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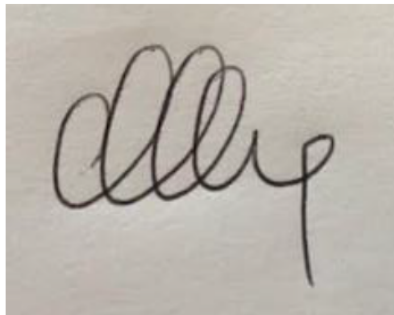
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# New ways of understanding dark tourism sites: A case study of The Kingsley Plantation



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Master of Tourism

Master Thesis

Supervisor: Martin Trandberg Jensen

Handed in 31<sup>st</sup> of May 2018

## **Abstract**

This project takes point of departure in the field site of The Kingsley Plantation, a former cotton plantation during the 18th and 19th centuries where slavery was a part of the past. The field site is located within the National Park of the Timucuan Ecological and Historic Preserve in Jacksonville, Florida. As an attraction site, the plantation can be categorized as a dark tourism site based on the historical past but the location within a national park creates a space that attracts both tourists and locals. National Parks have been set aside for people to enjoy and have a good time.

The aim is therefor to find out how the dark attraction site of The Kingsley Plantation is constructed through different mobilities by using theories within mobility studies and furthermore explore how the use of mobility frameworks can lead to new ways of understanding and nuancing the concept of dark tourism. The structure of the projects is divided into three parts. The first part of the analysis will address how the Kingsley plantation has been staged from above by using the framework of 'staging mobilities' to explore the physical space through regulations, planning and the designs. Secondly, the project will explore and analyze how the plantation is staged from below to examine the different practices through an interplay between embodied performances and social interactions. Both first and second part of the analysis will include aspect of dark tourism theories in order to understand how a dark tourism site is constructed. At last, the third part will discuss if it is possible to categorize the darkness within The Kingsley Plantation and furthermore explore if the use of mobility studies can be a way of challenging the concept of dark tourism.

To examine the conditions within The Kingsley Plantation and to get an understanding of what happens I have made use of qualitative research methods. The approach of the project is structured around a case study where I have been visiting the plantation site over 6 days. During these days I have made participant observations, had small semi structured conversations with present visitors. I have furthermore had longer semi-structured interviews within both former visitors and Park Rangers. My observations have been transformed into field note diaries where the approach of autoethnography has been used in order to describe my own experiences, feelings and emotions. I have tried to be as honest as possible by documenting all my observations and thoughts as well as the challenges I faced during the process.

**Keywords:** Tourism, Dark tourism, Staging Mobilities, Experience, Slavery, Qualitative Research Methods

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## Introduction

People have for decades traveled to experience places that in one way or another have been linked with death and suffering (Stone & Sharpley, 2008) but it was not until the early 1990' that relations between tourism and places of death and disasters were drawn. Since then several attempts have tried to label death-related tourism and its darkness (Stone P. R., 2006), among them were thanatourism and dark tourism.

As well as dark tourism has been viewed in many ways, so has the concept of experiences which can be seen as the key to success within tourism (Loureiro, 2014). It has been argued that destinations and sites are not fixed places but are determined upon the embodied performances and interactions by both locals and tourists and can be experienced and understood in multiple ways (Sheller & Urry, 2014). One way of addressing experiences are through 'staged mobilities' that recognizes the ordinary and everyday life situations (Jensen, 2013). Here the experience is influenced by an interplay between planning, designs and regulations staged 'from above' and the visitors performed actions staged 'from below' through embodied performances and social interactions (Jensen, 2013). It is within this crossfield that the experiences are occurring.

This project will take point of departure in the attraction site of The Kingsley Plantation. The plantation site is located in the city of Jacksonville, Florida. The Kingsley Plantation was during the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries a one of many cotton plantations in Florida where slavery was a part of the history. The plantation site is today a well-preserved historic site that interprets the everyday life of the people who once called The Kingsley Plantation their home and has become a symbol of a time in the American history (National Park Service, 4). The location of the plantation is today a part of the National Park of the Timucuan Preserve that invites people to enjoy the wildlife and the nature of the national park. This resolves in a location that invites both tourists and locals.

The aim of this project is to explore how the attraction site of The Kingsley Plantation is constructed through different mobility practices and furthermore look into how existing theories of dark tourism categorizes darkness. By exploring these two aspects of a dark tourism sites will raise a question if new ways of understanding the concept of dark tourism can be considered.

To do so will the two concepts of dark tourism and mobile experiences will be used as a theoretical frame to create a structure throughout the analysis. To get an understanding of what is happening at The Kingsley

Plantation, this project is centered around a case study where qualitative research methods have been used. To explore the conditions and to get an understanding of how the construction of the place and its different mobility practices I have made use of autoethnography in order to document my own experiences, feelings and emotions. I have furthermore made participant observations and conducted information based on semi-structured conversations and interviews to examine how the dark attraction site is understood by the visitors and the Local Park Rangers. I have documented all my observations in a field note diary and supported my experiences with pictures. During the process I have tried to be as honest as possible by exposing my experiences during the process as well as my challenges.

This project will work with following research question:

### Research Question

How is dark tourism sites constructed through mobility studies and how may this lead to a new way of understanding dark tourism?

- How is The Kingsley Plantation staged from above
- How is The Kingsley Plantation staged from below
- How is dark tourism categorized and created through different forms of practices

### Delimitations

**The Kingsley Plantation:** The project will refer to The Kingsley Plantation which is located within the National Park of the Timucuan Preserve in Jacksonville, Florida, USA. I have chosen to delimit myself to this specific plantation in the analysis and have left out other plantations that are to be found in the State of Florida.

**Experience:** The concept of experience will be further discussed in the theory chapter.

**Dark tourism:** The concept of dark tourism will be defined and elaborated in the theory chapter.

### Outlines for Readings

To make it easier for the reader to follow the setup of this project, I have made an outline for readings. This project is divided into seven main chapters which are: *Introduction, Field Description, Methodology, Theory, Analysis, Conclusion* and *Suggestions to Further Research*. The following chapters will be elaborated below.

**Chapter 1: Introduction**

The introduction will briefly introduce the field of research and viewing the theological and methodological approaches used to create this project.

**Chapter 2: Case Description**

Chapter two includes a field case description which helps the reader to get a better understanding of the setting for this project and which role and function the Kingsley plantation used to have.

**Chapter 3: Methodology**

I will in the methodology chapter presents my ontological and epistemological considerations and elaborate on my position within the paradigm of social constructivism. Additionally, this section will also clarify the use of primary and secondary data and my considerations within the use of qualitative methods.

**Chapter 4: Theory**

Chapter four will include my theoretical approach and reflections that will set the framework for the analysis of this project. The theory chapter will introduce the theories within dark tourism and experience and elaborate on how they create a connection to the research question.

**Chapter 5: Analysis**

In chapter 5 the analysis of the project will begin. The analysis is based on my findings in relation to my data collection and theoretical considerations in order to answer the research question. This chapter is divided into three sections according to the aims to create a better structure throughout the project.

**Chapter 6: Conclusion**

Chapter 6 will consist of a conclusion, which is based on my findings in the analysis chapter. The conclusion will highlight the findings and round off this project.

**Chapter 7: Suggestions to Further Research**

In chapter seven I will elaborate on how I could have approached this project differently and reflect on how it would be possible to do further work in extension to this project.



## Case Description

The United States of America also known as USA opened up for slave trade in the year of 1619. At this time the State of Florida was a subject to the Spanish colonial who had made use of slavery since 1497 (Harritshøj, 2003). The Spanish government was ruled by a relatively liberal racial policy (National Park Service, 1) which was different from the rest of USA. In Spain, a three class task system divided the people into three social classes: white people as the top class, free people of color in the middle and slaves in the bottom. The basic element in the system allowed legal rights for one person to own and control another person. One of the central views regarding the concept of slavery in the Spanish system was that the slaves were considered as human beings and not only property and enslavement was not seen as a permanent condition based on race (appendix 16) whereas slaves in USA were of African descent were owned by white people and they were seen as living property without any human rights aligned with animals (Andersen, 2014). The number of slaves was considerable larger in the Sothern States where slaves was used as a work force at many plantations producing tobacco, sugar, rice or cotton whereas slaves settled in Northern States were primarily used in the household (Andersen, 2014).

Slaves lived in generally under bad conditions where they had to rely on their owners ability to provide them with clothing, housing, food and everything else they needed. Many owners did not provide their slaves with more food than they had to which resulted in nourishment diets. The living conditions were cramped and many slaves had to live together in cabins allocated near their owners or had to build their own houses. Most slaves in the USA worked from sunrise to sunset every day and were lucky to just have one day off a month which gave them very little time to themselves whereas slaves in Florida worked based on a time schedule which allowed them more spare time. In their spare time they had to cook, maintain their houses, grow vegetable to provide more food to their diet, relax and so on and most did not dare to complain or make rebellion due to fear of being wiped or even worse punishments (History On The Net).

### Fort George Island in Florida

Back in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries the cotton business stated to grow in Florida and many people traveled or immigrated to the State (Florida Memory). Some traveled across the Pacific Ocean to obtain land and establish plantations in the hope of earning their fortune while others were forced to travel to work on the plantations to provide wealth for the people who owned them (National Park Service, 5). The period from 1763 to 1865 was known as the



Picture 1: Plantation house and kitchen house

plantation period in Florida (National Park Service, 8, 2016) and in 1830 the population of Florida consisted of more slaves than white citizens (Florida Memory).

One traveler, who sought to find economic welfare in Florida, was the English businessman and slave owner, Mr. Zephaniah Kingsley. Mr. Kingsley arrived in 1803 where he became a successful planter (National Park Service, 2). During a trip to Cuba in 1806 he purchased a 13-year-old African woman named Anna Madgigaine Jai to become one of his slaves. Mr. Kingsley later married Anna and together they raised four children. In 1811 Mr. Kingsley legally freed Anna and their children and they stayed together as a family (Explore Southern History).

In 1814 the family settled down on an established plantation on Fort George Island near the city of Jacksonville, Florida. This specific plantation had been owned by several planters and the plantation changed name in relation to those who owned it (National Park Service, 8). The plantation house was originally built in 1798 by slave labor and was located near the waterfront due to the easiest way of transporting supplies and crops by boat (National Park Service, 1). The farm stretched over 32,000 acres where Sea Island cotton, citrus, sugar canes, and corn was produced (National Park Service, 1).

To help out in the fields Mr. Kingsley had an enslaved work force on approximately 80 people (National Park Service, 1). Mr. Kingsley's view on enslavement was in accordance with the Spanish view on slavery. He believed that they should be treated according to their abilities rather than the color of their skin and they should be respected as they were a member of his own family (Appendix 16). On the other hand he believed in punishment and the purpose of slaves was to gain wealth for their rightful owners (Appendix 16). At the farm, Anna helped Mr. Kingsley with the daily operations. She had even taken advantages of the Spanish system on enslavement and took her freedom to own her own slaves and properties (Explore Southern History). During the years the mixed-race family took over four other plantations in the area and owned more than 200 slaves (National Park Service, 6).

Mr. and Mrs. Kingsley's slaves lived and worked at the plantation. A fifth of a mile from the plantation house was 32 tabby cabins in a semicircle placed which represented the slave community (National Park Service, 1). The life as a slave was not easy. The slaves were day by day assigned with a specific amount of work according to the task system. If the slaves finished early they were assigned with other tasks (National Park Service, 1). On the other hand, if the slaves at The Kingsley Plantation did not live up to the level of work requested, they were in the risk of being punished, sold to other planters and on this behalf being separated from their families. After a long day of work the slaves could do as they chose but many continued working with crops in their own gardens to supplement their food rations or sold them through

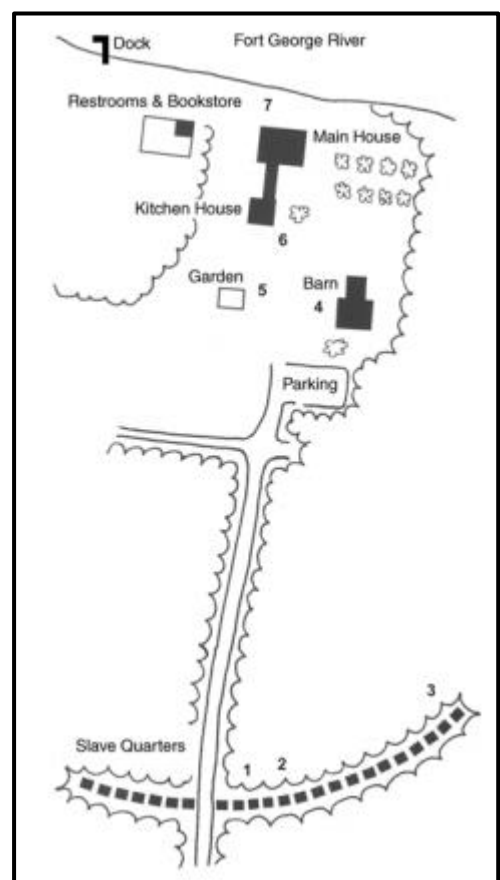
Mr. Kingsley (National Park Service, 1). The slaves were furthermore not allowed to learn how to read or write and this prevented them from telling their own stories in diaries or letters to others (National Park Service, 7).

In 1821 things started to change and the colony of Florida passed from Spanish government to the USA. Many slave owners feared rebellions and the conditions for the black population got worse along with the new government. The conditions got deteriorate for both free and enslaved black people (National Park Service, 1). Mr. Kingsley was against the stricter laws. The more strict rules concerned all black people which would affect the family members of Mr. Kingsley as well. He was therefor a spokesman for keeping a system where people were judged by their social class and not their skin color and he emphasized the importance of free blacks in the society, but his approach was ignored. In order to escape the oppressive laws and for his family keeping their freedom, Anna and two of their children moved to Haiti in 1837. At this time, Haiti was the only free black republic where Mr. Kinsley's family could live without restrictions. Mr. Kingsley remained at the plantation and sold it to this nephew in 1839 (National Park Service, 1). Slavery continued in the USA and came to an end in 1865 (Harritshøj, 2003).

### The Kingsley Plantation

Today, The Fort George Plantation also known as The Kingsley Plantation, is no longer in use and is located in the national park of the Timucuan Ecological and Historic Preserve and maintained by the National Park Service (Appendix 8). The plantation is the oldest remaining plantation in Florida and has become a historical site which is free for visitors to experience 7 days a week between 9am-5pm (National Park Service, 10).

During the week days the visitors can experience the remaining's of the old cotton plantation on their own. The stories presented at the plantation is addressed around the years of 1814 to 1837 where Mr. Kingsley was the owner of this plantation and stories about the free and enslaves people living on the Island are told (National Park Service, 8), and gives a glimpse of how the life of The Kingsley Plantation used to be for those who called the Kingsley Plantation their home. This specific plantation is the only site that tells the story about slavery seen from the Spanish



Picture 2: Map over The Kingsley Plantation

colonial era (Appendix 8).

At the plantation ground visitors can experience the original buildings of the plantation house, the kitchen house, a barn, an interpretive garden showing which kind of crops that were produced in the fields and the remains of 25 slave cabins (National Park Service, 10). There is furthermore placed a visitor center which goes under several names like the souvenir shop and the book store. A map showing the plantation site can be seen in picture 2.

During the weekends, guided tours inside the plantation home are provided for registered visitors at 11am and 3pm. The plantation home is normally closed for the public. The tours are escorted by Park Rangers where a maximum of 12 visitors are allowed. The plantation ground is visited by a wide range of people which includes locals, tourist, students, fishermen and hikers (Appendix 8) and in the year of 2017 the number of visitors was around 82.000 (State Report) who came from all over the world (Appendix 8). The plantation is today a symbol of a time and a place in the American history that represents people, free as well as enslaved and their willingness to survive (National Park Service, 4).

