which will offer insight in the surf tourism industry.

As mentioned in the introduction, over the past years, surfing as a tourism activity has increased quite significantly, and more and more people become surf tourists. The surf tourism industry has gone “from being viewed as an undesirable fringe activity” to being mainstream (Olivier, 2010, p. 1224), and it can be defined as:

“An activity which takes place 40 km or more from the person’s place of residence, where surfing or attending a surfing event are the primary purpose for travel. Surf tourists stay at their destinations for at least one night or can undertake their visit as a day trip.” (Tourism New South Wales, 2009, p. 3)

Hence, a surf tourist’s main purpose of his or her travel is to surf, but this does not necessarily mean that this is the only purpose. For surf destinations such as Sri Lanka, many surf tourists choose to explore many of the sights that the country has to offer while they are not surfing (Appendix 1.1), and travel agencies promote surf destinations with the help of exotic images and experiences (Beaman & Sikka, 2016).

Apart from becoming a mainstream and more popular activity, surfing has proven to be good for mental health. An article published by the popular culture media Vice suggests that surfing is soothing and makes people happy. Taylor & McClure state that the UK’s national health service in 2010 taught surfing to patients suffering from depression and schizophrenia as a trial for six weeks, where after “they found significant improvements in mood [...] and particular leaps forward in self-esteem and ability to ‘have fun’” (Taylor & McClure, 2017, p. 1). Other studies found that just 30 minutes of surfing improved mood and calmness, and veterans with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder who participated in a study felt a sense of release from suffering when surfing, and

the participants proved more willing to discuss their experiences. Also, people without any mental conditions claim that surfing help them improve their mood and feel free. Several of the interviewees in the article mention the fact that they cannot control the ocean and how and when the waves are coming, and that they are being forced to be calm and follow the inconsistent conditions soothes them and let them disconnect from a busy work life or any concern they might have outside the surf. Additionally, one of the interviewees explain how when he catches a wave and rides it, he feels pure joy and everything else disappears. And to him it doesn't matter if it is a complicated surf, as long as he stands up on the board and cruises the wave, he is happy (2017).

Due to the increase in the popularity of the activity and the increased number of surf tourists, destinations for surf tourism have over the past decade received increased attention. Surfers want to avoid the crowded surf breaks in their own countries, and therefore travel the world to find the perfect waves and uncrowded surf spots. Additionally, surf tourism is becoming trendy and since more and more tourists want to learn how to surf, surf camps pop up on surf destinations around the world. What distinguishes surf destinations from other tourism destinations is, as Usher and Kerstetter (2015) clarifies, small-scale rather than large-scale tourism development which appeals to many surfers who often want a chill atmosphere and relaxed surroundings, rather than big resorts.

Sri Lanka is one of the surf tourism destinations that has gained considerable attention during the past decade. According to LS (Appendix 3) there were only a few tourists and locals surfing when he was a child, and he tells that he has felt a big increase in the number of surf tourists who visit the destination. Furthermore, as LS points out, the increase in surf tourists is one of the main reasons why surfing as an activity has become very popular among young locals from Sri Lanka. In addition to this, as mentioned in Appendix 1.1, an increase in the number of surf camps in Sri Lanka has occurred, offering many tourists surf lessons by the surf spots in the country. Surf camps use the possibility of tempting potential customers with the exotic culture of Sri Lanka, giving the customers an opportunity to “escape from home and from the mundane aspect of everyday life” (Hannam & Knox, 2010, p. 106) and encounter the exotic environment. This will be further developed in part 3.4: *Producing a Perception of the ‘Other’*.

An increase in surf tourism means a growing economy and new economic opportunities for local communities in many countries. In Sri Lanka, many jobs have been created as a result of the growing surf tourism, offering locals jobs as chefs, gardeners, cleaners, guards and much more on surf camps. Some locals have even been employed as surf instructors, but many foreign instructors are also employed as there is a lack of experienced and qualified local surf instructors with a sufficient level of English (Appendix 1). However, the growth in the surf tourism industry is not only positive; there has proven to be many downsides to the increase, one of them being factors that threaten the sustainability of the surf destinations. A primary motivator of surf travel is crowd avoidance, but as the industry increases, it gets harder and harder to find good surf breaks without many people already surfing there, and the more people surfing in one spot, the more unsustainable the destination becomes (Usher & Gómez, 2016). A consequence of the crowded surf spots is localism, which will be defined as a concept in the next part and subsequently used for analysis and discussion on encounters between locals and surf tourists in Sri Lanka.

3.2: Does Anyone Own the Waves? Localism in Surfing as a Concept

'Localism' is a concept that has gained more and more attention with the increasing interest for surfing around the world. Within surfing, the concept can be defined as the idea of belonging to a particular beach or area on the coastline, a place where the surfer was born or lived for a certain amount of time (Beaumont & Brown, 2016). According to Scheibel (1995), the term localism roots back to surfers in California who felt threatened that people from the valley came to the coast to surf 'their' waves, making the Californian surfers excluding people from their surf breaks. In the most basic way, localism can be explained as locals who feel threatened by 'outsiders' taking 'their' waves, which can lead to various acts of threats and violence ranging from warning graffiti near the beach to broken car windows, warnings to paddle back in and being slapped and being called out of the water to settle the issues on land. This implies that there are several degrees of localism, and according to Bennett (2004) heavy localism, which is localism at its worst, is consistent to some of these examples as it can be defined as "excessive territorial behavior that typically involves threats or intimidation towards newcomers, though more rarely can involve physical assault or property damage" (p. 348). Many incidents of localism have been reported, and research shows that most surfers have either witnessed or been exposed to some degree of localism (Olivier, 2010). Kaffine (2009) stated that localism can diverge from surf destination to surf destination depending on local environmental and social factors. The extend of localism and to what a surfer feel ownership of varies from place to place, leaving Usher & Kerstetter (2015) to define the term 'micro-localism' as the sense of ownership over a single wave that a surfer is riding rather than ownership of a surf spot or area.

In order to understand localism, a clarification of who are locals and who are newcomers, or 'outsiders' as Bennett (2004) calls them, is essential. According to him, locals can be defined as:

"Being a local means belonging to a particular beach or area of coastline where you were born or have lived for some accepted period of time. Localism is simply a preference for what is local, and may be expressed through ideas, customs, attitudes and behaviours of the surfers in the local area." (2004, p. 346).

Olivier (2010) provides a slightly more advanced explanation of whether you are considered a local or not:

"[...] you are considered to be a local if you: have surfed the spot for many years; surf there regularly (for example, every time it breaks); live near the spot; were born in the area." (2010, p. 1224).

Both of these statements define what it is to be a local within the surf milieu and how locals can be distinguished from the surf tourists visiting the destination. Hence, the surfers who are not local, are perceived as outsiders. Elaboration on the concept of 'outsiders' and 'the others' will be provided later on in the theoretical framework.

As a contrast to these two definitions of local surfers, Usher & Kerstetter (2015) argues that it might not always be clear who are locals in a surf destination:

“They may be members of the local indigenous community or the foreign resident community (i.e., moved to the community for the good surf conditions, bought property, and started surf businesses)” (p. 46).

That is, in their research, Usher & Kerstetter distinguishes between surfers who originate from the destination (local indigenous) and surfers who originate from another country and have moved to the destination because of various reasons (foreign residents) (2015). For explanatory reasons, the main identity groups will throughout the thesis be mentioned as ‘surf tourists’ (i.e. tourists who travel to the destination with the purpose of surfing) ‘foreign’ (e.g. foreign surf instructors, foreign employees) and ‘local’ (e.g. local surfers, local surf instructors).

In Usher & Kerstetter’s study on territorializing of the surf space in Nicaragua’s Popoyo Reef from 2015, the main purpose is to examine how the two different types of locals use their perception of their self-identity to claim ownership of the waves and how the two groups perpetuate localism through their behaviors. Furthermore, they argue that the surf tourism industry can be unsustainable, and define sustainable tourism development as foreign tourism developers and other foreigners who live in the space and respect the local community’s rights to space on land and in the water. Hence, they find that when the local community’s rights to space are violated, unsustainable surf tourism occur (2015).

A contrast to this is Olivier’s (2010) approach to localism; while some of the several articles and reports written on localism simply attempt to codify behavior within surfing, Olivier attempts to account for why localism should not be justified. He argues that one of the main reasons for localism is the absence of regulation within surfing. Olivier furthermore mentions that “anecdotal evidence suggests that most surfers have witnessed, or been subjected to, some of the forms of localism [...]” (Olivier, 2010, p. 1225), implying that, as mentioned previously, many incidents of localism has occurred. His approach to the concept of localism roots from some surfers’ arguments that localism is necessary to gain success within surfing:

“Violence seems to be an accepted method of addressing situations where disputes occur. Violent acts in surfing are almost always the result of competition over an increasingly scarce resource (waves)” (Olivier, 2010, p. 1223).

Olivier (2010) emphasizes in his paper that he does not support even localism, not even ‘soft’ localism which for example is a mean look or a vague threat from a local. Olivier argues that issues and conflicts regarding surfing should be solved rationally and that no sense of localism should have to occur at all (2010).

Additionally, according to Olivier (2010), one of the reasons why localism is distinct in surfing is that surfing is an individual practice, and what separates it from other individual practices is “the absence of almost any regulation, and the resultant conflict over territory and resource” (p. 1224). Because of surfing being a more or less unregulated sport, there is no set of written rules within the sport. However, the phenomenon ‘surfing etiquette’ exists and functions as codes of conduct or recommendations on how to behave in surfing such as *Rule #2: Don’t Drop In*. This rule refers to surfers giving space for each other and that a surfer should make sure not to drop in on another surfers’ wave as this can be dangerous. Surfing etiquette is recognized amongst most

surfers, and it is recommended to new surfers that they memorize and follow the codes of conduct as to avoid accidents in the ocean (Surfing Handbook, n.d.). Problems arise, though, when outsiders or beginners don't know the surfing etiquette of a certain area and/or don't respect it. While Usher & Kerstetter (2015) and Olivier (2010) have different approaches to and aims of studying localism, they both agree that outsiders should show respect towards the locals. Olivier argues that intimidation or violence has seemed the only solution to teaching unaware or careless surfers in overcrowded spots about surfing etiquette:

“the novices and outsiders don't show sufficient respect for locals and competent surfers, thus they need to be informed as to what constitutes acceptable behavior; and the only effective method of education seems to be intimidation and/or violence” (2010, p. 1224).

With this and with the previous statements that he does not support violence within surfing, Olivier indicates that maybe more awareness about surfing etiquette could solve intimidation and violence. However, according to the Surfinghandbook.com (n.d.), the awareness of surfing etiquette is gradually decreasing with the increasing number of surfers.

Another interesting aspect of localism is that, as mentioned in *Surf localism in Costa Rica: exploring territoriality among Costa Rican and foreign resident surfers* by Usher & Gómez (2016), localism has been found to relate to the “deeply entrenched masculinity in surf culture and the close bonds male surfers form with one another” (p. 199). As pointed out in *Appendix 1.1: Surfing in Sri Lanka*, only male locals were involved in intimidation and violence against foreigners, and of the surf instructors I met during the field work, both local and foreign, none of them were female except from two employees at the camp I worked for who participated in an instructor course while they were in Sri Lanka. In other words, the research of territoriality among local and foreign surfers in Costa Rica by Usher & Gómez is consistent with the findings of the field work and emphasizes that the surf culture is dominated by males.

As mentioned by Ponting & O'Brien (2015), one of the grave consequences of localism is that surf tourists might choose to travel to other destinations where they feel more welcome if they experience intimidation or violence regarding localism, and if they feel unwelcome in a certain surf destination. In the end, this might divert needed economic income away from the local community. In coherence with this, Usher & Kerstetter (2015) argue that:

“Localism has implications for sustainable tourism development including, but not limited to, a reduction in the number of tourists, which could undermine the entire local tourism industry, upon which locals are dependent for jobs” (p. 46).

With this statement, it is clear that localism is not beneficial, and that the locals might end up being negatively affected by their own actions. This will be further developed in the analysis.

3.3: An Introduction to Self-Identity, Impacts of Societies and Power Relations

Keeping in line with the previous part, in order to understand why some people are perceived as local and where the sense of ownership of a wave, a surf spot, or similar arises from, an understanding of self-identity and how persons are constructed is essential.

Barker (2004) states that “what it means to be a person is social and cultural ‘all the way down’” (p. 181). He furthermore claims, that the way we think about ourselves and the narratives with which we identify ourselves is what self-identity is based on. The well-known sociologist Anthony Giddens (1991) agrees as he claims that self-identity is “the self as reflexively understood by the person in terms of his or her biography” (p. 53). In other words, self-identity is constructed by the roles we play in society and cultural aspects as well as how we act, and self-identity changes through time as our roles change and as we take different choices. Hall (1996) additionally argues that our identity, rather than being and where we come from, is the process we go through to become, as well as how we are represented. Our identities are constructed within our actions and how we behave, and identities should therefore, according to Hall (1996), be understood “as produced in specific discursive formations and practices, by specific enunciative strategies” (p. 4). In line with this, social anthropologist Thomas H. Eriksen (2015) draws on a quotation from George Herbert Mead in the introduction to his book *Small Places, Large Issues*:

“The self is something which has a development; it is not initially there, at birth, but arises in the process of social experience and activity, that is, develops in the given individual as a result of his relations to that process as a whole and to other individuals within that process” (Mead, n.d., cited in; Eriksen, 2015, p. 52).

With this quotation and the above statements from Giddens, Hall and Barker, it is emphasized that self-identity is not something that is just there and that will always stay the same. Rather, self-identity is constructed, developed and re-developed throughout life according to the social experiences, activities and relations that individuals encounter.

As mentioned in 2.4: *Analysis of the Empirical Material*, the informants from the field work created a narrative of themselves by informing me, the interviewer, of more than just their gender and position. According to Riessman (2017), individuals create identities through storytelling which is what the informants did by providing a narrative of themselves. Moreover, the individual informant’s self-identity is partly constructed through these narratives, providing me as a researcher with an understanding of who the informant is.

In his earlier mentioned book, Eriksen (2015) explains how humans share social conventions or implicit rules in order to survive in society, and how these conventions vary from society to society. One of his examples is how there in Britain is a general agreement “that one does not wander naked around shopping centres” (p. 53), and that people in Britain speak English. He argues, that general agreements like these are often taken for granted and that they are therefore perceived as natural even though they are socially constructed. And he additionally states that by studying other societies where social conventions are completely different, people might learn something about themselves. Eriksen also elaborates on how people can have and/or achieve different statuses,

and how this can vary from society to society. He distinguishes between ascribed status, which is not something a person choose, but rather something the person just is (e.g. grandson), and achieved status, which is something acquired by the person, in modern societies often a person's profession. Within status are various roles, which describe what a person with a specific status does. A status informs a person's surroundings what the person is expected to do, and as Eriksen explains, if the rules and expectations of a certain status are broken, "other members of society may react by imposing sanctions or different forms of punishment" (2015, p. 64). However, a person is subject to improvise within his or her status as it does not entail exactly which rules to follow concerning how to behave in every situation and since all statuses are ambiguous.

Eriksen (2015) additionally elaborates on the notion of agency and explain how it "implies that people know that they act, even if they do not necessarily know the consequences of their acts. In other words, it is always possible to do something different from what one is doing at the moment." (p. 62). Eriksen furthermore claims that the concept of actors can include collective actors and thus be semantically wider than for instance 'individual'. In the following analysis, the surf camp ASC appears as an actor as it consists of a collective of humans who appear as an acting unit. Furthermore, Eriksen elaborates on power in his studies of the social person:

"For it is clear that social conventions, role expectations and the very distribution of roles and statuses in society contribute to systematic power disparities. Some actors are able to exert considerable power over others; some have very limited control of their own lives, let alone other people's." (2015, p. 67)

In other words, Eriksen emphasizes the distinction that can be in power between individuals, and that this is caused by social conventions and expectations within society.

The concept of power is difficult to define accurately, but as Eriksen stresses, there exists significant differences regarding power relationships between societies (2015). Nonetheless, he distinguishes between two main categories within power from Max Weber and Marx respectively; power from the actor perspective "may be defined as an aspect of a social relationship, namely the ability to make someone do something they would otherwise not have done"; and power from a systemic perspective where it is "crucial to show how power differences embedded in the fabric of society are, in fact, constitutive of those very social relationships" (Eriksen, 2015, p. 68). These two varieties of power should, according to Eriksen, be kept apart for analytical purposes, but both perspectives are useful and it can be established that while one simply cannot choose not to have a powerless status, one can certainly improve one's relative position (2015).

In the following analysis it will be illustrated and outlined how power relations are important in society and what it means in the construction of the self. But first, an examination of the concept of 'difference' will be given, and it should be noted that the notions outlined in the following part are closely related to the content of this part.