## Methodology

The methodology chapter will describe and elaborate the methods and processes that have been used throughout this research. It will also be discussed why the chosen methods and processes have been used and why they have been relevant for this case study. Besides this, this section will view how I have collected data and how the obtained knowledge has been processed in order to answer the research question.

Furthermore, this chapter will also include my ontological and epistemological approach which will be elaborated through the project.

## Ontology and Epistemology

Within the field of research there are different views and perceptions on the world and what reality is and means. This approach is referring to ontology (Hansen, 2014). Epistemology, on the other hand, refers to how the 'reality' and scientific knowledge are recognized (Langergaard, Rasmussen, & Sørensen, 2006). These two concepts are intertwining and are necessary to look into in order to understand how I as a researcher recognize knowledge and thereby understand the reflection on different meanings. In the following section, I elaborate on my ontology and epistemology considerations to create a deeper awareness on my viewpoint and this will furthermore clarify and give a better understanding of why I have applied the methods that are used through this project. The methods are a part of the processes that supports the answer of the research question, and through this I expose how my view is on the world and how I recognize construction of meanings, darkness, experience and construction of places.

## Ontological Considerations

Within the ontological perspective there are two counterparts to be seen which are *realism* and *relativism* (Hansen, 2014). Within a scale, these two concepts are seen as counterparts to each other.

Realism is placed in one end of the scale and the view on the world through this approach is that it exists independently from our sensory perception of it (Holm, 2011). With this approach on the world, it is possible for researchers to cover an absolute truth about the world. In the opposite end of the ontological scale is relativism placed. In the view of relativism, no such thing as an absolute truth is exciting and there is therefore no true reality (Holm, 2011). At the same time this approach recognize that there can exist more than one truth, and they are socially and mentally constructed, but according to Holm, they are only applicable to certain and limited contexts (Holm, 2011). It is therefore not possible for a researcher with a relativistic approach to clarify an absolute truth about the real world and meanings.

Within the ontological scale I place myself towards the relativistic approach. I do not believe in one absolute truth about the real world. It is of my belief construction of meanings can affect how we see and

approach the world. Within dark tourism, scales of darkness has tried to frame dark tourism places (Stone P. R., 2006), but I question if this is possible to categorize all dark tourism sites within generic scales. I therefore argue that trying to categorize the darkness at a place can be seen as a realistic approach. I recognize that people can have different views and meanings which can effect on how they for example understand an experience, the term of darkness and construction of places. As a researcher, I acknowledge that the visitors at The Kingsley Plantation might have different backgrounds and might have different reasons to visit the plantation which can have an effect on their visitor experience even though they all have been at the same attraction.

Due to my ontological belief I find my standing point within the paradigm of social constructivism where I define my position as a moderate social constructivist. Within the ontological view, the paradigm of social constructivism is leaning towards the relativistic approach where the construction of meanings and how we see the world is constructed through a combination of interaction between people, practices, mobility, language, experiences and our common understanding. Social constructivists do not believe in one true reality which on the other hand is a realistic approach (Daymon & Holloway, 2002).

As moderate social constructivist, I will not have a view that is entirely relativistic where everything is divided into social entities (Guldager, 2015), but I will on the other hand include both relations between the social entities and the physical entities throughout this project (Dolward, 2014).

By this I mean that the construction of meanings are not only created through social entitles, but through an interplay between social entities and objects which together have an impact on our believes and how we are able to shape meanings which not necessarily are the same. Within the field of tourism this is referred to as the material turn (Haldrup & Larsen, 2007). Tourist are traveling to visit attractions and destinations where social interactions with other visitors, locals or tour guides can affect the experience but material objects like machines, technology, souvenirs, buildings, pictures also play a significant role within tourism practices (Haldrup & Larsen, 2007) and can have an impact on how value and meanings are created within the place.

My ontological viewpoint will have consequences for the data I have collected in this project. I will approach this project as a subjective researcher, which will further be elaborated under my methodological considerations and will be expressed through my chosen methods. I am aware and acknowledge that my own preunderstandings will play a role in the way I collect data and how I interpret the information to useful knowledge and this will influence how I understand the context at The Kingsley Plantation. By incorporating autoethnography I will furthermore be able to include my own experiences, feelings and

emotions and this can give me be a better understanding within the views of the visitors and the participants that I have been in contact with. This have create meaning and very useful knowledge for this project and I do not believe that an approach of staying completely neutral and objective would have been useful or even possible within this project or within any other social research fields for that matter.

I will therefore not be able to stay completely neutral and objective. With this in mind, the dependability of this project can be considered. To prevent this, I have tried to document all my research which will be elaborated in the section of further considerations.

### **Epistemological Considerations**

Where ontology was an expression of how I looked upon 'reality', epistemology is an expression of how I recognize 'reality' and knowledge. It is important to recognize how to obtain knowledge and how this is creating meanings when researching (Langergaard, Rasmussen, & Sørensen, 2006).

As within the ontological perspective, two counterparts are seen within the epistemological approach as well, which are realism and relativism. Within the realistic approach, it is necessary to stay distanced and remain objective throughout the research process and it is important that the researcher must not be affected by values and opinions in the search for the truth (Hansen, 2014). In contrary to the epistemological realistic approach is the relativism perspective, where it is found important that knowledge is created through a cross field of interactions between what is being researched and the researcher (Hansen, 2014). With this approach it is seen inevitably for the reseacher to leave out his or hers own pre-understandings and it is not possible to create a complete distance and stay objective during the process of research.

My epistemological approach is influenced by my ontological standpoint and is therefore mainly based on relativism. I believe that I can find the best understanding of the context within The Kingsley Plantation if I interact with the visitors and the staff on site like when I had interview with a park ranger (appendix 8), together with former visitors. By observing, interacting and talking to people I have been aware that different meanings have been associated with the place which is reflected in different mobility practices on the plantation which is exposed during my interviews and field note diaries. In this way, I am not trying to keep a distance but I am on the other hand trying to understand the views of the visitors though a crossfield of interactions.

Based on my relativistic approach within epistemological perspective, I still find myself situated within the paradigm of social constructivism. Within social constructivism the language has a large impact on how we create a common understanding. The language is therefore not depicting the truth but can be affected by

the environment that it is used within (Holm, 2011). Within this project, the understanding of language as an important source to understand the place of The Kingsley Plantation is acknowledged but it is not only the language that create an understanding of places, but this project will explore how observations, experiences and the everyday lives through embodied performances and interactions as well can give an understanding of the environment and the construction of places. I do also recognize that material object, preunderstandings and different forms of mobility practices play a role when trying to explore darkness and visitor experiences within tourism. Due to my own position within the field, my own ability to interpret the conversations, observations and emotions into useful knowledge will have had an effect on the outcome of this project.

Due to my ontological and epistemological considerations, my understanding of the relevance of the use of language and other factors as tools to create knowledge and my own preunderstandings, I will in the following section include my hermeneutic considerations. My standpoint in the social constructivist paradigm causes me to make use of interpretation in the work on this project. This means that I am also going to make use of hermeneutic considerations, which will be elaborated upon in the next section.

### Hermeneutic Considerations

The hermeneutics addresses all forms of human activity and the purpose of its existence is not to explain the activity of the humans but instead to interpret it in order to understand the reasons behind it (Holm, 2011).

According to Holm, humans can only understand the context or the whole on basis of the parts that it consists of. All understanding is therefore conceptual which leads us to the idea

that understanding is as a circular process (Holm, 2011). In figure 1 is an illustration of the hermeneutic circle with is a core element within the hermeneutics.

With this knowledge I will not be able to get an understanding by only looking at one part but the whole needs to be taken into consideration in order to get an understanding of the whole. Therefore I need to look at different elements of the visitor experience at Kingsley plantation including embodied approach and here the circular process is important to get an understanding of the whole.

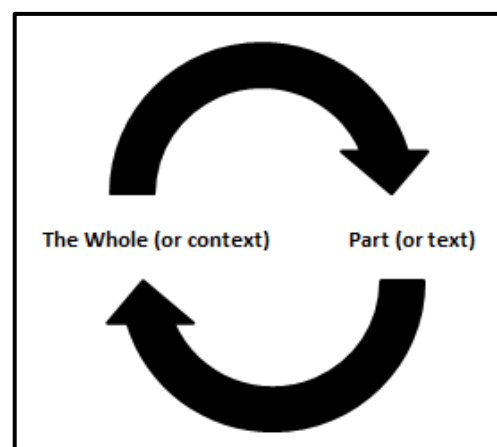


Figure 1: Hermeneutic circle



In order for me to understand how the visitor experience is created and how stories play a role, it is important to understand the meaning of the circular hermeneutic understanding. It will not be possible for me to clarify the understanding of the visitor experience if I do not understand the elements that affect the overall experience. I will therefore speak to the visitors about their expectations and their view on the plantation to get an understanding of their experiences. I will furthermore complement the meaning of language with non-representational approaches where embodied performance will help me to get an understanding of what is happening.

According to Gadamer, preunderstandings are not seen as negative and in fact it will not be possible to interpret without including preunderstandings (Holm, 2011). I am aware that the hermeneutic circulation will not give a right or wrong picture of an experience, but on the behalf of my preunderstandings and my obtained data, I will expand my horizon when trying to understand and create meaning within the context based on different views which will come to expression in the analysis.

### **Methodological Considerations**

My methodological considerations are in line with my views upon ontology and epistemology. To obtain knowledge that will help me answering the research question, I have made use of both primary and secondary data. In regards to primary data I have made use of qualitative methods in form of autoethnography, interviews and participant observations at the plantation which will be elaborated on in the following section.

As a social constructivist, I am aware of the importance of language, social interactions and material objects which can have different meanings according to the individuals preunderstandings and backgrounds. I will therefore include the voice of the workers at the Kingsley plantation and the visitors in order to get a better understanding of the visitor experience. I have furthermore made use of participant observations in different ways on site in order to put myself in the visitor's position but I am aware that my preunderstandings and the purpose of my present will not make me a regular visitor. Thirdly I have used my own experiences and self-reflection through autoethnography while trying to understand the concept of experience and darkness.

I have furthermore made use of secondary data in form of academic articles, books and webpages that have contained relevant theories and information that have supported this case study. Secondary data have given me an insight in the narrative that are framing the Kingsley plantation which have expanded my preunderstandings in order to get a better understanding of the actual visitor experience.

By implementing different methods I believe that this has given me more inputs and knowledge in order to create a bigger understanding of the visitor experience. In the following section I will elaborate on my methodological choices during the process of this project.

### **Considerations Regarding Qualitative Research Methods**

Qualitative methods are generally used when trying to explore and become experienced with the phenomenon's within the research area (Trochim, 2006) and when trying to learn how people make sense about themselves and others in order to create meaning in their lives (Hox & Boeije, 2004). This research method is viewed as being very flexible and is generating detailed information within social contexts (Hox & Boeije, 2004). This approach try to understand what and how people think about specific topics and this method is especially valuable when the topics are more sensitive (Trochim, 2006). The qualitative methods are good methods to use, because it is seen as qualified to understand, interpret and analyze experiences (Brinkmann & Tanggaard, 2010).

I have during this project conducted information and knowledge through field work at The Kingsley plantation where I have observed phenomena that was of relevance of this project. During my days at the field site I made field notes which are elaborated further in the section about autoethnography and I further made use of qualitative methods by observing the experience at the plantation by considering the elements that have meaning based on my theoretical framework and took pictures to document my findings.

Besides this I had a meeting with a Park Ranger where I had prepared an interview in order to understand how the site looked at itself as a place. In addition to this, I spoke with present and former visitors that allowed them to talk about their experiences and express their views and which gave me an understanding of their expectations and their actual experience.

These approaches have set the frame for the primary data of this project. The observations and interview methods will later in this section be elaborated.

I have gained a lot of information and detailed data during my field work and there have been a lot of information to process. I have in the section regarding document analysis elaborated on how I have proceeded with the information in order to create meaningful information to answer my research question.

To answer the research question, secondary data has been used to support and challenge my findings during my field research. I have critically implemented the data from the secondhand sources that I have found relevant for this project.

The approaches, use of method and critique of the different qualitative methods that I have chosen are further elaborated in this section.

### Working with Case Studies

A case study contains of the study of an individual case that are being researched (Veal, 2011). The purpose of this study method is to seek an understanding of a phenomenon through research about one example (Veal, 2011). Case studies as a research type are a useful tool when new phenomena, areas or perspectives have to be explored and researched. At this stage, existing theories are not sufficient in the structure of capturing 'what happens' where case studies can approach *how* and *why* questions in the approach of understanding. Existing theories can at later stage be useful for further knowledge creation (Rowley, 2002).

In this project, The Kingsley plantation will be the point of departure in the research of how the mobile experiences are created and new ways of considering dark tourism site can be used. I have during this research visited The Kingsley plantation over a short period of time of 6 times in trying to seek an understanding of 'what happens' (Veal, 2011) by using an ethnographic approach which is seen as a qualitative research method to poses knowledge about different groups within a field where field work and participant observations are a part of the project in order to create understanding of the different mobile experiences, practices, meanings and understandings that take place within the field. It is not sure that an understanding of 'what happens' can be found without considering all activities within a field. The challenge has been to explore what is actually happening and furthermore convey the collected information into a project which appears credible and can create knowledge.

To support the project, I have through interviews, participant observations and photos tried to collect information and data that can document what happened at the current time. In order to understand the visitor experience I had through an interview guide made sure I would ask questions that contained how and why questions to understand what actually happens (Rowley, 2002). I have immersed myself within field by observing, interaction, talking to people and observe their body language and their behavior while trying to understand what is happening. By using this approach, I create knowledge which barely would have been possible if I had used questionnaires to get information from the visitors. Together with the collected data, I have combined scientific secondary data and theories in order to support my findings and to make a structure through this project.

Even though case studies are viewed as a useful tool at early stages of research, this research method has faced skepticism. It has been criticized for lacking rigour and being too subjective compared to social research methods that appears to be more objective (Rowley, 2002). As a social constructivist, I am aware

that the 'reality' I capture in this project is affected by my own ability to interpret the collected data. I acknowledge that the research is influenced by individual person's experiences and if I had asked other tourist or made the research at another time I would have captured another 'reality'. I have therefore tried to be very careful and thorough when processing the data.

I am furthermore aware of my own position as a researcher and that my personal pre-understandings and background have had an impact on the research and the outcome of this project. By this I mean, that my own perception and meaning on how I feel towards a slave plantation, how I understand the concept of experience and dark tourism in relation to my education which is pointed towards the study of tourism. I therefore acknowledge that if other researchers would make the same research the result would not be the same due to our different backgrounds and pre-understandings and the tourist being included would not be the same and their individual experience would not be the exact same either.

Despite this, I still find it possible to generalize and use this case study as a base that can be used for further research. Generalizability addresses the questions if the result of the current context can be transferred and used in other contexts (Brinkmann, 2014). In this project I have interviewed and spoken to participants and the question that can be raised is if we can be generalizing with this number of respondents. According to Brinkmann, qualitative research cannot present a statistical generalization, but it will still create a solid foundation of the context based on the individual's mindset (Brinkmann, 2014). I, on the other hand, assess that the respondent representativeness is high since I have been in contact with a range of different people that individually have given me an insight in their experience where different meanings and backgrounds have been a part of the construction of The Kingsley Plantation.

## Primary Data

Primary data is the data that is collected by the researcher with a specific intention to what is being explored (Veal, 2011) and it helps to support and strength the credibility of the project. During this project I have made use of the Methods *Auto ethnography*, *Participant Observations and Interviews*.