3.4: Producing a Perception of the 'Other'

Keeping in line with the previous part, in order to understand who we really are, it is necessary to understand how we have become what we are, and where we are going (Giddens, 1991), and in order to do so, we have to understand the concept of 'difference'. Difference is, according to Hall (1997), essential to meaning; we use oppositions to find meanings. Oppositions can for instance be found in the opposite gender (male vs. female), but it might also be found in nationalities and ideas of cultures, which leads to the next part; how we produce a perception of others. Here, clarifications and elaborations on difference as a concept and the perception of others and how we produce these perceptions with focus on the surf tourism culture will be given.

In his article *Imagineering Otherness: Anthropological Legacies in Contemporary Tourism* (2013), Salazar points out how notions of old-style anthropology, even though it as an academic discipline has gone through significant changes, are still being deeply drawn on by stakeholders within the tourism industry. He argues how ideas of objectifying, reifying, homogenizing, and naturalizing peoples are still used to "staking claims of imagined identity and cultural belonging on strong notions of place and locality" (p. 672). Local natural and cultural heritage have been simplified and historically fixed by archaic anthropological models, drawing an imagined picture of a local scenery and the local people (2013). According to Skinner & Theodossopoulos (2010, cited in; Salazar, 2013), "the insatiable tourist demand for novel experiences of "difference"" (2013, p. 673) is one of the major reasons for these simplified, objectified and naturalized imagines of people on tourist destinations. Hence, identities of a destination is somehow tailored to match the demand of the tourists in their pursuit of different experiences.

In connection to this, Eriksen (2015) draws on the concept of culture, which, in his own words, is "thorny" (p. 56). He claims that culture refers to something that is shared in two different ways; "First, culture may refer to something universally shared – a shared quality of all humans is the fact of their culturedness [...]. Second, culture is also used in the meaning of a culture (which is thus distinct from other cultures, a word which can be conjugated in the plural [...]) (p. 56). With this in mind, Eriksen perceives culture as a marker of difference between groups (2015), which will be applied to the subsequent analysis. Moreover, the statuses and roles of people as mentioned in the previous part helps define a person by the distinction of other statuses and roles.

As outlined earlier, an understanding of difference plays a key role in meaning, and Hallam & Street (2000) agree as they mention how the process of othering is complex, but at the same time "crucial in the formation of identities" (p. 1). They furthermore claim that a high degree of contemporary representation is founded on ideological preconceptions of self and other, and they explain how, like self-identity, the other is never just encountered; it is made. Additionally, they state how diversity has been constituted and how anthropology throughout history has had a tendency of construing the other as something negative. Oppositions between civilized and savage/primitive were formed during the industrialization and the rise of bureaucracy, and a connection between knowledge of the other and domination were found. Hallam & Street (2000) show how early anthropologists drew on contradictories and how the other was easily perceived as 'savage' and even 'monstrous'. However, as they stress, "emphasis has shifted from a concern with representation as an objectifying process which subordinated the 'other', towards an investigation of the significance of representation in the formation of multiple, negotiated subjectivities and social identities" (2000, p. 4). That is, otherness is not

necessarily perceived as negative anymore, but as Eriksen (2015) points out, a common idea among anthropologists in modern societies is that people with a simple technology, as for instance some people from developing countries, “tend to have an intuitive understanding of the processes of nature because they live ‘closer to nature’ than we do, whereas moderns [...] have ‘removed ourselves from nature’” (2015, pp. 57-58). Hence, great distinction of societies and their development still exists.

In other words, there might be a big gap between people from different societies, and we might have preconceived notions of people from a society with a different culture than the one we come from. In line with this, as Hannam & Knox (2010) states, culture is socially constructed, and as Jafari (1996) claims, it can be argued that without culture there is no tourism. Hannam & Knox additionally argue that tourists “often seek encounters with what we might term exotic environments, cultures and practices” (2010, p. 106). They claim that much of contemporary tourism is packaged and sold as engagement with exotic places and the option of exploring and discovering new people, cultures and places. This is in accordance with the before mentioned statement that tourists have a high demand of experiencing difference. In connection to this, George, Mair & Reid (2009) state that “tourism provides ‘spaces’ where encounters between different cultures occur where a host culture interconnects and interacts with a visiting culture.” (p. 124). And Hannam & Knox (2010) continues to explain how places outside the norm somehow become ‘less real’ as located in the realm of fantasy, that “they take on the role of the (frequently feminised) Other” (p. 109). They also, however, mention that these discourses of the Other are relative, and that what might be perceived as exotic to one tourist might be ordinary to another.

Beaman & Sikka (2016) draw on Salazar & Graburn in their study on otherness, as they state that “tourism as an encounter of Otherness draws on (as much as it feeds) a set of images of the Other that mixes a sense of romanticism, nostalgia, exoticism, as well as the idealisation of an elsewhere embodied in the Other” (p. 76). In other words, as Salazar (2013) also emphasizes, the encounter with a destination, a sight, local citizens and so on is framed to meet the demand of the tourists. Additionally, Krase & Uherek (2017) draws on the concept of ‘local contexts’ as emphasis to the fact that social diversity is always manifested in a specific local milieu. They explain how an understanding of these local contexts is essential for descriptions of identities as “they provide the settings for diversity” (pp. 3-4).

With the concepts of localism, identity and otherness explained and elaborated on, it is now time to continue to the analysis with the research questions in mind, where notions of these concepts will be applied.

Part 4:

Analysis

In this part of the thesis, the empirical material presented in 2.3: *Methods for Compilation of the Empirical Material* will be analyzed and at the same time used for a discussion on encounters within the surf culture in Sri Lanka on basis of the theoretical framework of localism, identity and otherness as presented in the previous part. Various general tendencies and clusters as well as themes have recurred from the compilation of the material and will here be presented and analyzed.

4.1: Surfing in Sri Lanka

Observations from the field work (Appendix 1.1) and research of the theoretical framework revealed that the surf tourism in Sri Lanka has been growing quite significantly, and so has the surf tourism industry in other destinations around the world (Olivier, 2010). Additionally, observations indicated that the surf culture in southwestern Sri Lanka was close to non-existent before the encounter with surf tourists in the sense that locals became aware of surfing because of surf tourists traveling to Sri Lanka with the purpose of surfing; as the local informant, LS, explains in Appendix 3, not many locals surfed before they encountered surf tourists from all over the world in their local areas. Additionally, LS told that previously the ocean was predominantly for fishing, and hence work, and not for playing. However, as he continues to explain, as Sri Lanka has gradually developed as a surf destination, locals have realized that the ocean can be used for sport and fun activities, and they have started picking up the sport. Furthermore, LS explained how he as a child started surfing because of surf tourists, and that he used creativity and whatever materials he had at hand to learn how to surf; for instance, he used empty plastic bottles to stuff in his shorts so he could float since he did not know how to swim, and to begin with he used a piece of wood to surf on since he could not afford a surf board. It could seem that stories like this is the reality for many of the young surfers in Sri Lanka; they might not have used a piece of wood to surf on, but many of them have never had any instruction, they have been forced to learn by doing and by looking at other surfers, and they have used whatever materials they could procure.

It is interesting that the encounter with surf tourists was the beginning of the surf culture for many local surfers since the same kind of encounters today often end in conflicts and feelings of ownership of the surf spots. This will be elaborated on later in the analysis.

4.2: Localism in Sri Lanka

In the theoretical framework, definitions of localism were explained, and it was evident that the primary matter of the term is local surfers feeling a sense of ownership of an area, a surf spot or a single wave, and that these local surfers might to various degrees challenge surfers who do not come from or belong to that specific area. It has additionally been established that surfing emerged in Sri Lanka when the locals encountered surf tourists, hence tourists introduced locals to surfing. Therefore, it can be discussed whether the local surfers are entitled

to claim ownership of the waves as some of them evidently do; as LS explains, “now they [locals] think it [surfing] is their thing. They think they own the surf spots in the areas they come from, and it is really bad” (Appendix 3, p. 23). LS keeps on explaining how the young local surfers have no respect while surfing, not even for each other, and emphasizes that it is mostly some of the young surfers that cause problems in the surfing industry as they, according to LS, have no respect and don’t follow any rules when they are surfing:

“The young guys have no respect and to them there are no rules in the water. Tourists know how to behave and to keep the rules, but these guys don’t and they don’t share the waves” (LS, Appendix 3, p. 23).

He continues to explain how they don’t even respect each other, and how protective locals can be of a very specific area. Even though there might only be a few kilometers between two villages, it is two different areas with different groups of locals living and surfing there, and LS tells that even though he has many friends in all areas on the southwest coast, he has to be careful when surfing elsewhere than Midigama, “because it is not “my” area, I don’t come from there” (LS, Appendix 3, p. 23).