These are tools that have helped me get a better understanding of what is actually happening at the Kingsley plantation and helping me to get a better understanding of the tourism experience.

In the following section I will elaborate on my obtained primary data.

## Autoethnography

Auto ethnography is seen as a popular quality research method where the researcher describes his or hers own personal experiences, self-reflections and observation experiences and has an increased focus on emotions in order to understand cultural elements (Ellis, Adams, & Bochner, 2011) where participant observations, semi-structured interviews and mapping movement are used tools (Rakic & Cambers, 2011).

The researcher can make use of autoethnography in three aspects: 1 *The researchers is a full member of the participants in the research*, 2. *The researchers is a visible member in the published project* and 3. *The researcher is committed to get a broader understanding of social phenomena through theoretical approaches* (Anderson, 2006) and the method is generally used when the topic of research is related with emotional wrenching experiences which could be linked with cruelty, death or victimization (Anderson, 2006) which is the case at The Kingsley Plantation. But autoethnography as a method has been exposed to skepticism. This approach to research has been criticized for not being too scientific enough while others express it as being too artful and the researcher need to be a very good writer to use autoethnography. It is furthermore debated if this approach is seen as a valid research process. On the other hand it has been argued that autoethnography can explore social phenomena including emotional approaches and is seen as a different way to view subject within social science (Ellis, Adams, & Bochner, 2011).

In order to seek an understanding of how The Kingsley plantation is consumed and constructed by locals and tourists through embodied performances and social interactions I made use of autoethnography as a study method to conduct data for this project. By using this approach I do acknowledge that I will not find the exact truth in how the plantation is consumed and constructed based on my findings.

Before my first day of arrival I had high expectation to my visit at the plantation. I had read about the field site and the history of the plantation and the living and working conditions of the slaves. In my mind I expected to experience a slave site where I could almost feel how life used to have been.

Below is an experience of my first day at the plantation when I had to drive from the main road to the attraction site:

*“A sign from the main road pointed me in the direction of The Kingsley Plantation but nothing indicated what I was about to see or what had been going on at this specific land around 150 years ago. I drove around 2 miles down a small dirt road where a few random houses were places but it felt that I was placed in the middle of the jungle like seen in the picture to the right. I was alone in the car and I at one point doubted that I had typed in the correct address on the GPS. It seemed like the road would never end at it was fist when I saw a semi-circle of white ruins that used to be the cabins where the slaves lived, it was clear to me that I was at the right place”* - Extract from Appendix 1: Field Diary, Day 1



Picture 3: Dirt road to The Kingsley Plantation

The above quote is an extract of my first day at the plantation from my field note diary. Before I visited the plantation, I had made some online research about The Kingsley plantation and slavery in general, so I had an idea of what to expect and to see. I had set my mind to expect a place that was associated with slavery, cruelty, respect, and a site that contained lot of history and darkness and was depicting the conditions of the slavery at this specific plantation.

During my visits I got a feeling of the atmosphere and to document all my thoughts, emotions, the materiel elements I saw, and my own experiences as a visitor at the plantation I took notes. The below quote is an extract the firs field note diary where I have tried to describe how I felt when being at the plantation site.

*“The plantation had a very open landscape. The atmosphere was peaceful and the surroundings were beautiful. I could not stop thinking of the beauty of the place - the jungle feeling I met when I arrived, the large ground surface, the white main house in front of the river side all together created an authentic feeling inside of me. But then I thought about the history of the place and all the cruelty and the conditions of the slavery and the detention that I associate this place with, I almost felt bad that I could even think that this place could be beautiful to begin with”* - Extract from Appendix 1: Field Diary, Day 1



Picture 4: Overview of the planation home and riverside

All of my impressions and experiences have been transcribed into a detailed field note diary which can be seen in appendix 1-6. In the field notes I furthermore express selected experiences I had in relation to other individuals and group based behavior of visitors at the plantation together with activities that the visitors were engaged in and the general study of the tourists' and locals' embodied experiences on the plantation related to their behavior and movement around the plantation ground. More elaborated approaches on my participant observations and interviews can be seen in the following two sections.

### *Participant Observation*

Participant observation is an observation technique and is seen as a qualitative method where researchers gather information by being an actual participant at the field site (Veal, 2011). The participant observations is a tool where the researcher can immerge themselves in the field of research, take part in the daily activities on site, observe the present people, interact with people, listen to conversations taking place and

participate in events with groups of people (Bernard, 2011) in a learning process to understand what is happening .

This technique provides a detailed first-hand insight of the experience at Kingsley Plantation and I chose to use this type of observation to interpret the factors that are affecting the visitor's experience. By visiting The Kingsley Plantation myself, I was able to put myself in view of the visitors and I then became a participant. My observations stretched over 6 days - Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> of January, Friday 19<sup>th</sup> of January, Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> of February, Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> of February, Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> of March and Friday 9<sup>th</sup> of March and varied in duration and time. The main focus with the numerous participant observations was to get an understanding of place and the atmosphere and to study tourists' and locals' embodied performances of the place through reflections of their movement and link their experiences to the concept of dark tourism.

My first days at the plantation were unstructured. I wanted to get familiar with the place and the design, feel the atmosphere, get a sense of the present visitors and their behavior. I used a closed observation technique, because the visitors on site were not informed about their involvement in my observations (Rowley, 2002). To my surprise, there was a very limited amount of visitors present and I then decided to borrow an audio guide at the visitor center and to hear the story that was being told about this place. The audio guide had an intended route around the plantation which was marked with a blue line on the display and the voice furthermore told you where to go. I followed the guide as instructed to see where the visitors were taken and the stories that were told (appendix 1).

My first intuition was to shadow the visitors and drawing their movement and routes on a map and inquirate which places they would spend the most time which is seen as a technique within participant observations (Rowley, 2002). The focus would have been on the flows rather than the actual experience but I would have gotten an idea of the infrastructure at the plantation and which areas that seemed to draw the most interest for the visitors. But this turned out to be too difficult. I experienced that the number of visitors were very limited and I decided that it would be inappropriate to follow them and mapping their movement and it would possibly interfere and disturb their experience.

I therefore placed myself at different positions where I could study the flow of visitors, the embodied performances and in general how they approached the site. I started out by doing unstructured observations which can help to understand and interpret cultural behaviors (Mulhall, 2003). After several hours of observation I started to see a pattern of peoples' movement and their behavior and thereafter my observations started to become more structured and I tried to follow the flow of people and their behavior from a position that I placed myself in. By not letting the visitors know that they were being observed was

an intentional decision to create more trustful patterns of movement and behaviors (Bernard, 2011). I overheard some of the visitor's conversations without interfering with them and spoke with others including both visitors and employees. One observation I made was that people who made use of the audio guide tended to follow a specific route and not speaking that much whereas people without audio guide tended to walk more freely around the plantation and stopped at points that interested them but what they all had in common was, that they slowly moved around the plantation ground. But some groups of people stood out. I met one school class that used the space as a playground and picnic area and some locals used the space to walk their dogs (Appendix 5). With this approach I was able to get a better understanding of how the places had been staged as an attraction site but also how people used the facilities. By my own presence and participation at the plantation I was able to relate and recognize the elements and emotions the visitors had tried to describe.

I furthermore interacted with some of the visitors and had smaller conversations with them that aimed to understand their motivation for visiting the plantation and which meaning the place had to them without revealing why I approached them. I, as well, participated in a guided tour pretending to be a regular visitor. It was a conscious choice not to inform the guide or the group of the purpose of my present. I wanted to get a more realistic picture of how the visitors behaved and reacted during the tour and I did not want the guide to perform any different than normal. After the tour I revealed my identity as a student for the tour guide. I chose to approach her after because I wanted to get the same visitor experience as everyone else and not let the tour guide be affected of my present. I was afterwards allowed to ask the guide questions to get a better understanding of the people who work on the plantation (Appendix 4).

To document my observations, experiences and my self-reflections, I made detailed written field notes on my phone when I walked around the plantation. I took pictures at the different things I saw and experienced during my visits like signs and buildings and I recorded the audio guide story on my phone to support my observations and gain more knowledge about the plantation - a selection of pictures can be seen in appendix 17. I did not take notes in a notebook because I did not want to look different than the other visitors. Even though I tried to pretend to be a regular visitor during my observations, I acknowledge that I would never be a normal visitor, since I had built up pre-understandings before my visit and had a purpose with my visits at the plantation. But outwardly I looked like a regular visitor. When I later came home after each time, I rewrote my notes into more detailed field notes, almost like a diary which can be seen in the field note diaries in appendix 1-6.



## *Interviews*

The purpose of the interviews is to explore and to get a deeper understanding of individuals insights, views, experiences and motivation that have a connection with a specific place. Within qualitative research methods there are three fundamental interview types: *structured*, *semi-structured* and *unstructured* interviews (Gill, Steward, Treasure, & Chadwick, 2008), where this project have made use of semi-structured. By using this interview method, it allowed people to talk about their experiences and express their views (Hox & Boeije, 2004).

## *Semi-Structured Conversation*

To obtain knowledge about the visitors and the employees I engaged in conversations with them. After my second day of fieldwork I wanted to get in contact with the visitors on site but it was not without challenges. It was not as easy to approach the families and groups as I had imagined. Partly because the amount of visitors were limited and also because of my own nervousness to reach out for the visitors but also circumstances made it difficult to get that much information out of the visitors. All visitors I was in contact with seemed very nice and eager to talk, but they would rather ask me question than answer mine. I can only assume that this could be due to a missing trust relationship, language barriers or something else.

I managed to speak with some present visitors where I tried to explore the motivations and the meanings they had associated the place with, the darkness of the plantation and how their overall experience was. According to social constructivism, language is a tool which gives us the ability to communicate, but it is not a tool that can depict the world in itself (Holm, 2011). All people I approached were on their move around the plantation but I did not approach any of the visitors with audio guides. I did not want them to feel that they were forced to talk to me and it was a conscious choice to keep the conversations short with the visitors and the estimated time with them was approximately 3-10 minutes. These conversations were very informal but considered as semi-structured since I had an aim and goal. It was my first idea to record the conversations on my phone, but due to the surroundings I instead talked to them. The challenge with this approach is that I had to remember what the visitors had been saying and there was a chance that I had missed or left out some of the information they gave me. I tried my best to pay attention to what they were saying and interpreted their answers in accordance of what they meant. Another challenge with conversations is that I might not ask all the visitors the same questions, so they did not have the exact same starting point when they talked about their experience. On the other hand, I argue that semi-structured conversations and interviews create frames where the participants can express their views in broader settings. These conversations had been incorporated in the field note diaries.

### *Semi-Structured Interviews*

I decided to make longer semi-structured interviews with former visitors and with a Park Ranger from the plantation whom I had asked if they wanted to participate in an interview regarding their experience/role at The Kingsley Plantation. These interviews followed a more structured interview guide by Kvale & Brinkmann (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015), which helped me uncover different themes and formed questions which allowed the respondents to freely express themselves and allowed me to ask follow up questions. I started out with more easy questions and continued with questions that required more from the participants to answer. The semi-structured interviews could furthermore allow information and insights within the respondents to add information that I had not thought about. These interviews was recorded and afterwards transcribed. The interview guides are to be seen in appendix 7 and 9 and the transcribed interviews can be seen in appendix 8 and 10-13. The duration of the interviews varied from approximately 10-20 minutes.

### **Methods Analyzing My Data**

My collected data though autoethnography, participant observation and interviews have been processed with meaning condensations (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015). Meaning condensations is a form of categorizing the collected data based on themes (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015) and can give a give better overview of the data. Since the data is processed by myself, the data has to some extend been influenced by my subjectivity. The data from my qualitative methods are consisting of citations from interviews and photos and notes from my observations. The data material is evaluated and arranged within different categories to support elements of dark tourism theories and mobile experiences. I am aware that several ways of grouping the information and if I have categorized the data by other themes the outcome would might have been different.

### **Secondary Data**

To compliment and support the primary data, I have made use of secondary data in order to obtain more knowledge about the research field. Opposite primary data, secondary data is information that has already been collected by others and is available for everyone to make use of. The researcher has to keep in mind that this data has been collected for other purposes (White, 2010) and this can be seen as a disadvantage since the focus in the secondary materials can have been on something else that what this project is aiming for (Veal, 2011).

During this project I have made use of scientific articles and academic text books to get a better understanding of the concepts within the methodology and theory section of this assignment which have

helped creating a framework through this project. I have furthermore looked into the official webpage of The Kingsley plantation to gain information about the history of this specific site. I have looked into relating webpages to support the information I had found on the plantation's official webpage to support the data written. I am aware that the data on the official webpage is written to promote the site but also to create knowledge to the readers. At the plantation I furthermore collected brochures about the place and recorded the voice from the audio guide that helped me create useful knowledge about the plantation and what the visitors are exposed to on site.

I am aware that the data that I have collected have been conducted by others, with other purposes in mind and at different times and can in some extent have been outdated. It has been up to me to evaluate and reflect upon the relevance of the data and which of it to use when converting the data into useful information that has created value to this project. I have furthermore used my primary data to support the findings within the secondary sources.

### Further Considerations

In this following section I will look into alternative ways of judging qualitative research instead of using the concepts of validity and reliability and at last I will look at the ethic consideration I have had during the process of data collection and writing this assignment.

Among some qualitative researchers the concept of validity has been exposed as a more quantitate approach of judgement (Trochim, 2006). Qualitative researchers argue that it does not make sense to look for the reality of right and what is flash when using observations as a tool to gain information which is one of the primary concerns within validity. According to Guba and Lincoln there are other ways to judge the quality research which they categorized as *Credibility, Transferability, Dependability and Confirmability* (Trochim, 2006).

### Credibility

The meaning of credibility is to see if the result of the qualitative research is believable. The purpose is to understand and describe the experience from the participants view and therefor the only rightful judges that can evaluate the credibility of the results are the involved participants (Trochim, 2006).

To get an understanding of the visitors experience at the plantation, I created an interview guide consisting of why and who questions for former visitors and a Park Ranger which provided me with information. These interviews were recorded and transcribed. At the plantation, small conversations with the visitors where conducted. I did not go for any specific target group when approaching the visitors since. I experienced that the number of visitors present were relative limited. I am aware that my own subjectivity

has affected the questions asked during the interviews and conversations and can to a point have guided the respondents to answer in certain ways. I have along the way tried to keep an open mind towards the visitors views, understandings and experiences in order to understand that what actually happened.

Unfortunately, it will not be possible to get in contact with the visitors I have been in contact on site. The only persons that I would be able to contact again, is the Park Ranger, Emily Palmer who said I was always welcome to contact her and I still have her contact information. Since I do not have the contact information on the visitors, it makes it difficult for them to judge the credibility of this project.

### **Transferability**

The understanding of transferability relates to the degree of qualitative research that can be transferred or generalized to other settings or contexts. It is argued that transferability can be enhanced by the researcher if they manage to document the context by describing the settings. It is then the person who wants to make use of the material and 'transfer' the information that become responsible for judging how this can be used for new contexts (Trochim, 2006).

I have made use of secondary data within this project which I have tried to be critical about. I am aware that the articles, books and webpage have been produced with other purposes in mind and within other contexts. By implementing others research into this project I have had a critical mindset when transferring information and knowledge. I have in the process judged the relevance of the information and implemented what I have found relevant and useful. If other researchers want to make use of my project, they will be made responsible for transferring my insights and make the judgement of the relevance in relation to their contexts.

### **Dependability**

The purpose of dependability is to find out if we could have obtained the same results if we observed the same twice. According to Trochim, it is not possible to measure the same things twice. By trying to measure the same it would be like measuring two different things. It is therefore very important that the researcher describes everything that takes place during the research including the changes that can occur and how they have affected the research approach of the case study (Trochim, 2006).