This clearly shows how pronounce localism is on the southwestern coast of Sri Lanka; when locals from a specific area won’t even welcome locals from neighboring areas to surf with them, one can imagine how they feel when foreigners, in the eyes of the locals, ‘invade’ their area with surf lessons and many new surf tourists. However, according to the informant from Surf Camp 1, Sri Lanka is not the only country where localism is quite widespread:

“But on a side note, localism in Australia can be even more crazy than here. There are people slashing tires and all that kind of stuff, it’s pretty much the same everywhere in the world. There is always going to be that ‘small town’ syndrome, the smaller the area, the more secret the wave, the worse it is until it gets more well-known, and then the problem kind of disappears because it can’t be controlled anymore” (O1, Appendix 2.1, p. 13)

The informant is here implying that localism happens many other places around the world, which is supported by the case studies used for some of the theoretical framework in the previous chapter. Sri Lanka is not unique in that sense; what distinguishes Sri Lanka, though, is the fact that tourism is still fairly new, and as O1 indicates, the extent of localism might be different from other, more developed surf destinations around the world. In LS’ opinion, the locals need time to learn how to behave and to realize that tourists are important to the country (Appendix 3), which is in accordance with O1’s statement that localism can change with time.

4.2.1: Codes of Conduct and How to Behave in the Water

According to the theoretical framework, respect of surfing etiquette, or lack of same, seems to be one of the main triggers of localism. Both Olivier (2010) and Beaumont & Brown (2016) argue in their definitions of localism that it is mostly the new surfers and outsiders who are either unaware of or don’t respect surfing etiquette. However, in Sri Lanka there seems to be more to it than beginners not respecting surfing etiquette; some local

surfers, specifically several of the young local surfers, don't respect other surfers even though they are not beginners. They drop in and they put others in danger by not following the line-up in the water (Appendix 1). So, maybe it is different in Sri Lanka because the industry is still fairly new and everyone is still learning how to handle the surfing industry. Or it might be a cultural matter that the people of Sri Lanka have a different mindset about ownership of the waves than other places with localism.

As explained earlier, localism exists in various forms and sizes; one type of localism is micro-localism, which is when a surfer has a sense of ownership over a single wave rather than a surf spot or an area, and is a form of localism which often happens in Sri Lanka (Appendix 1 and 3). As LS explained, many young locals show no respect while being in the water and seem to think that all waves belong to them (Appendix 3). When following surfing etiquette, according to *Rule #7: Don't be a wave hog*, a surfer should not catch all the waves just because he or she can; "Give a wave, get a wave" is the mind-set that surfers, according to the surfing etiquette, should follow (Surfing Handbook, n.d.). As stated earlier, the awareness of surfing etiquette gradually decreases concurrently with the increasing number of surfers, so maybe a suggestion to the lack of respect for surfing etiquette could be to increase awareness of this in an attempt to avoid intimidation and violence.

Speaking of ownership of surf spots or a wave, one might argue that conflicts rooted in localism predominantly are based on power relations, or notions of same, as stated by Eriksen (2015) in the theoretical framework. Eriksen claims that power inequality is partially constructed through social conventions, role expectations and distribution of roles and statutes, and that the degree of power over others varies a lot from actor to actor. Possibly, these young local surfers are not able to exert considerable power over others in their everyday, but while surfing they know what they are doing, and they know that they are, in their own words, acting on their own territory, hence they might feel a greater control over their own lives and thereby attempt to exert power over others by, for instance, not respecting codes of conduct.

The before mentioned lack of respect to surfing etiquette was the background for asking the managers and owners if they found themselves behaving differently while surfing than before they started working in that position. One of the informants from Surf Camp 1 replied:

"It depends on the local. Some are really good friends of mine, and others I wouldn't even speak to, which can seem a bit weird. But I think it's the same as people in general; I wouldn't classify it as a Sri Lanka thing. In Australia, there are also certain people that you don't want to surf with, some that are not really friendly. There are dickheads everywhere and they are not limited to any particular sport! [laughing]" (O1, Appendix 2.1, p. 13).

With this statement, it is indicated that the informant seemingly does not feel an inequality of power while he is surfing in Sri Lanka, and that he does not act differently than he would do in Australia where he originates from.

4.2.2: Localism's Impact on Surf Instructions

To the question about whether the surf instructors ever experienced any issues with locals while working in Sri Lanka, all of the eight participants said yes with the replies ranging from "Yes, some could be mad because we were giving instructions in a place that they thought belonged to them" (Appendix 4.1, p. 26) to simply "Localism" (Appendix 4.4, p. 29). Moreover, several of the participants replied that they have been threatened by locals during surf lessons (Appendix 4.1, 4.2, 4.5 and 4.6). The 5th respondent experienced the following:

"In Kabalana locals threatened to throw lines with fish hooks into the water so students and instructors would get hurt, if I came back the next day. In weligama, by the island, similar things have been said" (Appendix 4.5, p. 30).

While this instructor does not clarify whether he talks about local surfers or locals in general, it can here be presumed that he means local fishermen since they were threatening with a tool for fishing. Although this is a serious threat, luckily none of the respondents have experienced any physical violation during their time in Sri Lanka, and the same concern most of the managers of the surf camps. However, the informant from Surf Camp 2 explained what happened at her camp:

"[...] surf instructors have come to me with stories about how they were approached by local fishermen or surfers who didn't want them to surf in a specific spot. Some of them felt very threatened, and a few times a surf instructor got punched by a local because he refused to give into his threats." (GM, Appendix 2.2, p. 14)

As an opposition to ASC and most of the involved surf camps, Surf Camp 2 has experienced physical violation, and the informant from Surf Camp 5 has experienced something similar:

"We have had issues with locals not wanting us to surf in their spot. Or, well, it is not actually their spot, but they think that it is. There are some spots where we cannot give surf lessons at all because we have been threatened so much, and once one of the foreign instructors got punched by a local surfer." (M, Appendix 2.5, p. 21)

Fortunately, not all of the surf camps have experienced physical violation towards any employees, but these two examples illustrate that it does happen. Cases like these emphasize the sense of ownership the locals feel, no matter the degree of reasonableness.

4.2.3: A Different kind of Localism

It could seem, though, that there might be more to localism in Sri Lanka and the conflicts occurring in the surf than just lack of respect for surfing etiquette and arguments over who owns the waves and gets to surf them; in the theoretical framework about localism, the main reason for localism in the destinations investigated in the various case studies seems to be locals not wanting outsiders surfing 'their' waves, and according to the theory, conflicts often start when beginners are not aware of or don't respect surfing etiquette (Olivier, 2010). However, according to some of the informants from the online survey, one of the main reasons for localism to occur in Sri Lanka is that the locals find that foreigners are taking away business opportunities within the tourism industry

from them. The 7th respondent to the online survey states that “money rules society here in Sri Lanka” (Appendix 4.7, p. 33), and also explains:

“It [intimidation] happens all over the world, but here it seems different as the Local Instructors are not necessarily surfers at all, they are just using the surf tourism as a way to cash in, which was brought here by the surf camps that are running the lessons.” (Appendix 4.7, p. 32)

With this, the opinion is that surf tourism depends on the surf camps, but that since “money rules society” locals are exploiting the industry to “cash in”. O1 agrees as he claims:

“All of their [the locals'] customers are off the beach, whereas all of our customers are internet bookings. So we are getting people to the area, not stealing people from them.” (O1, Appendix 2.1, p. 13)

In other words, according to these informants, many of the surf tourists would not be in the country if it weren't for the surf camps, and both informants here indicate that rather than stealing customers from locals in the surf industry, the surf camps are in fact generating an increase in the number of surf tourists visiting the destination.

According to the theoretical framework presented earlier, identity is socially constructed and is to a great extent perceived on the basis of difference and otherness. As stated by Giddens (1991) it is necessary to understand how we have become what we are and where we are going in order to understand who we really are. Surfers who are born or have lived a significant time of their lives by a surf spot will most likely perceive this spot as theirs. From a surf tourist's point of view, these surfers might be perceived as locals and thus somehow labelled, and the same vice versa; the locals might perceive surf tourists as outsiders, someone who does not belong in that area.