As stated in the case study section, I am aware that I am depicting the visitor experience based on the individual respondents' subjective views that I have been in contact with and my own experience and observations at The Kingsley Plantation. This data have helped me shape and form the result of this project. I acknowledge that if another researcher would have made the same research it would not have been the same outcome since another researcher would have other preunderstandings and used other approaches.

It would furthermore be other visitors that would set the frame and their understandings and experiences would not be the exact same as the ones that I have been in contact with.

In order to describe my understandings and experiences I have made a field diary during my days at the plantation which explains all my thoughts, approaches, emotions, conversations with visitors, weather conditions, challenges etc. to bring the readers to get an insight in what happened during the days at fieldwork. During the days at the plantation the weather conditions were good - mainly sunny. If the weather conditions had been different this could have affected the visitor experience or interpretation of the plantation. Furthermore, there were not that many visitors when I visited the plantation but if there had been this could also have had an impact on the total visitor experience. I therefore acknowledge that it will not be possible to make the same research again and it is not possible to depict an objective truth.

### Confirmability

This approach refers to the degree of the result that can be confirmed by others. There are different ways to enhance this problem which the researcher can prevent by documenting the procedures and make recheck the data during the process. Afterwards another researcher take a critical approach to the research in order to look into the process and the documentation (Trochim, 2006).

In order to prevent this I have made a detailed field note diary that expose all my emotions, observations and experiences. I have during the process been transparent and expressed the challenges I have faced.

### Ethics

Ethical issues are present and faced in all types of qualitative research and create tensions between the research question and participants who are involved in this project (Orb, Eisenhauer, & Wynaden, 2001).

I have through this project raised ethical questions regarding my approaches to collect information at the field site to maintain a high ethical standard. It has been my intention from the beginning to be honest about my position and the purpose of my appearance to all people I have been in contact with. I became aware that this site had different meanings to people. Some used it as a beautiful spot to take walks where other came to learn about the history of enslavement. I was there for careful not to defend anyone and respect all visitors' aspect of their visits.

Furthermore, I considered that carrying out qualitative research meant that I would encounter people in their everyday environment and in their experiences and my interaction would have an effect on their experience (Orb, Eisenhauer, & Wynaden, 2001), for example by conversations or my observations. When

approaching the visitors on site I first thought I could have longer conversations with the visitors. But I became aware that this was not in all the visitors' intention. I was there for restructuring my tactic and instead I approached the visitors with short conversations in order not to intrude their visitor experience. During my observations on site, it was of my intention not to observe the visitors themselves but rather their behaviors and flows with the theoretical framework in mind. I did not want the visitors to feel uncomfortable by my presence and therefore I observed them from a distance.

During my days at the plantation I took pictures to document my experiences and the different elements I explored. It was a conscious choice not to take pictures directly of the visitors since I did not have their permission to take photographs. The only person I have photographed was the tour guide who gave all the visitors permission to take a picture of her. The picture of the tour guide can be seen in appendix 4.

### **Summary of Methodology**

To sum up, I have found my viewpoint within a relativistic epistemological and ontology approach towards my research which have led me to a standing point within paradigm of social constructivism. This approach has been reflected through my choices of methods and the way data has been collected which has been through qualitative methods in order to gain information and knowledge to support the research question. I have through primary data gathered relevant information at The Kingsley Plantation through my own experiences also categorized as autoethnography, participant observations and interviews. I have furthermore made use of secondary data through academic articles and the plantations own webpage. To interpret all of this data I have used my viewpoint within the social constructivist paradigm. To judge the information of the project, alternative ways of judging qualitative research has been used in form of Credibility, Transferability, Dependability and Confirmability. During the process ethical questions have been raised in order to avoid tensions between the participants and the research.

## Theoretical Framework

In order to set the frame for this project, this chapter will address the two central concepts of *experience* and *dark tourism*. The purpose of the framework is to give an overview of the concept which will become a tool for the analysis and frame the structure in order to answer the research question.

I am fully aware and acknowledge that several approaches and definitions within these two concepts exist, but since I will clarify and discuss how I understand and interpret the meaning of the concepts accordingly to this project, I can argue and explain why these theoretical approaches have been chosen.

In the following section I will start by defining, discussing and elaborating on the concept of experience. Secondly, I will elaborate, define and discuss on the concept of dark tourism. Thirdly, and lastly, a section regarding my choice of theory and how the concepts intervene will be discussed and argued together with the model that will set the structure of the analysis.

### The Concept of 'Experience'

The concept of experience is well used and to some extent seen as the key to success, innovation and competitiveness within the concept of tourism and can be associated with the heart of the entertainment business (Loureiro, 2014). The concept of experience is broad and complex and the terms have been defined in several ways by many theoreticians.

Pine and Gilmore are widely viewed as the pioneers behind the mind set and concept of experience economy (Poulsson & Kale, 2004). According to them, there has been a need to find new ways to create value to customers due to vibrations in consumer consumption patterns (Pine & Gilmore, 2009). They define an experience as following *'Experiences are a forth economic offering, as distinct from services as services are from good, but one that has until now gone largely unrecognized'* (Pine & Gilmore, 1999, p. 2). The four realms of an experience that are being referred to are *entertainment, education, esthetics, and escapism* (Pine & Gilmore, 1998). According to Pine and Gilmore an experience occurs when an organization 'stage' a service or goods on purpose in order to create a unique and memorable event for individual customers (Pine & Gilmore, 1998). By this they state that an experience is individual and something that a business can provide for customers and they furthermore argues that it is often created based on direct participation in an event and/or observations (Pine & Gilmore, 1998) and is successful when the customer feels engaged because here a memorable relation is shaped between the consumer and the business (Pine & Gilmore, 2009). According to their approach to experience, an experience is seen as memorable whereas goods are tangible and services intangible (Pine & Gilmore, 1998). It is then no longer enough for the organizations just to provide customers with goods and services they need to produce and stage an

experience to create economic value for the buyers in order to differentiate themselves from other businesses (Pine & Gilmore, 2009).

Pine and Gilmore gives an example of experience economy with a coffee bean that is transferred into a cup of coffee and sold to customers. If the business wants to increase their profit and distinguish from their competitors they have to provide more than good service and coffee - they need to stage an experience for their consumer that embodies a heightened atmosphere and are memorable so they can charge a higher price per cup of coffee (Pine & Gilmore, 1999, pp. 1-2). The approach of Pine and Gilmore's experience has been criticized by portraying consumers as passive recipients or actors of staged experiences (Hansen, 2014). On the other hand Pine & Gilmore give an indication of how business can design an experience but this is also view as a criticism of addressing people in a mechanical way where the business are the only factor that affects the experience. According to Jantzen and Jensen people are not as predictable as Pine and Gilmore refers to. They on the other hand argue that people have unpredictable behaviors (Jantzen & Jensen, 2005).

With another approach to experience as something that can be *produced*, we take a closer look at Lena Mossberg (2007). She has a more marketing based perspective where an experience is something that can be *consumed* which is another take on the experience concept than Pine and Gilmore's who look at experience as something that is *produced*. Mossberg defines an experience as "*a constant flow of thoughts and feelings that occur during moments of consciousness*" (Mossberg, 2007, p. 60). By this she argues that an experience take place inside the tourist and it is important to look at the tourist as more than just an element of the environment but co-producers of a space and by this will be difficult for organisations to produce and give an experience to consumers. However, what an organization can do is to create a specific environment there the tourist can consume and experience (Mossberg, 2007) but still, she express that an organization cannot create an experience but only influence the settings and the environment. This environment is according to Mossberg referred to as an experiencescape which she defines as "*a space of pleasure, enjoyment and entertainment, as well as the meeting ground in which diverse groups move about and come in contact with each other*" (Mossberg, 2007, p. 62) which for example could be a tourist attraction. It is within this specific space the experiences are taking place and Mossberg describes the tourism experiences that is in contrast to or varies from the individual's everyday life. These diverge experiences to the daily life is referred to as peak experiences and is only created if the consumer experience surprise moments or something unexpected (Mossberg, 2007). This leads Mossberg's approach to experience in a direction that primarily are centered around social and physical factors that an



organization is able to have an influence on. A criticism of Mossberg is that she does not take human embodied performance, emotions and feelings into considerations when framing an experience.

Another theorist that refers to experience and aspects of the everyday life is John Urry. He defines a tourism experience as: *'Tourist experiences involve some aspect or elements that induces pleasurable experiences which, by comparison with the everyday, are out of the ordinary'* (Urry, 2002, p. 12). He argues that consumption of goods and services within environments that are in contrast to the everyday lives which generates pleasurable experiences which he refers to as 'tourist gaze'. This 'tourist gaze' often involves some kind of social aspects as well and in some sense out of the ordinary. According to Haldrup & Larsen a tourist gaze is portrayed as visual experiences where people travel to experience environments that are out of the ordinary (Haldrup & Larsen, 2010). Urry on the other hand argues that gazes can be constructed through signs by using semiotics to consume meanings to places (Rakic & Champers, 2012). Accordingly to him, tourist can experience places in multi sensuous ways that are associated with embodied performances which is referred to as a 'performative turn'. An example could be a sign of Frenchness that can be associated with 'a kiss in Paris' which captures the gaze of timeless romance (Urry, 2002). He furthermore argues that tourism is a creation in relation with movement through spaces and stays at new places and that these experiences are individual.

Haldrup & Larsen on the other hand argue that tourism and the everyday life interact in many ways which has an affect the tourism performance. They argue that tourism is not all about consuming but also about social relations and materials (Haldrup & Larsen, 2007). They look at materials such as objects, machines and technology and social practices in relation to each other in people's everyday lives. This can for example be seen through souvenirs and photographs that become incorporated in our daily lives by sharing it on social media platforms or become decoration in our homes (Haldrup & Larsen, 2010). According to Haldrup & Larsen tourism is generally defined as contrasts to the everyday life, like viewed by Mossberg and Urry.

This leads us to another approach on experience concept which is seen within Ole B. Jensen (2013) where he focuses on mobility within everyday life experiences. According to Jensen, mobilities are more than movement from A-B but is about mobility of the individuals, goods, information, signs and the built environment, but also about the embodied performance and social interactions. He argues that mobility is not something that just happens but is affected by the designed and planed setting (Jensen, 2014). He refers to the concept of staging mobilities which he defines as: *Mobilites are staged and people performing mobilities engaged in social interactions of staging mobilities. Staging Mobilities is therefore a process of creating lived mobility practices and the material preconditions of these'* (Jensen, Staging Mobilities, 2013,

p. 5). Jensen's research takes point of departure in fields with connection between design and situational mobilities (Jensen, Lanng , & Wind, 2016) . According to Jensen, a mobile situation is staged 'from above' which means that they are designed, planned and staged with a specific purpose in mind (Jensen, 2013), *for example a traffic light that control the flow of peoples movement*, which can draw parallels to the approach of experience seen by Pine & Gilmore (2009) where they argued that it was possible to create and produce an experience for visitors. Jensen argues that an experience, at the same time, is individual and is being staged 'from below' which means that people are staging themselves through by embodied performances and social interactions (Jensen, 2013). This makes staging of mobilities a dynamic process of being staged and how individual people perceived the stage which is contradicting to Pine & Gilmores view. It is within this cross field that the mobile situations are being experienced. It is within this cross field that the mobile situations are being experienced. Jensen therefor defines an experience of what is happening in the cross field between what is staged 'from above' and what is staged or acted out 'from below'. The perceived visitor experience itself is therefore influenced by the interplay between the set frames for the experience 'from above', and how the visitors choose to make use them and interpret these frames. In the context of tourism, this can be seen within visits to attractions or destinations, where visitors generally move around (Jensen, 2013).

Jensen's approach to mobility experience is to some extend similar to Sheller and Urry where they define the term as: *'Tourism mobilities involve complex combinations of movement and stillness, realities and fantasies, play and work'* (Sheller & Urry, 2014, p. 1). Like Jensen, they argue that mobility is more than just movement of people and objects. They take memories, performance, embodiment, atmospheres and emotion into play. They argue that tourism is not just one form of mobility but can be seen in different ways and tourism is shaping places in spaces where tourism is performed. According to them, places are also performed through embodied play (Sheller & Urry, 2014). The approach of Jensen and Sheller & Urry are on the other hand closely related to non-representational theories which includes the aspect of mobility and embodied performances (Vannini, 2014 and Rakic & Champers, 2012). The aspect of mobility and performance seek to include the 'non-representational' aspects which can lead to a richer understanding of visitors consumption of places. According to the study of John Urry, places are consumed partly by products and services but also meanings that are associated with places which he refers as symbolic meanings. He argues that places are not fixed but is constructed based on embodied performances by both locals, tourists and hosts which create meaning of places (Rakic & Champers, 2012). The concept of non-representational' theories has met criticism in the consumption of place as being multisensory (Rakic & Champers, 2012) and furthermore missing clearance within the methodology approach (Vannini, 2014). According to Rakic and Campers, embodiment is the individuals' way of seeing

the world and makes sense of it based on how they engage with both their minds and bodies (Rakic & Campers, 2012, p. 1616). The concept of embodiment is therefore not looking at the body as an object but rather how the body is active when consuming and creating meanings and experiences of places. Rakic and Campers furthermore relates an experience in context of being a tourist in context to meanings assigned with experiences (Rakic & Campers, 2012).

On behalf of these insights in the concept of experience, several insights have been made in trying to understand and experience. This project will make use of the framework of Jensen's approach to staged mobile experiences to explore how tourism and the everyday life affecting the experiences where interaction and elements of non-representational theories of embodied performances are taken into account. The theoretical framework and the use of experiences in this project will be elaborated on further in this section.

### **The Concept of 'Dark Tourism'**

Traveling toward places that are linked with death and disaster is not a new phenomenon. People have through decades been drawn to travel and experience places, sites and events that in one way or another have been associated with death, violence, tragedy, suffering, atrocities or disasters (Stone & Sharpley, 2008). This phenomenon can for example be seen back in the Middle Ages where mass executions took place and travelers crossed distances to witness these events or when people joined the audience to experience the Roman gladiator games and battles. This kind of travel behavior was signs of the first forms of death-related tourism (Stone & Sharpley, 2008).

Despite the knowledge about death-related tourism behaviors, it was first in the early 1990's that academics started to draw attention to this and related places of death and disaster and tourism in a wide range of context and locations (Light, 2016). There have been several attempts to categorize, label and defined death-related tourism, among them was *morbid tourism*, *black-spots*, *thanatourism* and *dark tourism*. Bloom (2000) expressed the concept of morbid tourism as sites that had been exposed to sudden death that quickly attracted a large number of visitors whereas Rokej (1993) related Black-spots with visits at graves and places associated sudden or violence death of celebrities (Light, 2016) and lastly thanatourism was more specific and was defined by Seaton (1996) as '*travel to a location wholly, or partially, motivated by the desire for actual or symbolic encounters with death, particularly, but not exclusively, violent death*' (Seaton, 1996, cited by Light, 2016, p.278). The most popular term became *Dark Tourism* which was coined by the researchers Lennon and Foley (Lennon and Foley, 1996 cited by Bowman & Pezzullo, 2010). They defined the concept as '*The presentation and consumption (by visitors) of real and commodified death and disaster sites*' (Lennon and Foley, 1996 cited by Stone & Sharpley, 2008, p. 577).