As mentioned in chapter 3.3: *Local Surfers vs. Surf Tourists, an Introduction to Self-Identity*, culture and identity are social constructions, and self-identity is a continuous project where a person's narrative is written and re-written throughout his or her entire life. Local surfers were not surfers before they encountered surf tourists and their home country was developed into a surf destination. Thus, the encounter with surf tourists and the surf industry changed the role of some of the locals in Sri Lanka, and as Hall (1996) claims, the process these locals are going through and how they are presented is part of who they are. Throughout the thesis, it might have seemed as if local surfers have been put into one box, but since our identities are constructed through our actions and how we behave and is developed throughout our entire life, it is not possible to claim that local surfers have one streamlined identity. Rather, as Mead argues, social experiences and relations to other individuals within the process of activities causes the self to develop, leaving each individual to progress their own identity. Nonetheless, what can be deduced is the thorough employment of 'us' vs. 'them' throughout the data, both from a foreign and a local perspective. During the interview with LS, he consistently referred to locals as if he wasn't part of this group of people:

“Before locals didn’t know anything about it [surfing]. But then because tourists came from all over the world to surf in Sri Lanka, the locals slowly started as well, and now they think it is their thing. They think they own the surf spots in the areas they come from, and it is really bad. They don’t even respect each other. When I surf in Weligama, I have to be really careful because it is not “my” area, I don’t come from there.” (LS, Appendix 3, p. 23)

There is a clear distinction between ‘me’ and ‘them’ in the informant’s statements throughout the interview, emphasizing the great degree of localism that exists in Sri Lanka. He uses difference in mindset to distinguish himself from other people with the same nationality and gender as himself. It seems like it is this otherness and different views on each other that creates conflicts, and as mentioned by Hall (1997) we use difference to find meaning and to identify ourselves. In other words, by distinguishing ourselves from others, we – whether surf tourists or local surfers – construct our own identities and perceptions of ourselves.

4.2.4: Should Waves be for Sale?

In addition to surf instructors being intimidated during their work on the beaches, during my work as a Camp Manager for ASC I was confronted with the question whether or not we as a surf camp should pay certain local people in order to be able to give surf lessons in specific areas as the former Camp Manager had done the year before (Appendix 1.3). In corporation with the Property Manager of the camp and the headquarters we came to the conclusion that ASC should not pay this year as there would be too many disadvantages by it. Furthermore, if ASC chose to pay they would support a form of corruption, which they did not want to do. In other words, they chose not to give in to the demand of paying to be able to conduct surf instructions, and thereby excluded themselves from surfing in certain areas as they did not want to bring the guests in danger by bringing them to an area where they had been told not to come unless they paid. This limited the possibilities for conducting surf lessons during off season where only a few surf spots worked, but ASC still believed it was worth it compared to giving into corruption.

During the interviews, the informants were asked if they had experienced something similar, and both Surf Camp 1 and Surf Camp 3 told that they did not pay anyone to surf specific spots or to give surf lessons in specific areas. However, the General Manager, GM, from Surf Camp 2 answered the following when asked if he was somehow ‘forced’ to please specific locals in order to conduct surf lessons:

“Yes, we have to pay a local surf instructor from the area we want to surf in and we also have to pay other people to keep us safe. We tried running the business without paying, but we kept running into problems and as it is now, we don’t see any other way than paying to please them and keeping us safe during the surf lessons. For us, the most important thing is that the guests are safe both in and out of the water. But hopefully this will change in the future, when the locals realize that it can’t keep functioning this way.” (GM, Appendix 2.2, p. 14)

In connection to this, General Manager from Surf Camp 4 answered the following to the same question:

“Yes, we are. Unfortunately, we’ve fallen into the trap of paying certain locals to gain access to certain surf spots. And there are some spots we can’t do lessons at because we are afraid the locals are going to be violent to our surf instructors or guests.” (GM, Appendix 2.4, p. 19)

And the informant from Surf Camp 5 has experienced something similar:

“In another spot, we are kind of forced to pay to be able to surf there. So we do that, even though we don’t want to. Hopefully, in high season when there are more spots it will be better again.” (M, Appendix 2.5, p. 21)

These statements are in accordance with the statement from LS that “there is a big kind of mafia in Weligama [who] wants money for people to surf in front of his hotel and he is an important guy” (LS, Appendix 3, p. 24). In other words, these locals employ power in an attempt to control the area by demanding money from surf camps conducting surf lessons in the area. Most of the foreign instructors, who replied to the online survey, commented that there were several surf spots where they were not ‘allowed’ to instruct. Only 4th respondent replied that he could instruct wherever he wanted (Appendix 4.4). He was, however, the only respondent who had been working as a surf instructor in Sri Lanka for less than three months, which might mean that he just hasn’t been in the position long enough to have experienced being told to stay away by locals yet.

Both O1 from Surf Camp 1 and the 7th respondent to the online survey suggest that a solution to the challenge with locals wanting money might be to buy coconuts from the ones causing problems. They both claim that this helps avoid problems, at least for a while. However, O1 explains that it is not a sustainable solution as “by doing that [buying coconuts], we are giving them ownership of the break, and nobody really owns the surf. It can be seen as kind of a national asset, but it can’t be seen as somebody owning it, claiming that this is their wave. It’s not just for one person, it’s for everybody.” (O1, Appendix 2.1, p. 12). In other words, O1 agrees with me as a Camp Manager and the camp I worked for that corruption, even the slightest degree, should be avoided.

O1 elaborates on this by saying “it all comes down to money and people controlling areas. We can surf some areas, but we have to give money to the right person, which we disagree with, so we don’t do that” (O1, Appendix 2.1, p. 12). He additionally explains how they have been told a couple of times not to surf in certain areas, and that they, according to local fishermen, local surf instructors and local surfers, are not supposed to be in the water with the guests. The locals suggest that the foreign instructors do the theory on the beach, and then practically demand that the camp employs locals to push the guests into the waves in the water. However, as O1 tells:

“Their English level is not very good, so we’re not going to hire them. If they had a decent level of English you could hire them as a full-time instructor, but unfortunately you can’t, so we split it up between Australian guys giving all the theory and watch them to make sure they learn the technique, and then we have the locals pushing them into waves.” (O1, Appendix 2.1, p. 11).

In other words, Surf Camp 1 has come to some sort of agreement with locals regarding surf instruction, and it might seem like this could be a possible, partial solution to the conflict regarding ownership of the job opportunities in the surf industry.

As pointed out by Kaffine (2009) in the theoretical framework, localism and the degree of it can vary from destination to destination depending on environmental and social factors. According to the conflicts exemplified by the informants in the empirical material, seemingly some of the young local surfers in Sri Lanka feel a sense of ownership over the job opportunities within the surf industry. They feel that they should be the ones employed to the jobs as the industry takes place in their country, and it might again be argued that they are seeking to exert power over the surfing industry. This indicates that localism in Sri Lanka predominantly concern job opportunities. However, investigating the issue from a different angle, what the locals are seemingly not taking into account is the fact that the surf tourism, as emphasized earlier, was brought to Sri Lanka by tourists and foreigners, and that these job opportunities might not have been there if it weren't for foreigners. With that being said, as mentioned by Usher & Gómez (2016) sustainability is essential for a tourism destination, and it is important to support the local communities.

Through the experience I gained during the research, since tourism is fairly new and under development in Sri Lanka, locals has gained a feel of earning money, and they want to earn more. However, some of them have not yet learned how to handle tourists and the tourism industry, and what I encountered was that often intimidation and violence seemed to be their solution to gain power. This is in accordance with several of the analyzed parts of the interviews in the previous chapter.

As found here, localism to a high degree regards money and work in Sri Lanka rather than who gets to surf the waves. Nonetheless, it is interesting how, even though surfing apparently is soothing and good for the mental health, aggressiveness, intimidation and violence can occur because of the sense of ownership of a surf spot or a job opportunity.

4.3.5: To Involve or not to Involve Authorities

Of the five surf camps – six including the one I managed - only two, namely Surf Camp 4 and 5, have involved the police in any issues, and in both cases without any effect (Appendix 2.4 and 2.5). Additionally, none of the foreign surf instructors who responded to the online survey have reported a threat or physical assault to the police while they were in Sri Lanka (Appendix 4). When asked if he has involved the police in any matters, the informant from Surf Camp 1 answered the following:

“There have been situations with the bar where it could be necessary to involve the police, but I never have. I know other people that have though. But the police are all corrupt anyway, so unless we pay the police off its not going to be of any benefit to us. The police will come asking me for money for helping out, so it's best to try to settle it without the police. One of the other guys got a gun pulled on him, and they send the guy to jail, but then all of his friends gathered around the police station, claiming to get him out, so in the end they had to release him.” (O1, Appendix 2.1, p. 12)

That is, O1 here explains how he finds it futile to involve the police in any matters due to previous experiences. The informant continues to talk about how different this is from Europe and Australia, and explains that when working in Sri Lanka, it is essential to find good, trustworthy employees and to not get involved with the, in his own words, 'wrong' people:

"You can tell pretty much right away what type of person they [locals] are, so you just have to avoid them." (O1, Appendix 2.1, p. 12).

In other words, O1 indicates that he has encountered unreliable people and that he can easily spot who he can trust and who he can't. However, in 4.4: *Opposites Attracts* it will be illustrated that this is in fact not always the case for O1 as he here mentions how some of his local employees are stealing from the cash register and behaving inappropriately towards girls. If he really can distinguish between trustworthy and unreliable employees, he might not have employed employ locals who turn end up stealing from the surf camp. Nonetheless, the informants statement here exemplifies reasons for not involving the police, which is in accordance with P2's examples during the meeting held in connection with the e-mail correspondence presented in Appendix 5. Here, P2 explained how the surf camp he worked for had involved the police more than once but without any luck. All of the times the police had met them with an encouraging approach and had promised to do something about the matter, but nothing never happened. This and the previous example from O1 could be a testament that the police have not proven to be trustworthy or action oriented, which was one of the motivational factors for conducting the e-mail correspondence and P1's attempts to spread awareness of the intimidation and violence that happens in the surf milieu.

The e-mail correspondence began with the following e-mail from P1 with the subject *Intimidation and Violence against schools and clients*:

"Hi P3.

Would you be prepared to come to a meeting of some of the schools about the recent issues we have had of intimidation and violence against instructors ?

Do tell me please ?

Ciao,

P1 ... Director." (Appendix 5, p. 36)

The aim of the meeting was to gather as many surf camps from the area as possible in order to find out how many had experienced intimidation and/or violence against surf instructors and guests, and to outline how many of these incidents had been reported to the police. Unfortunately, some surf camps did not want to participate as they were anxious that it might not be completely confidential which could cause trouble for the people involved. Others had attempted to solve the problems with the help of locals who said that they had contacts in the police and other authorities that could help out with protecting the specific surf camp. This was, according

to P1, a bad idea since no locals should be trusted with a matter like this. This can seem harsh, but P1 explained that to most of these locals who want to help out, it all comes down to money, and in the end if you do not want to pay them anymore, they might turn their back on you and exploit the confidential information you have given them. Therefore, we ended up only being me, P1 and P2 at the meeting, so in total three different surf camps/schools represented. We discussed what kind of incidents had happened and if they had been reported to the police, and P1 explained what his intentions were and that he would take the case to the National Olympic Committee (NOC) in Colombo.

After the meeting, P1 met with the NOC to discuss the matter and send a follow-up e-mail to me and P2. Among other things he wrote:

“So... at the National Olympic Committee [...] the subject was raised and the reports produced. They were read by the secretary of the NOC and it really shocked them (they live in another world from the normal Sri Lankan's) that these incidents were taking place.

At the meeting and spear heading from the Sri Lankan side the development of the Association was P4 who's also a main player in the Life Saving Association of Sri Lanka and National Power Boat Association but more importantly one of the management heads of Jet Wing <http://www.jetwing.com/> Sri Lanka's largest travel company.” (Appendix 5, p. 38)

In other words, the secretary of the NOC was not aware what was going on in the surf scene in Sri Lanka, and were shocked to realize it. The information from P1 in the e-mail correspondence indicates that authorities in Sri Lanka and important associations such as NOC find the issue important and take it serious. It furthermore reveals that actions probably will be taken, but that this can take time and might not happen within the near future.

The cases illustrated in this part of the thesis indicates how inequality in power relations to some degree might cause serious conflicts like surf instructors being threatened or punched. The importance of power relations and what kind of influence it has will be elaborated in *4.3.1: Attempts to Exert Power and the Influence of Power Relations* and subsequently used for a discussion on who, if anyone, owns the waves.

4.3: A Local Work Force

The analysis has so far revealed that the increase in the surf tourism in Sri Lanka and all the surf camps opening up has created job opportunities for locals. All of the surf camps interviewed employ locals for positions such as cleaning, gardening, kitchen staff, guards and other employments, and all of the eight foreign surf instructors who replied to the online survey either worked or have worked with local surf instructors during their employment in Sri Lanka. Some camps, including ASC, even employ local surf instructors, but this is rare due to lack of

experience, non-sufficient English level and no instructor qualification. While all of the surf camps have local employees as part of their work force, there seems to be, though, a disagreement in the reasons for employing local staff:

“[...] the major reason for having local surf instructors is that we need it to be able to teach. Foreign instructors are not enough. As a foreign business you need to employ local people [...]” (O1, Appendix 2.1, p. 9).

The informant here argues that they have to employ locals in order to function as a foreign surf camp. In contrast, other informants argue that they employ local staff with the intention of supporting the local communities. The informant from Surf Camp 2 explained what they do for the local community and how they intend to help local employees:

“We really try to support the local villages and communities, and we have a long-term plan of training and educating locals in hospitality, service, management, yoga and surf. By doing this, we can help the locals become better educated and accomplishing a greater understanding of the tourism industry.” (GM, Appendix 2.2, p. 14)

Here, the informant implies that they do not feel forced to employ local staff, but rather that they want to in order to help and support the local communities. It is also implied by the informant that the local employees need help to become better educated and to obtain a better understanding of the tourism industry, which might be a preconception from the management of the surf camp. This is in line with Eriksen's (2015) claim that we tend to perceive people from a destination with a simple technology as having a better understanding towards nature's processes, and therefore might not have a great understanding of the tourism industry. However, the statement might be rooted in experience with employing local staff, and previous employees who has proved that it is a good idea to conduct such a long-term plan of training and educating.

Seemingly, there is a more or less common attitude amongst the surf camps that the positions that can be employed by locals should be employed by locals (Appendix 2). However, as pointed out by O1, work ethic might be different in Sri Lanka compared to the countries that these foreign surf camps originate from, and it might therefore take a lot to have locals employed as they, according to some of the informants, need a lot of training and supervision in their job tasks.

“Especially western standard things like having a proper toilet, so when we're trying to explain how to clean a toilet and that the floor is not wet, they don't really understand it. Also, cleaning things in general, we have to be on their back with everything just because their houses are not up to the same standards as our houses in the Western world. [...] Its' basically a bunch of 10-year-old staff, and when you teach them you have to teach them 10 times before it actually catches on, and you eventually have to show them hands on, this is how you do it 10 times before they learn it and take it on board.” (O1, pp. 10-11)

With this quotation, the informant implies that the local employees at his surf camp have difficulties living up to the standards set by the surf camp because they are not used to it, and because their own houses do not have the same kind of standards. Furthermore, he indicates that the local employees are slow learners and that it takes a lot of work to train them. Most camps seem willing to train local employees, though, and if the method of training does not work properly, it might be discussed if another approach should be applied; it could seem as if the surf camps are trying to train local employees the same way as they would train foreign employees, and when this does not turn out successful, they tend to blame the local employees. However, maybe a different approach should be taken into account as local employees might learn differently than foreign employees. As pointed out in the following it seems as if Surf Camp 5 has found a successful approach to training their local employees:

“We see the importance in helping the local community by employing staff for as many tasks as possible. There is no need of bringing in a foreign cleaner or cook when the people from here can do just as good, if not better, job.” (M, Appendix 2.5, p. 20)

The informant here agrees that it is important to help the local communities, and also argues that local employees might do a better job than foreigners. Additionally, the informant from Surf Camp 3 explains that they too aim to support the local community, but she furthermore states other reasons for employing local staff:

“We try our best to support the local community, and one of our ways is by employing local staff. We realize that the surf camp can’t function without local employees, and more than that we want to work with them. We want to mix the qualities of foreign staff with the qualities of local staff and get the best possible combination of staff.” (FHM, Appendix 2.3, p. 16)

Thus, the informant here implies that they value the differences in work culture in different nationalities. However, it is also mentioned that they have to employ locals, and it is not evident which of the reasons for employing locals weighs the most to the informant.

These differences in opinion might be caused by several factors. It could be argued that there is a difference in the work experience between the local employees from the different camps; the local cleaning staff from one camp might have a great sense of how it should be done in order to match the standards of the surf camp, whereas the local cleaning staff from another surf camp might not have the same experience, and thus is not aware of the level of standard and how to meet it for one reason or another. As mentioned earlier, this could have something to do with methods for training the staff. Moreover, it is interesting to notice that O1 by far is the informant who has been working in Sri Lanka the longest (a year and a half), and since he is one of the owners of the camp, whereas the other informants are managers, O1 might have more experience than the others. Additionally, since O1 is one of the founders of Surf Camp 1, he has had to build everything from the bottom with his co-owner, including training of the employees. M from Surf Camp 5, on the other hand, has not been there from the foundation of the camp, and the experienced local employees that he mentions might have gone through a thorough training before M started working at the camp. Thus, this informant does not have the same

experience with training of local staff as O1 does, and their statement therefore weigh differently. The achieved statuses of the informants, as outlined by Eriksen (2015) in part 3.3: *Local Surfers vs. Surf Tourists, an Introduction to Self-Identity*, varies and influences their ability to express their opinions and experiences on the topic of local employees.