The concept of thanatourism and dark tourism are closely related and can be seen as parallels according to Seaton and he argues that dark tourism is a dimension of thanatourism (Stone P. R., 2006). Thanatourism is a more specific concept and has a longer historical lineage which is related to the romantic era of the Middle Ages in the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> and can be seen as a form of heritage tourism (Stone P. R., 2006). The concept of Thanatourism by Seaton takes focus upon tourist behavior and their motivation and fascination for these sites. The essence about this phenomenon is *'long-standing practices of travel motivated by a specific desire for an encounter with death'* (Light, 2016, p. 277). Thanatourism, can accordingly to Seaton, be identified in 5 forms (Stone P. R., 2006): 1. *Travel to witness and experience public enactments of death like public executions*, 2. *Travel to witness and experience specific places where individual or mass deaths was occurred like Auschwitz or the place of J.F. Kennedys death*, 3. *Travel to witness and experience memorial sites like graveyards or war memorials*, 4. *Travel to witness and experience symbolic or evidential representations that are aligned with death like weapons or flags*, 5. *Travel to witness and experience simulations of death within religious themes*

The greatest thanatopic destination of the Romantic period has been listed as to be the site of Pompeii in Italy that was destroyed by a natural force and caused human lives (Stone P. R., 2006), whereas the phenomenon of dark tourism is more contemporary and is rooted back to the late twentieth century around the historical period of World War I (Bowman & Pezzullo, 2010) and is less concerned with types of darkness compared to Seaton's view on thanatourism. The term of dark tourism has since been expressed as an umbrella term, which identifies sub-forms which include all types of tourism that is related to suffering, death, tragedy, atrocity or crime (Light, 2016). It has been argued that dark tourism is a postmodern phenomenon due to focus on reproduction and spectacle (Light, 2016). Light argues that it is not possible to frame one of the concepts without concerning the other, since the two phenomas are so closely related (Light, 2016). But what the two phenomes has in common is that both research areas includes a broad range of themes (Light, 2016).

It has been said by Smith (1998) that places which are associated with war is by far the largest single category of tourist attraction all over the world. The concept of dark tourism can furthermore refer to both specific places or forms of tourism like holocaust sites (Smith 1998, cited by Stone & Sharpley 2008). Accordingly to Lennon and Foley (2000), sites associated with war and conflict, the Holocaust, places of detention, genocide and slavery are the ones that have attracted the most attention (Light, 2016).

Accordingly to Stone and Richard (2008) the term of dark tourism continues to be eclectic and theoretically fragile (Stone & Sharpley, 2008) and accordingly to Stone, the concept lack a closer relationships between wider studies of violence (Stone P. R., 2006). A question, that rises is, if it is even possible to categorize and

justify experiences of places or attractions that are linked with death and suffering as dark tourism and if the concept is driven by demands or supply (Stone & Sharpley, 2008). The concept of dark tourism is seen as broad and complex and is not exposed to levels of darkness and it can be argued that shades of darkness is missing in the definition set by Lennon and Foley and by unfolding the umbrella term and definition of dark tourism is being challenged (Stone P. R., 2006). The concept of dark tourism, based on the definition from Lennon and Foley (2002), differentiates some places in the category of 'dark' and other as 'heritage' where heritage does not have a category on its own. Bowman and Phaedra critiques this approach where they argue that heritage sites can be affected by death, disaster and atrocity as well (Bowman & Pezzullo, 2010). They question how sites like US southern plantation houses and slave quarters should be distinguished and imagined as heritage or dark sites. They point out some former slave site was presented as heritage sites where the story of the enslaved were ignored but when the stories of the enslaved live and cultures were exposed the destinations turned darker (Bowman & Pezzullo, 2010). Even though, Lennon and Foley do not offer any explanation concerning their expression of definition and do not want to enter a more philosophical debate according to Stone (Stone P. R., 2006).

On the other hand, Miles (2002) argued that a paradigm of darker-lighter tourism exists and that there is a distinction between dark and darker tourism and he highlights that there is a considerable difference between places associated with death and suffering and places that have been exposed to death and suffering. He gives an example of Auschwitz which he categorizes as darker than for example a US holocaust memorial museum since Auschwitz was exposed to death and suffering whereas a memorial museum is associated with the elements but has not directly been exposed to it (Stone P. R., 2006). He divides a spectrum of darkness into 6 categories and defines the aspect of the lightest and the darkest ends. A weakness of Miles spectrum is that spectrum does not explain any of the categories in-depth and it does not take meanings attached to place into considerations by tourists and lastly, that individuals can have diverse meanings of a place (Miles, 2014).

In addition to light sites, Urry (2004) pointed out that death does not play a role in the story for someone. Miles furthermore argues that there have to be an element of empathy within the sites of dark tourism. By this he means that within darker tourism sites there have to be created a degree of empathy between the places and the former victims. This empathy is created through the design of the place and the dimension of time which will increase the empathy by the visitors. He works with the element of 'chronological distance' where he suggest that sites that have more recently been exposed to death and tragedy that is more clear in the memory and might have living survivors or witnesses is by far darker than the sites that took place later in the past (Stone P. R., 2006). This argument is supported by Lennon and Foley (Stone P. R., 2006).

A similar view on 'shape of darkness' is seen within Sharpley (2005). He argues that darkness can be identified within seven categories and address them after dark tourism products - *Dark Fun Factories, Dark exhibitions, Dark Dungeons, Dark Resting Places, Dark Shrines, Dark Conflict Sites and Dark Camps of Genocide*. According to him the darkest spectrum is *Dark Camps of Genocide*, and is associated with a fascination of death, an example of this, he suggest the 'flight 93 tour' to the Pennsylvania crash site by one of the airplanes that was hijacked on the 9/11 (Stone P. R., 2006). Opposite Miles, Sharpley defines each of his categories but it is still difficult to locate the blackest form of tourism within Sharpleys research.

It had been said by Lennon and Foyle (1997) that the contended motivation to explore dark sites were based on three central elements: *remembrance, education and entertainment (Foyle and Lennon (1997:155, cited by Lite, 2016)*. This show us that Lennon and Foyle have considered the aspects of education and entertainment which by Miles affect the range of the darkness at the site. It has since been argued that there are a diverse range of motivations for visitors to travel towards dark tourism sites. For some it can be due to personal interest and for others it can relate to family history. Reason could furthermore be due to nostalgia, search for authenticity, trying to understand the past or a fascination of the evilness (Light, 2016). Accordingly to Lennon and Foley there are two forms of tourist within dark tourism which are those who have a personal relation/connection to a site or a special interest in a site and others that do not have such relation and visit sites for other reasons (Lennon & Foyle 1999:2000, cited by Light, 2016).

According to Bowman and Pezzullo sites of death and disaster provoke different reactions to different visitors since we travel for different reasons and purposes (Bowman & Pezzullo, 2010) and a dark place can have different meanings for different people. Trying to understand the visitors experience through embodiment has been a way of understanding the experience within dark tourism where the visitors feelings and thoughts has been taking into considerations. For many people who visit the so-called dark tourism destinations are not affected by the darkness (Light, 2016). In some sites where visitors travel to experience what they associate with dark tourism, death has not always occurred (Light, 2016) .

Based on these insights in the concept of dark tourism, this project will address the understanding of the concepts in accordance to the parallel terms of thanatourism by Seaton and dark tourism by Lennon and Foley. This project will furthermore explore the paradigm of darkness to see if it possible to categorize the degree of darkness within a place with the approach of Miles spectrum of darkness. This will be elaborated further in the next section

## My Approach to the Concepts of Experience and Dark Tourism

In this following section I will elaborate on how I will make use of the concepts of experience and dark tourism that will set the frame around The Kingsley Plantation and I will elaborate on how I will approach and use the theoretical framework to support this project.

As well as the concept of experiences has been explored and defined in several ways, so has the concept of dark tourism. This project will try to make an interconnection between mobilities staged from above and below and dark tourism sites. To unfold this, this project will be structured around the framework of with Ole B. Jensen's 'staging mobilities'. It has furthermore been argued that dark tourism site can be defined within its darkness. To explore the darkness framing The Kingsley Plantation the approach of Miles paradigm of 'Darkest-Lightest' tourism sites will be used as tools to explore the experiences of the darkness at The Kingsley Plantation. Below will the two frameworks be explored further.

### Staging Mobilities

Ole B. Jensen's framework of 'staging mobilities' recognizes the everyday life situations where individual experiences are taking place. The mobility focused on the invisible everyday occurrences where mobility practices are performed (Jensen, 2015).

This framework has two dimensions: 1. *Situations being staged from above* and 2. *Situations being staged from below* (Jensen, Staging Mobilities, 2013). It is within these two dimensions that the crossfield occurs. The framework of Jensen can be seen in figure 2.

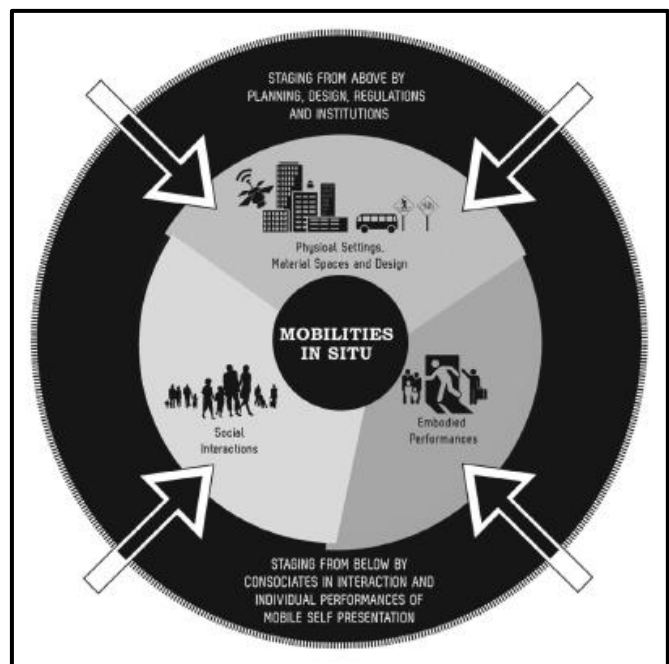


Figure 2: The staging mobilities model, (Jensen 2013, p.6)

Situations staged from above are about decisions addressed towards regulations and the design. This can be viewed when an organization is trying to regulate how a space should be used and working in practice. This could for example be seen within an attraction where a suggested route is made or how a service should be performed. To regulate how the experience should be unfolded, the organization can take the physical settings, the material space, the design, planning and the institution into considerations.

Situations staged from below are related to two elements: *Embodied performances and Social Interactions*. The embodied performance is related to practices and how people are embodying the space. An example of this could be an attraction site that are designed with specific aims but the individual visitor embodying the space might be using the setting in other ways that how it was intended. Jensen argue that mobility and therefore the experience is affected by the individuals ability to make decisions like making use of a suggested route but this route has been designed 'from above' based on regulations, planning and designs. Experience mobilities is more than movement of the individual information's and good but it is also about embodied performances which is affected by other humans within the attractions physical and material setting (Jensen, 2013). The social interactions can affect an experience and is relates to how an experience can be positively or negatively affected by other human beings (Jensen, 2013). Jensen's approach to the framework is therefor to explore how everyday mobility sites are staged and is the expression of a meeting between above and below.

#### *'Darkest-Lightest' Spectrum*

Within the concepts of thanatourism and dark tourism has the degree of darkness tried to be categorized. Miles argues that a paradigm of darkness exists and his framework categorizes the darkness based on a scale of dark tourism. The scale is divided into six categories or 'shades of darkness' which is based on a generic spectrum of darkest-lightest tourism (Stone P. R., 2006), where the darkest and lightest sites can be seen as contrasts. Directed by temporal dimensions and spatial affinity, Miles argues that there are a radical distinction between places of death and suffering which comparted to places associated with death and suffering. According to him, experiences of sites of death and suffering are seen as darker than experiences associated within death and suffering (Stone P. R., 2006). The spectrum of dark tourism can be seen in Figure 3.



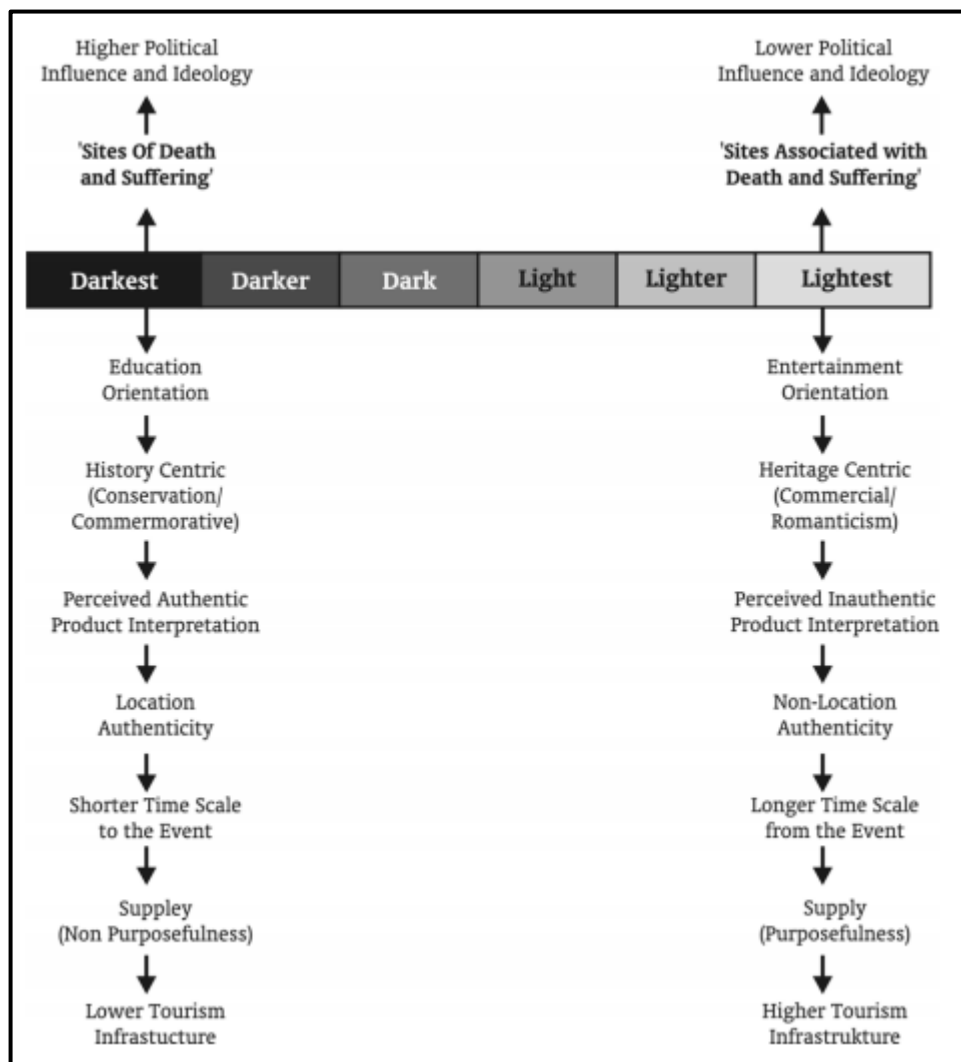


Figure 3: A Dark Tourism Spectrum: Perceived Product Features of Dark Tourism within a 'Darkest-Lightest' Framework of Supply (Stone P. R., 2006 p. 151)

Miles argues that the location authenticity within the design is of importance and that a degree of empathy within the attraction site has to exist between the visitors and the victims. The empathy can be evoked based on the time scale of the event but is also created based on the design. According to him, the design has an important effect on how the dark tourism experience is perceived and consumed by the visitors (Stone P. R., 2006).