4.3.1: Attempts to Exert Power and the Influence of Power Relations

In order to illustrate the kind of challenges that could occur with regards to encounters between foreign and local staff, here an example from ASC will be applied; during the time I spend in Sri Lanka, ASC was confronted with several challenges regarding employment of locals (Appendix 1.2). Especially one local surf instructor, LSI, caused challenges that are in accordance with the theoretical framework presented earlier. LSI had worked for the surf camp for a while but had been given several warnings due to not performing well in his job, just like foreign employees would if they did not do well. ASC ended up suspending him from his job at the surf camp due to lack of responsibility of his work tasks and several incidents where he was caught surfing on his own while he should be instructing and taking care of the guests. The suspension led to dismissal of LSI since he started blackmailing the camp in an attempt to get his job back:

“After 4 weeks of suspension, the Head Instructor and I had a meeting with LSI that did not quite turn out as we had hoped; LSI started the meeting by trying to blackmail us to give him his job back. He basically said, that if we didn’t give him his job back in a week at the latest he would make sure to, in his own words, “make trouble” for us. He explained that he had many friends in the area where we have the surf lessons and that him and his friends would make sure that we could not complete surf lessons there anymore.” (Appendix 1.2, p. 5).

This could be an illustration of how LSI saw blackmailing as his only possibility to get his job back; as it will be clarified later on in this part, this was LSI’s attempt to exert power over ASC.

After LSI started threatening and blackmailing ASC, it was evident how much he and his family depended on him having this job as surf instructor; the management at ASC had tried suggesting other jobs to him, but nothing seemed to work for him, and as it was later on evident, he probably would not have been able to work, for instance, as a tuk tuk driver in the area as the territorialism was big and the other tuk tuk drivers might be upset that a former surf instructor would work as driver in ‘their’ area, leading to fewer customers for them.

Nonetheless, due to the blackmailing ASC would not reemploy LSI as that would indicate that they gave after for threats and corruption, which they did not want to do. Therefore, LSI was definitively dismissed and ASC had to look for a new instructor; initially it was discussed finding another local instructor to work along with the local instructor who was still employed as ASC wanted to employ as many good local instructors as possible. However, the management and the headquarters of the camp were aware that it would be difficult to find a good, qualified instructor with a sufficient level of English, but they had one instructor in mind. I, as Camp Manager, had an informal talk with him, and he was interested in working with ASC. Nevertheless, the camp quickly changed their mind as “some locals heard that [they] talked to another local instructor and told it to LSI and his

family, who again became very upset [...]. They could not understand why [they] would fire LSI and then look for another instructor.” (Appendix 1.2, p. 6). Thus, to avoid trouble with LSI and his family, ASC decided to only look for foreign instructors, and then did the best they could to explain to LSI and his family that LSI was not dismissed because the camp did not need another instructor, but rather because he did not perform well in his job and did not prove to be trustworthy.

This situation illustrates how differences can create conflicts, and how an actor can incline to use power as a means of defending himself; LSI felt powerless in the suspension and resorted to the best solution he could master in that time and space, namely to threaten his employer in an attempt to get his job back. As mentioned by Eriksen (2015), LSI might have felt role expectations from his local community, and the distribution of roles and statuses might have affected him, which led him to attempt to apply power in order to, as Eriksen mentions, get someone to do something they would not have done otherwise.

Keeping in line with this, despite his negative comments on his local employees, O1 (Appendix 2.1) explains how they have the intentions of giving something back to the local community, both by hiring locals, but also by letting local surfers from the area borrow surf boards from the camp. With this, he continues to explain how the locals quickly started taking it for granted that they could have a surf board, and that one day one of them did not want to wait until the guests had chosen their boards (which was the criteria for borrowing a board), and demanded to get first pick of the boards. And when the foreign surf instructor from the camp denied him this, the local surfer got aggressive and punched the foreign instructor in his face. As an explanation to this, O1 explains:

“They behave like kids and they are testing you out, because they are not educated, [...] and their solution is to threaten. The more you give them, the more they take and expect.” (O1, Appendix 2.1, p. 13).

In other words, the informant here indicates that they have the intentions of helping and supporting the local communities, and they wanted to do something nice for the local surfers in the area around their surf camp by lending them some of the excess surf boards from the camp free of charge. However, one of the locals then started taking it for granted and would not follow the one rule that the camp set for borrowing the board; that he had to wait until the guests of the camp had chosen the boards they wanted to use. This might indicate a difference in manners and education, or it can be argued that it is a sign of greediness from the local surfers. Nonetheless, notions of power are once again at stake, and the reaction from the local surfer might be a defense mechanism to feeling a limited control over the situation (Eriksen, 2015). According to the informant, this kind of behavior is not uncommon, and as he says in the quote above, to his experience the more you give, the more they expect (Appendix 2.1).

4.4: Opposites Attract

Of the challenges with local employees, O1 from Surf Camp 1 explained that some of the challenges he experienced regarded work ethic, and in his words “they get paid a lot less but they also work a lot less [than foreign staff]” (O1, Appendix 2.1, p. 10). As examples of specific challenges, he mentions stealing from the cash register, insufficient level of cleaning and hygiene, lack of English language skills, and inappropriate behavior towards guests, specifically girls. At one point, as O1 told, some female guests were walking home from a nearby bar at night when they were stopped and harassed by local tuk tuk drivers. As an explanation to why such challenges with locals might occur, O1 points out how he perceives differences between cultures, and how he sees it as conflicting:

“They [locals] are culturally different; the girls are still in the kitchen and getting married at 17, and they are not allowed to wear any revealing clothing at all. So that’s a big challenge. We have to warn the guests and make sure they don’t walk around in their bikinis and so.” (O1, Appendix 2.1, p. 10)

As a tourist, it might not be evident that it is not appropriate to walk around lightly dressed, especially for surf tourists who surf in their bathing suit or bikini and want to walk from the beach back to the surf camp right after having surfed. As pointed out by Eriksen (2015) in the theoretical part about self-identity, all societies share some social conventions or general agreements that specify how to act in a specific society. The female surf tourists from this example might be accustomed to social conventions stating that it is acceptable to walk around in bikinis on the beach where they come from, and since such implicit rules, according to Eriksen (2015), are often taken for granted, they are in fact socially constructed and thus might not apply to other societies such as for instance Sri Lanka. However, it can be discussed if this justifies local men approaching the girls, inappropriately commenting on their outfits. Nonetheless, it is a difference in opinion, and it cannot be clarified who are right and who are wrong; what might be perceived as inappropriate to tourists and foreigners might not be perceived the same way in the eyes of locals, which is in accordance to Hannam & Knox’s (2010) statement earlier that what is exotic to one, might be ordinary to another. As outlined previously, Hallam & Street (2000) and Hall (1997) all agree that difference is essential to finding meaning and in the construction of the self. That is, the different ways in which the above-mentioned situation is perceived can be a tool for the individuals to construct their identity and how they are presented.

Keeping in line with this, as mentioned in Appendix 1.1, it was found in the research that female surfers often obtained more respect from local surfers than male surfers, and I never experienced any serious harassment or violence towards me while surfing, neither as a female surf tourist, as a female camp manager, nor as a female researcher. This is in coherence with Usher and Gómez’ findings that localism is often connected to male surfers. Nonetheless, all surf instructors that I met in Sri Lanka were men, but two of the respondents to the online survey were female surf instructors, and they both commented that they experienced intimidation and threats while instructing in Sri Lanka (Appendix 4.1 and Appendix 4.3).

“During my lessons they would approach me in front of my students in a very unfriendly way. Very threatening and suspect. They said we couldn't teach there, because it was their beach and that we didn't have the license to teach. [...] When they approached me and my colleagues, they said that if we came back to the same beach they would be back to give us big problems - implying that they would beat us I assume from their tone of voice” (Appendix 4.3, p. 28)

Thus, due to my experiences as a female surf tourist it was first presumed that intimidation only happened towards male surf instructors, but then the research found differently and my first presumptions were proved to be wrong. This emphasizes the previous findings that localism in Sri Lanka is highly related to jobs in comparison to other countries where it comes down to surfing as an activity rather than the industry and employment opportunities.