### Experience and Dark tourism

It is of my impression that a link between the understanding of dark tourism and mobility studies is missing. This project wants to challenge the way at looking at dark tourism sites by using mobility studies and see how the design and practices can affected the understanding of a dark tourism experiences. By looking at tourism in contrast to the everyday life and the staged situation of by planning and designs and

incorporating embodied performances and social interaction can create an understanding of how a place is given meaning in a relation to the design and the darkness, which can be seen as another viewing dark tourism sites. By clarify and analyzing how The Kingsley Plantation is staged from above and below can give an insight in how the place is staged and how it is perceived by the visitors. By combing the mobile experiences with Miles spectrum of darkest-lightest attractions I am to explore who meanings are attached within the field site and how dark tourism comes to expression though the individual visitors experiences. I hereby question if a dark tourism site can be categorized in its darkness and furthermore if mobility studies can be a new way of looking at different forms of practices and dark tourism in general.

### Summary of Theory

The theory chapter have elaborated and discussed the two concepts of experience and dark tourism that will set the framework of this project. Both concepts has been viewed and defined by several theoreticians. The concept of experience can be seen as contrast to the everyday life and be experienced through a crossfield of staged mobilities from above and below which is viewed though the framework of Jensen. Thanatourism and dark tourism has been viewed as parallel terms where the degree of darkness has tried to be categorized. Among others is Miles spectrum of darkest-lightest tourism sites. This project will try to incorporate both concept in the aim of understand the meanings based on the staged mobile experiences and the darkness of the experience within a so-called dark tourism site.

## Analysis

The analysis of this project are divided into three sub-sections which have the purpose of answering the research question. In order to explore The Kingsley Plantation as a dark tourism site and how the plantation site is constructed through different forms of mobilities the first part of the analysis will elaborate on how the plantation has been staged 'from above' in accordance to Jensen's framework of experience of mobility situations (Jensen, Lanng , & Wind, 2016). The second part of the analysis will analyze how The Kingsley Plantation in staged from below by using the same framework of mobility situations.

At last, the third part of the analysis will analyze and discuss if the darkness of The Kingsley Plantation can be categorized based on existing theories within dark tourism in accordance to Miles spectrum of darkness (Miles W. F., 2002) followed by a discussion of the use of mobility studies as a new way of exploring dark tourism attractions.

### Sub-question 1: How is The Kingsley Plantation staged from above?

This section will explore how The Kingsley Plantation is staged 'from above' in accordance with the framework of 'staging mobilities' (Jensen, Lanng , & Wind, 2016). I will explore and analyze how The Kingsley Plantation has staged the planation site from above though planning, regulation and the design within the physical settings and the material space (Jensen, 2014).

### Staging The Kingsley Plantation 'from Above'

At The Kingsley Plantation several initiatives has been made which affect the landscape wherein the diffident kinds of mobilities are practices and these initiatives are structured though staged situations which are expressed through planning, regulations and design.

### Infrastructural Landscape

As a dark tourism attraction site, The Kingsley Plantation is a site of a former cotton plantation where slaves lived and worked during the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. The plantation is no longer in use but remains from the past exist and is available for visitors to experience. The remains include the plantation house, a kitchen house, a stable and interpretive garden of corps produced at the plantation and an extant slave quarter (National Park Service, 10, 2017). The physical settings create a link between the design and the architecture within the place (Jensen, 2015). Among all attraction sites at the plantation, it has been said by Park Ranger, Emily Palmer, that the main attraction at The Kingsley Plantation is the plantation house which is the oldest standing plantation house in Florida (Appendix 8).

As a visitor at The Kingsley Plantation, you have to find your own ways around the plantation site. In other words, visitors at the plantation are self-guided. As a helping tool to navigate within the physical space direction signs have been placed at different positions indicating by arrows where the different areas of the

plantation are to be found. Signs can be seen as a material object which can influence people's ability to decide whether or not they should follow the directions or go somewhere else (Jensen, 2014).



Picture 5: Trail system from the parking area to the plantation home



Picture 6: Design of information displays

Along with the signs have a narrow trail path from the parking area been created leading the way to the plantation house and it continues to the visitor center and the stable. The rest of the surface is planted by grass where plenty of benches are places. In front of the different attraction sites are several information displays placed. These incorporated features are design object to build the environment staged from above.

### *Interpretation of the Dark Past*

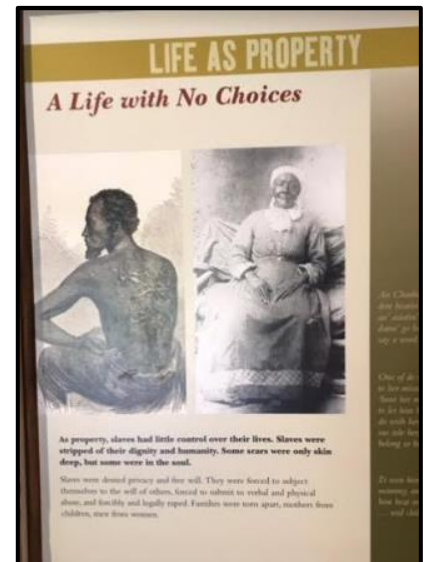
The historical past have been interpreted and retold by local Park Rangers who has the authority to manage the plantation (Appendix 8). Park Rangers are aware of how the past can be seen as a horrible part of the American past (Jensen, 2014).

*"...for some this is a place that is hallowed ground, the site of their ancestors for many Afro Americans today... They know that their family might have been enslaved but they don't have any of those records because people were not counted as humans, they were counted as property... A secrete ground. For many people this is the site of such a sad history. It is a reminder to never forget the harm and the indignities that people can rood upon other for..."* - Appendix 8: Interview, Park Ranger.

The dark past has been told though several platforms including information displays, fliers and an audio guide. The designs of the information displays are including short text boxes and pictures of what life used to be as seen in picture 7 and 8, which is taken inside the stable showing one of the information displays.



Picture 7: Information display in stable



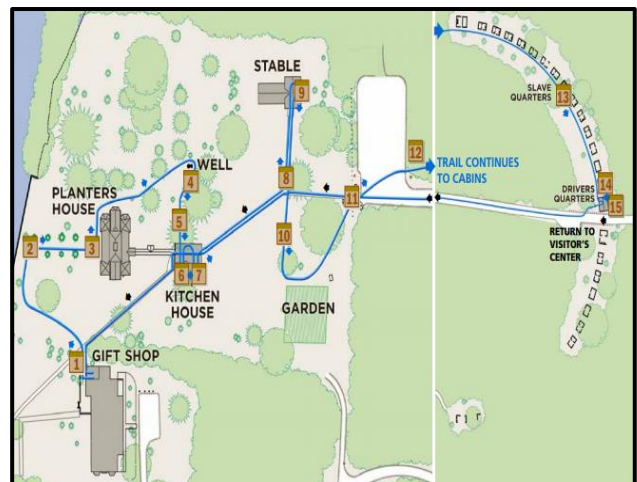
Picture 8: Highlighted picture and text from the information display

The text and pictures are together creating the history. By reading the information, slavery is not denied at The Kingsley Plantation but it can be argued in which way slavery has been exposed. At the displays, pictures of slaves begging and a man with a scared back are exposed. The belonging text of the enslaved man with scars says: *"As property, slaves had little control over their lives. Slaves were stripped of their dignity and humanity. Some scars were only skin deep, but some were in the soul"*- (display text in the barn, from picture seen above). The story does not tell why this man had been a subject to punishment and it is up to the individual visitor to interpret the text and link the picture together with punishment and torture and in general how life was at this plantation. It can be questioned how the interpretation of the conditions of the slaves have happened. In accordance to dark tourism studies, slave plantations that expose the histories of enslaved lives and their conditions, Bowmann & Pezzullo state that these plantations move from being seen as heritage sites to dark tourism (Bowman & Pezzullo, 2010). But Bowmann and Pezzullo do not define in which way and by which aspects of telling the stories of the enslaved create darker aspects.

Another alternative for visitors who want to learn about the past is through an audio guide which is provided by the National Park Service which brings back stories of people and the life at the plantation. Mobility has been seen as more than movement of people and goods, but is also contributing to the mobility of information which influences our understanding of the built environment (Jensen, 2015), which are seen through both the information displays but also within the audio guide. The told narratives, together with the audio effects, can influence the perception of the place and can generate symbolic meanings, emotions and feelings (Urry, 2002). The material devise of the audio guide is a special programed iPhone



which is covered by a plastic cover that can hang around visitors necks. The audio tour on the iPhone is designed based on a route which is suggested by a visual map seen on the display. The route is marked by a blue line and arrows pointing in the direction where the visitor are to go and is showing your position with a red circle. The iPhone is installed with a GPS that can track the movement of the visitor and plays the appropriate stories connected to the sites. If the visitor decides to skip some parts of the route, the audio guide is able to follow the visitors' movements.



Picture 9: Navigation route from the audio guide

The use of GPS systems has increasingly become a digital way of staging mobility situations which 'offers' navigation systems which can affect the movements and behavior but at the same time allows people to move freely and along the way staging the information and stories that are provided for the visitors (Jensen, 2015). At The Kingsley Plantation audio guides are 'rented' out for free and is available for all visitors.

What the information platforms all has in common is the historical insight where element of violence, oppression, suffering, disaster and crimes against humanity in one way or another come to expression which link this field to a dark tourism site (Dann&Seaton and Lennon&Foyle cited Light, 2016).

### *Design of Buildings*

At The Kingsley Plantation, the buildings are as well used as a part of telling the story of the past. Visitors are able to step inside in the original kitchen house which has been transformed into two show rooms. The first room shows an interpretation of a kitchen with a fire place and prepared food on a table. The room next door is showing posters of the life of Mrs. Kingsley and how slaves were transported under crucial conditions by boat to America. As part of dark tourism, exposing the pain of slaves can and does contribute to darkness (Dann & Seaton, 2001).

In addition to this, visitors can walk on the front porch of the plantation house. The main attraction of the plantation, the plantation house, is closed for the public but can be experienced by attending a guided tour



Picture 10: Kitchen house

which runs every weekend twice a day. The tours are led by Park Rangers who all are educated in the same history, based on same documents and instructions but it is up to the individual Ranger to make the tour personal and inspiring for the visitors (appendix 8). The framework of mobility situations looks at how the designs both enable and disables specific mobility practices within physical settings (Jensen, 2014). Within the field site of The Kingsley Plantation, visitors are able to walk freely where they want, but the design of the plantation house restrict visitors from experiencing the inside of the plantation house without the escort of a Park Ranger.

At the stable is a larger exhibition interpreting the past by tall information displays arranged in one end of the building. The barn has been designed to accommodate the exhibition but is furthermore designed as a place to give lectures to students where benches are placed in rows like it was a classroom where the area of exhibitions is forming the stage. As a part of an education program, Park Rangers have created two programs for students between 3<sup>rd</sup> -5<sup>th</sup> grades and students from upper middle classes (Appendix 8), where students can learn about the past. It has been said by Jensen that the designed environment are shaping different mobilities within the physical settings where signs, buildings and material objects permit people to perform mobilities in certain ways and at the same time disables some mobilities (Jensen, Lanng , & Wind, 2016). The multifunction of the stable indicates by the material design that the staged environment at The Kingsley Plantation is accommodating different groups of visitors including both tourists and students.

Opposite the stable is a small fenced garden located. The fields which shaped the landscape during the plantation era do not exist today and are instead covered by the forest of the National Park. This garden gives an indication of the produced corps on this Island.

As the last part of the attraction site the extant slave quarter which is separated from the rest of the attraction site by a dirt road and is located a fifth of a mile from the plantation house. To get to the slave quarter people have to walk down a natural trail to experience the remains of 25 slave cabins located in a semi-circle (National Park Service, 10). From a dark tourism perspective, incorporated slave quarters and other historical facts contribute to the darkness. But the most important artifact within a slave experience is the slave quarters (Bowman & Pezzullo, 2010). The ruins of the slave cabins are all alike and give a visual indication of the architecture and the layout but there is no interpretation of how a slave cabin used to look like as showed in the kitchen house.

At last is a visitor center located behind the plantation house. The visitor center has multiple functions and is a place to get in contact with Park Rangers but is also functioning as a souvenir shop and a book store

where several material objects can be purchased. A selection of books of slavery and wildlife can be bought together with teddy bears shaped as Park Rangers and manatees, post cards, along with other souvenirs and items. As a tourist destination, the effect of souvenirs can become a relation between the everyday life and tourism by incorporating the items in the daily lives (Haldrup & Larsen, 2010). By the items that can be purchased it indicates that the plantation have different visitors. The tourism artifacts accommodate the tourist where as wildlife books are items for people who show an interest in the nature and animals.

### **The Plantation as a Part of the National Park**

The physical open landscape of what used to be an old cotton plantation is more than just a dark tourism site. The location of the plantation is today a part of the National Park of the Timucuan Ecological and Historic Preserve. National parks are places set aside for people to enjoy and have a good time (National Park Service, 9). The surroundings of the park provides trail routes for hikers and bikers, a great wildlife, and has an active river for fishermen and water activities (Appendix 8). The framework of staging mobilities recognizes the importance of the ordinary and in particular every life situations (Jensen, Lanng , & Wind, 2016). Staging of mobilities therefore includes all types of mobility practices into account. Park Rangers are aware that the plantation site is used as more than an attraction site.

*“For some, they come out here and this is amazing architectural research and they see the main house as the oldest still standing plantation house in this state and for them it is an architectural beauty.... and it survived hurricanes... For others, this is just a beautiful place to take a walk. Many locals come here regularly” - Appendix 8: Interview, Park Ranger.*

The park allows different mobility practices to be unfolded and becomes a place that houses several activities where people can have a fun, safe and educational experience (National Park Service, 9).

*“For some people this is a great spot to watch birds and hiker trails and see wildlife and none of those is right and none of those are wrong, it is just how you want to connect to the site. And our job as rangers is not about us and how I connect with this site. It is about finding out how anyone visitor is going to connect and giving them that avenue, giving them that opportunity. So making it so kids can connect and scholars can connect and everyone in between” - Appendix 8: Interview, Park Ranger.*

This indicates that Park Rangers have designed the plantation ground to accommodate different mobility practices and as the Park Ranger mentions, it is not up to them to decide how the individual visitors connect within the place.



## A Place of Many Functions

The Kingsley Plantation can represent so many different things to different people and the reason for their present does not have to be the same which Park Rangers emphasize is the meaning of the place. This is a place that allows different aspect of everyday mobility and experience to take place and the use of the landscape in relation to the individuals associations with the place affects the design of The Kingsley Plantation (Appendix 8). The plantation is designed as a dark tourism attraction site but is also designed to be a recreational area for locals and according to Park Ranger Emily, not the job of a ranger to tell visitors how they have to connect with the place (Appendix 8).

## Summary

This section has elaborated on how The Kingsley Plantation has been staged from above by implementing the framework of staging mobilities though planning, regulations and design. We have explored how the landscape is constructed based on the design of material objects like information displays and the audio guide which are elements that affect the built environment. We have furthermore looked into the construction of the original buildings and how they have been designed to become a part of the attraction site but also how they are constructed to facilitate different kinds of visitors. The plantation is designed to be a self-guided attraction site where visitors can explore the remains of the original cotton plantation which has an extant slave quarter. The main attraction of the site is though seen as the plantation home with is the oldest standing in the State of Florida. According to the plantation site, Park Rangers are aware of the dark story attached to the place but also the purposes of National Parks. The Kingsley Plantation is therefore designed as more than a dark tourism site but also as a recreational area facilitating both tourist and locals.

## Sub-question 2: How is The Kingsley Plantation Staged from Below?

The first part of the analysis explored how The Kingsley Plantation was staged from above in relation of being a dark tourism site and at the same time be a part of the National Park. This following section will explore and elaborate on how The Kingsley is staged from below with the aim of trying to understand the different kind of mobility practices that occur within the plantation site.

### Staging The Kingsley Plantation 'from Below'

This section relates to the visitor experience staged 'from below' and how the mobile situation is acted out in relation to the intended experience staged 'from above'. To look at the mobile situation this section will explore on how the visitors are using the space and perceiving the frames set around of experience of The Kingsley Plantation within an interplay between the embodied performance and social interactions. In trying to understand how both tourists and locals consume and construct meaning to the attraction site by using the framework of mobility situation (Jensen, Lanng , & Wind, 2016).

#### *Structure of the Attraction Site*

At The Kingsley Plantation the dirt road leading arriving visitors to the parking area is placed near the plantation home. As a part of the design shaping the structure of the plantation, a trail path from the parking area lead the visitors towards the plantation house and the barn and way signs were placed pointing towards different areas of the plantation. The trail path made it easier for people with walking disabilities or strollers to get around. During my time at the plantation I experienced several visitors who looked at the signs upon arrival ending up in the kitchen house or at the front porch to begin with.

As a part of structure, the design of the infrastructural landscape can influence the mobility of people. But it is up to the visitors embodied ability to navigate within the staged frame (Jensen, 2015). The designed navigation system was difficult to interpret for some visitors who seemed to be misled to different places. A visitor expressed that she had tried to follow the directions but found it difficult to get to the areas of the signs. She expressed her experience as following: *"So there were signs set up as we tried to follow, but we could not really find the places it pointed at. We were going to find an audio guide, but it was a bit difficult to find our way, but we found it"* - (Appendix 14: Translation Sheet, Interview B).

As a part of finding the way to the visitor center, people had to cross between the kitchen house and the plantation house in order to get to the correct place. On the way sign, the visitor center pointed directly towards the front porch of the plantation house. I had during my first day had a similar experience trying to find the visitor center and I ended up at the porch as well. I looked through the windows but could not find

anything (appendix 1). From the outside it could have looked as if I was observing the inside of the plantation home, while I was actually searching for something else. *"There was an arrow on the sign pointing the visitor to the visitor center. I tried to go straight to the visitor center but was lead to the porch of the main house instead"* - (Appendix 1: Field Diary, Day 1). If you had been at the plantation before you could see that the sign pointed between the buildings, but as first time visitors, this was not easy to understand. As a part of my own experience, I got drawn by what I saw and instead of continuing my search for the visitor center, the plantation home got my attention. From a dark tourism perspective, engaging within architecture, signs and other objects belonging to the white plantation owners can within plantation sites be seen as a contributing factor of wanting to explore the history of the slaves (Alderman & Campbell, 2008). My following movement took me to the kitchen house where I stayed to read the information and observed the interpreted artifacts designed to shape the structure of a kitchen which I related to a work place for a slave. Looking at the material infrastructure and materialities, this is not something that has been taken into considerations from a dark tourism perspective.

As a part of the plantation an extant slave quarter is remaining at The Kingsley Plantation. The slave quarter is separated from the rest of the attraction site, where visitors have to cross a road. The road can be seen as a symbolic line separating the attraction site into two areas. The trail road leading visitors to the slave quarter was made by several people's movement so a natural trail had been made which made it more difficult for people with disabilities to get here whereas the trail to the plantation house was man made. The slave cabins were furthermore placed a fifth of a mile from the plantation house and this walk appeared long for some visitors who had moved their cars from the parking area and placed them in the sides of the road closer to the cabins. At The Kingsley Plantation, the slave quarters are not as easily accessible to get to as the plantation house and, as mentioned earlier by one of the Park Rangers, it is the plantation house that are seen as the main attraction followed by the slave cabins (Appendix 8). From a dark tourism perspective, plantation with slave quarters is seen as the most important artifact within a slave experience (Dann & Seaton, 2001). Along the dirt road near the slave quarter, there was not designed parking area, but a common understanding created a parking area closer to them which was not an intended mobility practice from above. None of the slave cabins had been interpreted to create an understanding of how the slaves lived. The only interpretation of the past was seen at the kitchen house. By avoiding an interpretation of the architecture of the slave cabins can be seen as an action of avoiding slavery (Alderman & Campbell, 2008). One respondent questioning how many slaves one cabin could accommodate and he thought the cabins looked big (Appendix 13). If The Kingsley Plantation had interpreted one of the cabins like the kitchen house, the experience of the slaves condition might have

been different. By the mobility and the embodied performances of visitors, this showed that there was an interest in the slave quarter which affected the flow of people and the understanding of the place.

### *Interactions with Objects*

The physical setting allows people to be self-guided while exploring the plantation, but audio guides, flyers and information displays were created by Park Rangers as helping tools for the visitors to get around and get information from. I experienced that interactions with these material objects, and especially the audio guide and the displays were devices that influenced and affect the embodied performances (Haldrup & Larsen, 2007).

Looking closer to the effect of the audio guide, this created a common movement among the users. To get a better understanding of the visitor's experience, I borrowed one myself, listened carefully to the stories being told while walking the suggested route (Appendix 2). By my own movement throughout the audio guide experience, I could recognize by observing others visitor's similar mobility flows which was affected by the suggested route from the device. As a part of the staged mobilities, circulating of people, information, objects and signs contributes to the meaning of movement and the understanding of the settings within the built and natural environment (Jensen, 2014). Secondly, the visual design of the audio guide reviled the users. The audio guide users were having an iPhone hanging around their neck and from a distance you could hear the stories being told since no head phones came along with the audio guide.



Picture 11: Audio guide

Along with my own experience, two other respondents mentioned that they were surprised to hear so much about Mr. Kingsley and pointed out that he was viewed as a gentle business man who fought for the rights of the enslaved based on the Spanish task system despites of being a slave owner himself. Both respondents quoted stories from the guide expressing that they had learned something though the tour (Appendix 2+6+15).

In addition to the stories were audio affects added. Walking near the river front with the audio guide, you could hear the sound of wind in the trees and the lapping of waves. The sound of wind for example have multiple symbolic meanings like a heavy wind can be a symbol of destruction but a light wind can be a symbol of something peaceful (Stefánsson, 2009). In relation to the audio affects in a combination with the

built and the natural environment, it created a peaceful atmosphere which added beauty to the place (appendix 2).

I started to see the connection between the staged interpretations of the plantation which main attraction was seen as the plantation house and on the audio guide, the owner Mr. Kingsley became the key person of the stories. At no point you heard the cry of a child being removed from the families or a whip striking the flesh of a body. The sound of a wipe can symbolize power but also punishment or pain (Stefánsson 2, 2009). These are examples of sounds that the visitors are spared for. From a dark tourism perspective, ignoring the conditions and the pain of the enslaved can move the understanding of being considered as a dark tourism site to a Heritage site (Dann & Seaton, 2001). One visitor had expected the plantation be scarier: *"I had expected a place that was a bit scarier because of the history that is attached to it. I do not quite know what I had expected to see, but at least something else"* - (Appendix 14: Translation Sheet, Interview B). By this quote, it shows that some visitors had expectation of a darker place than how it had been staged and how the aspect of the history had been portrayed.

The question is how much or how little should be said and how should the stories of the slaves and their conditions be portrayed? The stories of enslaved at The Kingsley Plantation were not completely ignored but exposed in a rather humble way. The way of exposing slavery can be seen as a political decision by choosing the words, frame a meaningful history but by incorporate the stories of slavery can create authenticity within the meaning of the place (Alderman & Campbell, 2008).

Secondly, I discovered how the use of information displays was consisted as more than an information platform to inform about the dark past but also as an object that could linked the environmental past and the present time together. I experienced a man who was impressed by the beauty of the nature along his visit. He questioned it the trees which shaped the landscape had been here during the plantation time and would have appreciated if information about the natural surroundings had been exposed on the displays. According to him, they trees created beauty to the place and reflected in an idyllic atmosphere (Appendix 6).



Picture12: Large moss tree at the slave quarter

To this visitor, the surrounding nature became a part of the attraction and created curiosity for the past. Mobility studies link a deeper connection with the nature and the natural environment (Jensen, 2015). Within dark tourism, the

environment is not considered as a factor that create darkness to the place but it is rather the history of the brutal past that set the frame for the attraction.

At last, another element of interactions with objects was tactility. I experienced, especially by male visitors, an interest in the construction of the tabby<sup>1</sup> buildings and several reached out to touch it even though it said on the signs that it was forbidden since the surface could appear sharp. But visitors seemed to ignore these warnings and indications.



Picture 13: Visitor reaching out for the tabby wall



Picture 14: Remains of a slave cabin

This is an example of the design prevents visitors to interact with the construction of the buildings but the acted out embodied performance by the individual people from below was crossing the staged frame from above (Jensen, 2015), and again mobility connects the understanding of the material space.

Interactions with objects and artifacts can be considered as a linked to slavery and can be considered as a symbol of the enslaved lives and become a part of the story of the slaves and to some visitors evoke strong emotions (Alderman & Campbell, 2008). At The Kingsley Plantation there were no artifacts or objects to interact with. One visitor expressed her experience as following: *"I think that it became boring to walk around and just look at the buildings and it did not say that much on the signs and since our audio guide did not work that well it would have been great if there was more text or some elements that was more living"* - (Appendix 14: Translation Sheet, Interview A).

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<sup>1</sup> Tabby can be described as a kind of cement (my interpretation). It was created from oyster shells, sand and water which were mixed together.



By the quote and the embodied performances on site in relation to tactility, the absent of not having any physical object to interact with created a 'boring' environment and by the interest in feeling and touching the materialities some visitors ignored the signs indicating not to interact with the buildings.

### *Interactions with the Past through Guided Tours*

Despite getting an insight in the past through the audio guide and the information displays Park Rangers have designed a guided tour at the plantation home.

As a part of the tour, the Ranger functioned as a story teller where the Ranger followed the group of visitors around the house and by instructions the group followed the Ranger around the house. Creating a space where people participate in something together, the involved becomes a part of a group that socializes with each other in one way or another for a short period of time, which Jensen describes as temporary congregation (Jensen, 2014). As a part of the tour, the Ranger tried to create a story and by asking people questions along the way, people were brought together (Appendix 4). As a part of being a dark tourism attraction, the center of attention within slave plantation is about suffering and the crucial conditions that have taken place (Dann & Seaton, 2001). But two respondents who had joined the tour experienced that the focus of the tour was about the architecture where they had expected stories of how life used to be, the conditions for the slaves and general information about the plantation (Appendix 10+11). One respondent expressed her experience as following: *"... I had went there to experience something about the past and must say I was a little disappointed"* - (Appendix 14: Translation Sheet, Interview A). I had myself experienced a guided tour where the focus was on the architecture. I experienced a visitor who asked about the past and if the palm trees outside the plantation house has been there during Mr. Kingsley's time at the plantation. The Ranger tried to skip the visitor's question and rolled with her eyes while continuing with her own story. Her body language indicated that the question of the visitor appeared foolish (Appendix 4).

This showed that the two participants and other visitors were expecting that the tour in one way or another was about the past which it appeared not to be in focus. As explored earlier, the most important aspect of a dark tourism site within plantation sites are slave quarters, but at The Kingsley Plantation there are no tours taking visitors to this site of the plantation. One of the respondents who had participated in the house tour expressed that she would have taken part in a tour passing by the slave quarter: *"If there had been an arranged tour at the cottages, I would definitely have signed up for it"* - (Appendix 14: Translation Sheet, Interview B).

It can be discussed if the staged experience at the plantation tour 'from above' are ignoring the past and thereby the darkness by not implanting the condition of the slave in the existing tour or arrange tours to

the slave quarter. A question can be raised if the plantation site wants to be viewed as a heritage site or a dark tourism site? By not incorporating the historical darkness of the past it has from a dark tourism perspective been said that plantations sites loses its dark aspect. Histories of the enslaved contribute to the darkness (Dann & Seaton, 2001).

### *Plantation Used by Other Studies*

Continuing with another aspect interacting with the past is seen through the different mobility practices. As mentioned in the first part of the analysis, I discovered that the plantation house of The Kingsley Plantation was considered as an architectural beauty. Within studies of architecture, the plantation house has been an interesting object to study since it is the oldest standing plantation house in Florida (Appendix 8). But The Kingsley Plantation has found interest within studies of archeology as well. Within archeology the plantation site is seen as a heritage site where especially the slave quarter is of interest to get a better understanding of slavery and the families who lived and had their daily lives here. Several artifacts like ceramic, metal crosses and glass fragments have been found (National Park Service, 3, 2015). The different kind of practices comes to expression through the study of mobility where the physical settings set the frames wherein the different practices and experiences are performed. According to mobility studies, recognition of places becoming arenas of several kinds of mobility practices is recognized (Jensen, Lanng , & Wind, 2016). Thanatourism does recognize that some slave plantation can be considered as heritage site (Bowman & Pezzullo, 2010) but in general dark tourism does not take into consideration that other kinds of scholars can interpret the field site in other ways.

### **Interactions between Dark tourism and Everyday Life Situation**

I came across several episodes where different embodied and social practices interrelated as a part of the designed structure of The Kingsley Plantation. As a part of everyday mobilities it is not only the individual practices that shape a place but it as well relates to how mobilities are performed in relation to each other as a group (Jensen, 2015).

I experienced a group of students who were having a lecture. Voices from a Park Ranger and children laughing and talking from the stable were not to be avoided (Appendix 5). Outside was a visitor walking with an audio guide towards the stable as a part of the suggested route. The visitor tried to look through the open



**Picture 15: Students having lunch in front of the stable**



door and his body language showed interest in the building and the contents of it inside but the occupation by the students prevented him from stepping inside. When the session was over the students went outside and transformed the plantation ground to a picnic area and a playground. As a part of mobility studies, movement is more than transport of people and information but it furthermore involves activities like socializing, experiencing, learning, relaxing and having fun (Jensen, Lanng , & Wind, 2016). By the way the students interpreted the ground of The Kingsley Plantation as a playground, it appeared that they were having fun and to them this was more than a dark attraction site. The man who was walking with an audio guide was indicating by his embodied performance that he had a hard time hearing the story of the iPhone because he raised the audio guide to his ear when he passed the group of children or when they came running around him (Appendix 5). Dark tourism studies do not address how different kind of mobility practices interrelate but this is viewed within mobility studies. This example showed how two very different mobility practices was performed within the same physical space and to some extend challenging each other.

By observing the use of the plantation I came across other experiences where dark tourism and everydayness came to expression. I experienced another type of mobility practice where people were using the riverside as a place of fishing. For these visitors, the plantation ground was a cross field to get from the parking area to the river side and did not pay attention to any of the artifact that contributed to the dark attraction site. The body language indicated that the fishermen had been here before and based on their movements they appeared as locals. But according to mobility studies, mobility is seen as more than movement from A-B but does influence the overall understanding of the place (Jensen, 2015). Furthermore I experienced another mobility practice involving people and animals. I experienced several families who visited the plantation with dogs and based on their embodied practice it seemed like they were familiar with the place as well. I observed that these visitors did not pay any attention to any of the buildings, signs or objects that were available. One visitor even experienced that a dog used the plantation ground as a restroom which the visitor thought was disrespectful to the place (Appendix 10). The use of the plantation as more than a tourist attraction site was by some visitor noted: *"I noticed that there were some that I think were not there to experience the plantation, but just was there and walked around"* - (Appendix 14: Translation Sheet, Interview, A). But it did not indicate that other practices were affecting the experience of the plantation.