As a female surf tourist, I myself experienced a few times to be approached, yelled after or stared at by local men when walking or driving on my scooter back from a surf session, and therefore always made sure to bring non-revealing clothes to wear on top of my bathing suit. However, as mentioned before, I never experienced being severely harassed, and I noticed that some locals started recognizing me and instead of yelling inappropriate things they started waving and smiling at me (Appendix 1.1). Thus, the perception of me changed gradually, and as the locals grew more accustomed to me being there, they also seemed to accept me more.

4.5: Pros and Cons of the Increasing Surf Industry

In the interview with the local surfer, the informant explained why it is good that so many job opportunities has opened up, and how job opportunities caused by the surf industry should be seen as advantages for locals:

“One thing that is really good is all the good jobs that comes with the tourists. If there were no tourists there would be no good jobs and we would have to fish or sell coconuts on the streets. But now, many young locals can get a proper job in the tourism business which is a good opportunity.” (LS, Appendix 3, p. 24)

However, he keeps on explaining that many of the locals do not understand that the increased tourism can be an advantage for them. As he says, “to them [locals], the tourists are just annoying and they [the tourists] are stealing their [the locals'] waves.” (LS, Appendix 3, p. 24), which is in accordance to the previous part about how difference is perceived.

Moreover, both sustainable and unsustainable aspects of the increased surf industry have been found; as explained in *Part 3.1: Surf Tourism, a Literature Review* a negative effect of the increased surf tourism is unsustainability in the sense that the surf spots get overcrowded. However, when surf camps support the local communities by employing locals, the industry is one step in the direction towards becoming more sustainable.

Additionally, several beach cleans are performed by surf camps every week in an attempt to increase the sustainability and take care of the nature as well as spreading awareness about ocean pollution.

However, conflicts about who owns the waves have a negative effect, and the several statements from surf instructors and camp managers prove that intimidation and violence is a great challenge as outlined in 4.2: *Localism in Sri Lanka*. The International Surfing Association Membership and Development Department of Sri Lanka has, in corporation with P3, who was mentioned in Part 4.3.5, written a report about how they recently gained awareness of the physical attacks and how they think it impacts the industry:

“The International Surfing Association deplores any use of aggression, violence or intimidation in any circumstances in the sphere of surfing. The reports of these attacks are shocking and can have a strong negative impact for clients on holiday to witness and present a negative image for Sri Lankan surf tourism.” (Appendix 5, p. 39).

The message from the Association indicates that they did not have any knowledge of the conflicts within the surf scene in southwestern Sri Lanka, and that they take the matter very serious. Their greatest concern is evidently the impact it might have on the Sri Lankan surf tourism and the tourists who possibly witness a conflict. Additionally, they state that they will do what is in their power to end the conflicts. As it has been defined in Ponting & O'Brien (2015), of the gravest consequences of localism and the negativity caused by it is that the industry might suffer from it in the sense that some surf tourists could choose other destinations over Sri Lanka, which is in accordance with the message from the International Surfing Association of Sri Lanka. Moreover, as Ponting & O'Brien (2015) emphasize, locals are dependent on jobs created by the tourism industry, and if issues regarding localism are not confronted and settled, the entire local tourism industry might be undermined.

4.6: So, to Whom do the Waves Belong?

Now, the extent of localism in Sri Lanka has been illustrated, and it has been outlined what kind of conflicts are caused by it. Furthermore, examples of encounters that trigger the conflicts have been given, and the analysis has clarified that the concepts of self-identity, difference, perceptions of others and power relations are closely connected and play important factors in Sri Lanka's surf scene. Here, elaborations of the most essential notions will be given, along with an attempt to outline to who, if any, the waves belong.

In the theoretical framework of the thesis it was pointed out by Salazar (2013) that some tourism stakeholders apply old-style anthropological notions to the tourism industry so people of a destination are objectified and homogenized, and as Skinner & Theodossopoulos (2010) stress, the reason for presenting consumers with these imagined identities originate from the consumers' own demand to experience something different. In other words, consumers within the tourism industry might be presented with imagined identities of their desired destination, which might reinforce prejudices and stereotypical images of the people. On the other hand, it has been illustrated here in the analysis that such images can go both ways; the example of me being approached and yelled at by locals, and the way their perception of me changes as they grow accustomed to me, indicates

that they had a preconception of me and that the imagined identity of me was changed with time. In other words, from both a foreign and a local perspective, as oppositions and differences learn more about each other and start accepting each other, encounters might turn out differently and might not end in conflicts.

Moreover, several conflicts have proven to be based on inequality in power relations. The example with the local surf instructor attempting to get his job back through blackmailing and the cases where the police was involved but did not end up helping, illustrates such inequality and how exertion of power can be used in the effort to change one's relative position.

Now, the question as to who can actually claim ownership of the waves remain. The informant from Surf Camp 1 has an opinion on this matter:

“Nobody really owns the surf. It can be seen as kind of a national asset, but it can't be seen as somebody owning it, claiming that this is their wave. It's not just for one person, it's for everybody.” (O1, Appendix 2.1, p. 12).

However, this does not seem evident to all, but as LS mentions, maybe Sri Lanka just needs time to develop and to let the locals understand that foreign surf camps are actually bringing tourists to the country, developing the economic growth, and not stealing the customers from local employees. And additionally, if the foreign surf camps started using more local employees in their work and perhaps changed their perspective on and way of training employees, and if the two parties came to a common solution on how to handle the surf tourism industry in southwestern Sri Lanka, maybe with time the quote from above will be evident to everyone and the surf scene in southwestern Sri Lanka can be developed and free of conflicts regarding who owns the waves and who gets to work in the industry.

Part 5:

Conclusion

Seemingly, Sri Lanka is a tourist destination full of opportunities, and with a diverse range of tourist sights and a manifold surf scene, the tourism industry has increased during the past decade. However, the research conducted before and during this thesis has proven that there in reality are many obstacles to get past in order to fulfill such opportunities.

The increased surf tourism has benefitted the economy of local communities in Sri Lanka and has created many job opportunities. Even though many of these jobs are positioned by foreigners, seemingly due to lack of experience and ability of locals, many job positions for locals have still been created, and supports local communities. If the increase continues, more and more jobs will arise, offering even more job opportunities to locals. However, part of the issue seems to be that the locals do not see it this way; they focus on the part where a foreigner is doing a job, that a local think he can do. They do not see the big picture and the advantages of the increased surf tourism, and on the contrary, the foreign employers might not always exploit the full potential of the local employees. Therefore, conflicts occur and cases of intimidation and violence emerge, potentially scaring away tourists, which is another part of the issue; a negative effect of encounters across cultures can, according to the theoretical framework, decrease the number of surf tourists and thereby have an impact on the economy of the local communities.

In the beginning of the research process I wondered why intimidation and violence happened on the southwest coast of Sri Lanka in a tourist activity that supposedly calms down and delights the surfer, and how differences in people and their backgrounds could produce various perceptions of each other that often led to conflicts. Then, however, I identified insider knowledge of the surf culture in Sri Lanka and obtained an understanding of local communities and diversity in societies. Additionally, I discovered the importance of considering differences in the encounter with others.

Through the grounded theory approach, it was possible to theorize on the empirical material that localism in Sri Lanka to some degree vary from other destinations in the sense that it to a high degree regards job opportunities rather than just who has the right to surf the waves. As it turned out, encounters between nationalities and cultures often results in conflicts about employment of foreigners, especially surf instructors, and the issue of young locals not having a job. Furthermore, throughout the field work and the analysis of the empirical material, it has been evident that there is a significant distinction between 'us' and 'them' in the surf industry in Sri Lanka. This supports the theoretical framework on identity and difference, and indicates that individuals use difference to shape meaning.

Finally, it was found that inequality in power relations often results in conflicts, and while claiming that money rules society, some of the surf camps suggested simple solutions to the intimidation and violence in the surf scene; one surf instructor suggested that by purchasing coconuts from the people challenging the surf lessons at the beach, the offenders might be pleased; others found it necessary to pay certain locals in order to protect their guests during surf lessons. It can be argued, though, that both of these suggestions fall under the category

of corruption, so maybe the solution should come from elsewhere. As one of the other surf camps suggested, by splitting the surf lessons between foreign, qualified surf instructors providing the necessary theory and local surfers pushing the beginner surfers into the waves, locals are occupied without compromising with quality.

In other words, maybe with time the surf tourism industry of Sri Lanka will develop and the number and extent of conflicts might decrease. One thing is evident though; a greater understanding and acceptance of what is different and corporation across cultures, nationalities and societies is essential in an increasing surf industry in Sri Lanka.

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