These two examples show how tourism and everyday practices intervene and together shape the environment of the place. Within dark tourism, it has been acknowledged by some theoreticians that visitors are motivated to visit these places based on several reason and some people does not seem to be

affected by the darkness at all (Light, 2016). According to Light, reasons of visiting such a site can be due to a desire or opportunity for leaning and getting an understanding of what had happened at the site. Others could have an interest in culture and history where a third option could relate to personal connections. At last, a fourth option is visitors who have a curiosity or visit a place based on simply based on other factors (Light, 2016). I overheard an older black visitor talking about ancestors and associated this plantation with a place that could have been a home to one of them (Appendix 3) which showed that this visitor has personal relation involved in the visit. Other visitors expressed that they wanted to learn more about the past and slavery (Appendix 6 + 15). In relation to Light, this indicates that different meanings and reasons for visiting a plantation by dark tourism visitors can be multiple, as underlined. The question is if dark tourism theories consider the understanding of not being affected by the darkness in a relation to everydayness and local activities.

### **Multiple Mobile Situations**

During the process it became clear to me, that meanings about the Kingsley Plantation were multiple. The infrastructural landscape of The Kingsley Plantation allows many mobile situations to play out and interact at this specific plantation. The different mobile experiences indicate how an ordinary mobility site can create different meanings and types of mobile practices and experiences (Jensen, Lanng , & Wind, 2016). The different meanings and experiences associated with the plantation came to expression through the perception of embodied performances and social interactions within the staged environment and physical settings. The mobility practices came to expression through the activities that the visitors engaged and participated in (Rakic & Cambers, 2011). The staging of the plantation from below was therefore affected by the individuals understanding and meaning with the plantation in interrelation to the staged conditions from above.

The Kingsley Plantation has become a place where people, in some way or another, has become attached to it and created meaning to it (Rakic & Cambers, 2011). As a dark tourism site, this place is visited by a large range of people but the understanding of the attraction site was more than just a dark tourism attraction site, it was for others an area where everyday activities were performed.

### **Summary**

This section has elaborated and analyzed how The Kingsley Plantation has been staged from below though the use of staging mobilities as a framework. I have explored how the designed landscape has influenced different mobility practices and how the structure has an effect on the plantation as a dark tourism attraction. As a dark tourism site, the most important artifact with a dark experience has been viewed as the slave quarter which at The Kingsley Plantation is not as easy to get to as the plantation house. This

reflected in the movement of visitors who had created a natural path as well as their own parking area closer to the cabins. Another founding was the use of information platforms including material objects and Park Rangers, which affected and created the environment and the understating of the place but also how the natural environment influenced how people perceived the plantation and the darkness. As an attraction site, the plantation was visited by tourists which due to their understanding of the place created different mobility practices which reflected in their embodied performance but as a recreational area other kinds of practices were seen. The plantation was used by a range of locals using the riverside as a fishing area, the ground as a place to walk the dog but also a place to educate people in the past. These different mobility practices in one way or another affected the construction of the plantation. To some this plantation was seen as a dark tourism site based on the historical past but others did not seem to be affected by the darkness at all.

### Sub-Question 3: How is Dark Tourism Categorized and Created Through Different Forms of Practices

In a relation to Miles spectrum of darkness and the framework of Jensen's mobile experience situation, this section will explore and discuss if a degree of darkness exist within the field site of The Kingsley Plantation. This section will furthermore explore if the use of mobility studies can challenge the existing concepts of dark tourism and if new ways of approaching darkness can give a more nuanced picture of dark tourism sites based on mobility practices.

#### Spectrum of the Degree of Darkness

It has been argued if a degree of darkness at a dark tourism attraction site exists (Stone P. R., 2006). According to different theoretical aspects of dark tourism the darkness can be measured based on several approaches and spectrums (Stone P. R., 2006). This section will explore the darkness at The Kingsley plantation based on Miles spectrum of darkness. This spectrum consists of six degrees stretching from 'darkest' to 'lightest' and is affected by a combination of components (Stone P. R., 2006). The below section will take point of departure in some of the measurements which according to Miles contributes to the darkness of a dark tourism site. Miles spectrum of darkness can be seen within the section of *Theoretical Framework*. The question is if it is possible to decide the degree of darkness that is framing The Kingsley Plantation?

- Sites of or associated with death/suffering

The first element to detriment the darkness relates to whether the plantation is a site of death or suffering or if it is a place that is associated with it. According to Miles there is a radical distinction between these two units of measurement (Miles, 2002). The Kingsley Plantation is placed at the original location of where the actual cotton plantation was, where slavery was a part of the labor. Based on the spectrum of Miles the plantation should therefore be placed within the darkest end of the scale.

I experienced a black colored man who associated the plantation with personal relations to his ancestors (Appendix 3). At the same time I spoke to another man who was very touched and emotional about the visit and compared the visit with the attraction site of Auschwitz (Appendix 15). At last, a third insight was seen within visitors who associated the plantation with movies like *12 years of slavery* and *North and South* (Appendix 4+6+10). One of these visitors said: "*Before we went to the plantation, I had the idea that we should see something that reminded of that movie ... What is it called ... '12 years of slavery' where you really get the feeling of the life as slave and their*

*conditions and all of that. But that is not how I felt out there. It was a very beautiful, but I did not get a feeling of a terrible place” - (Appendix 14: Translation Sheet, Interview A).*

These different insights showed that there were several ways of interpreting the location site. To some visitors, the visit at The Kingsley Plantation created association within the concept of slavery in general. To others, the visit at this specific plantation created strong emotions related to suffering and the horrible things that had happened at this plantation. It also showed that even though a visitor had expectation of darkness, the environment affected the perception of the place where it for the visitor in the quote turned the plantation into a beautiful place.

The darkness of these visits can therefore both be experienced as dark and light. The effect of darkness was to some affected by the place where slavery had been performed but to others association within slavery seemed just as strong. The actual place of the plantation where slavery has occurred did seem to create divers impression of the darkness and in comparison to Miles scale aspects of both darker and lighter version of darkness was seen. I therefore argue that it is up to the individual visitor to determine how to connect with the place and thereby create an understanding of the dark perspective.

- Sites oriented towards education or entertainment

Secondly, according to the spectrum, attractions that are oriented towards education are seen as darker than the ones who are more focused on entertainment (Miles, 2002). At The Kingsley Plantation, educational programs have been designed through an audio guide, displays and tours. Park Rangers has furthermore created programs to educate students but at the same time the idea behind the national park is to create a space that allows people to enjoy themselves.

I experienced several visitors who expressed that they wanted to learn something about the past. Two of the respondents participated in the guided tour at the plantation home but the information provided did not seem to create a darker feeling of the place for these visitors (Appendix 10+11). The guided tour addressed the architecture of the buildings and did not contain information about the plantation or slavery in general. This showed that just because a guided tour was arranged at the plantation, it did not seem so create a darker feeling. The information and the interpretation of the history and the building during the tour did not seem to contribute to any kind of darkness at all.

Another aspect within education vs. entertainment was seen within two of the visitors, who expressed that they wanted to learn about the past while being entertained. For the first visitor, it

would have been a great feature to interpret the past during role-plays, shot movies or through interactive displays and by this getting a more visual idea of how life used to be (Appendix 6). The second visitor expressed that she as well would have liked more interactive elements that made the experience more alive (Appendix 11). The same respondents showed the importance of interacting with employees and be able to ask questions in order to understand the past. *“Personal stories are just a bit more fun to hear directly from someone even if you can hear it on such an audio guide or read it. Sometimes it just becomes more realistic or gives a better insight in how it had been”* - (Appendix 14: Translation Sheet, Interview B).

This shows that for these visitors, leaning and entertainment was interrelated. The visitors wanted to learn while being entertained and this did not seem to affect the darkness but rather make the experience more real.

This raises questions to Miles spectrum and questions if education and entertainment can be separated from each other while exploring the darkness. Based on the two statements, I do not seem that the elements of education and entertainment affected the determination of whether or not the attraction site of The Kingsley Plantation become darker or lighter in its darkness.

- Timescale of the event

At last, Miles argues that attraction sites that have a shorter time frame are seen as darker than attraction sites with a longer time frame. Events with a shorter time scale may appear more alive in people’s memory through experiences of surviving victims and witnesses and therefore generate a deeper sense of empathy (Miles, 2002). Based on this, The Kingsley Plantation would appear lighter since the Plantation Era took place during the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century and have no living survivors or victims according to Miles.

During my time at the plantation I did not get an understanding of the time frame affected the darkness of the attraction but it crossed my mind that even though no living victims or witnesses are alive, The Kingsley plantation still had, in a sense, been able to stimulate empathy though the design and the stories being told. This came to expression from a visitor who commented on the history of the audio guide and felt she got an understanding of the time that she did not know anything about before and during her experience she, kind of felt, that Mr. Kingsley was an honorable man despites of his involvement in slavery (Appendix 15).

This statement showed that this visitor was affected by the story and it affected her interpretation of Mr. Kingsley and by the design of the story was able to create an effect of empathy for this man. Miles argue that empathy create a shorter time frame, but can be argued if the effect and the design of the audio guide can create a story that makes the visitor feel closer to the time period than they are even though the memory are not as clear it can still create as other dark aspects. I therefore argue that Miles can have a point in his interpretation of time, but I, on the other hand, argue that the design of the materialities and stories affect the interpretation of the past and contribute to the understanding of time.

### **Categorizing the Degree of Darkness**

By looking at how Miles spectrum of darkness tries to categories the darkness within a set frame of components it showed that the perception of darkness at The Kingsley was not homogenous but divers. According to Miles, the attraction site was placed within the darker end of the scale but the perceived visitor experiences indicated that both ends of the scale were in use. The individual visitors had different meanings and experiences of the darkness which applied in the use of the whole scale when looking at the degree of darkness at The Kingsley Plantation. I therefore argue that the actual darkness of an attraction is not possible to categorize based on a general scale. But the sale did not consider how different kinds of practices could shape a dark tourism site. This leads to the next part of the analysis that explore if new ways of understanding can be taken into consideration when trying to understand a dark tourism site.

### **New ways of understanding dark tourism**

By examining the existing views on dark tourism, in relation to The Kingsley Plantation and the degree of darkness, this leads to the question if new ways of looking at dark tourism should be considered. By exploring the concept of dark tourism through mobility studies it showed how everyday activities and tourism intertwined (Dale & Robinson, 2011). It showed that different kinds of mobilities and their connection to dark tourism came in different forms. Mobilities were practices by both locals and tourist. The mobility of the tourism experience was affected by the experience but also based on expectations, the staged physical settings, embodied performances, emotions and the environment. New ways of looking at dark tourism though mobility studies can therefore contribute with following:

- Mobilities can contribute to more nuanced ways of exploring the existing at dark tourism theories by recognizing the ordinary and everyday life situations within tourism sites
- Mobilities can contribute to the understanding of materialities which is neglected in dark tourism
- Mobilities can illustrate a relation between staged mobilities from above and below

- Mobilities can produce a lack of connection between emotional nearness
- Mobilities can explore relation between embodied performances and different practices
- Mobilities can explore how understanding of the past has been interpreted by the design

I therefore argue that by using mobility studies as a new way of understanding how a dark tourism site is constructed can contribute and challenge the existing dark tourism definitions. Mobility studies can contribute to the understanding of how a place is constructed through different mobility practices but does also include non-representational theories such as embodied performances and social interactions in the understanding of darkness within a dark tourism attraction.

## Summary

As a dark tourism attraction, the degree of darkness exist according to Miles and by a set scale the darkness can be exposed and categorized. This section has analyzed how dark The Kingsley Plantation is according to the spectrum of darkest -lightest attractions. Based on the individual understanding of the plantation and darkness the spectrum of darkness did not give a homogenous insight in the darkness. To some the plantation appeared darker than to others and I therefor argue that it is not possible to determine and categorize the darkness framing the plantation. By exploring existing theories of categorizing darkness it raises a question if new ways of looking at dark tourism should be considered. By implementing frameworks of mobility studies different forms created an understanding of how a dark attraction site is staged from above and below and how this result in different forms of mobility practices and understandings of dark tourism sites.



## Conclusion

The aim of this project have been to explore and analyze on how The Kingsley Plantation as a dark tourism attraction is constructed through mobility and furthermore illustrate how darkness by existing theories are categorized at the plantation. Based on this, lead to a discussion on how mobility studies can lead to a new way of understanding dark tourism.

To examine this, the analysis has been divided into three areas. The first part of the analysis elaborated on how The Kingsley Plantation has been staged from above though planning, regulations and designs. It was discovered that the landscape was designed based on the existing buildings and added material objects which together built the environment. The information platforms like the audio guide and the information displaces were affects that helped to create and construct meaning of the plantation. The buildings had in one way or another been incorporated as a part of the attraction but were designed to accommodate different groups of people like seen at the use of the stable. Local Park Rangers are aware of the dark story attached to the place and they consider the plantation house as the main attraction of The Kingsley Plantation. The plantation is designed to be a self-guided attraction site where visitors can explore the remains of the original cotton plantation which has an extant slave quarter. As a part of the location, the plantation is located in a National Park which allows people to enjoy the nature. The Kingsley Plantation has therefore been designed as more than a dark tourism site but also as a recreational area facilitating both tourists and locals.

The second part of the analysis elaborated and analyzed The Kingsley Plantation had been staged from below though embodied performances and social interactions. Here it was discovered how the physical settings of the plantation and the designs affected different forms of mobility practices. As a dark tourism site, the most important artifact with a dark experience was the slave quarter which at The Kingsley Plantation is not as easy to get to as the plantation house. This came to expression through different forms of mobilities where visitors had created a natural trail to get closer to the cabin and some had created their own parking area along the dirt road. Another aspect of darkness within the plantation was seen though the design of material objects which influenced the movement but also became information platforms which affected the creation and the meaning of the place and its darkness. As an attraction site, the plantation was visited by many tourists which in a combination of the staged frame and their individual understandings of the plantation reflected in different mobility practices. It was furthermore explored that the plantation was understood as more than a dark tourism attraction but was used as a recreational area which reflected in the activities they took part in like walking with their dogs or using the plantation as an educational platform. These different mobility practices were in one way or another affected by the

construction of the plantation. To some this plantation was a dark tourism site based on the historical past but others did not seem to be affected by the darkness.

At last, the third part explored and discussed how existing dark tourism theories categorized dark tourism site within a frame set components. According to the spectrum of darkness, The Kingsley Plantation was categorized as a dark to darker attraction site but based on the individual consumption of the place the understanding of darkness was diverse and I therefore argue that it is not possible to categorize the darkness within The Kingsley Plantation. By looking at existing theories within the concept of dark tourism, this raised a question if new ways of looking at dark tourism could be considered. By implementing framework within mobility studies more nuanced insights came to expression where both tourism and everydayness were considered. The use of mobility studies furthermore enlightened how an attraction site is staged from above and below where example of non-representation aspects and material objects resulted in different forms of mobility practices and understandings of dark tourism sites.

## Suggestions to Further Research

During the process of this project I have reached a deeper understanding and insight within The Kingsley Plantation as a dark tourism attraction but also as a recreational area for other purposes. If I had possessed the same knowledge as I do today it would have been interesting to expand the research field to a larger area. By this, I mean it could have been interesting to compare The Kingsley Plantation with other slave plantation in Florida or USA to see how they are affected by the concept of darkness. I could furthermore have looked into other plantations design and how mobilities at these places create the frame and experiences for visitors. By comparing different sites it would have made it possible to draw parallels to each other.

It could furthermore have been interesting to explore a deeper meaning within the concept of dark tourism and compare The Kingsley Plantation with other tourist destination that have been framed as dark, and it does not necessarily have to be a slave plantation and by this challenge the concept of dark tourism further with the use of mobility practices.

At last it could have been interesting to frame a similar project around the plantation and look at the visitor experience within other view of other experiences like the framework of experiencescape by Mossberg who have a more marketing based perspective and explore how specific designs can create the frame of an experience.

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