Entrepreneurs in Tourism in the Caribbean Basin
Carel Roessingh
Karin Bras
Myrte Berendse
Hanneke Duijnhooven
(eds.)

ENTREPRENEURS IN TOURISM
IN THE CARIBBEAN BASIN

Case studies from Belize, the Dominican Republic, Jamaica, and Suriname
Contents

Preface
Carel Roessingh 7

Introduction
Carel Roessingh, Karin Bras, Myrte Berendse and Hanneke Duijnhoven 14

Part I - Belize

Chapter 1
The Tourism Industry of Belize – An Introduction
Myrte Berendse 17

Chapter 2
A National Celebration Day as a Local Tourist Attraction in Dangriga, Belize
Carel Roessingh and Karin Bras 25

Chapter 3
Differentiation in the Belizean Tourism Industry: Small-scale Tourism and Cruise-ships
Myrte Berendse and Carel Roessingh 37

Part II – The Dominican Republic

Chapter 4
The Tourism Industry of the Dominican Republic – An Introduction
Hanneke Duijnhoven 53

Chapter 5
The Concept of All-Inclusive Tourism: the Case of Puerto Plata, the Dominican Republic
Nathalie Pot, Sofie Schrover and Hanneke Duijnhoven 61

Chapter 6
Coping with Mass Tourism: The Small Entrepreneurs of Puerto Plata, the Dominican Republic
Hanneke Duijnhoven and Carel Roessingh 73

Part III – Jamaica

Chapter 7
The Tourism Industry of Jamaica – An Introduction
Pieter Masmeijer and Ewout van der Meer 87
Chapter 8
Managing Cultural Differences -
The Daily Life in Two Hotels in Negril, Jamaica
Ewout van der Meer and Hanneke Duijnhoven 93

Chapter 9
Jamaican Tourist Guides: Ya mon!, I’ll show you the real Jamaica!
Pieter Masmeijer 105

PART IV – SURINAME

Chapter 10
The Tourism Industry of Suriname – An Introduction
Gwendolyn de Boer 119

Chapter 11
Tour Operators in Suriname - Small Players, Great Influences
Margot van den Berg van Saporoea and Myrte Berendse 127

Chapter 12
Tourism Development in Galibi, Suriname
Lizzy Beekman 141

PART V – METHODOLOGY

Chapter 13
Shifting Identities: Doing Research in the Field of Tourism
Carel Roessingh and Hanneke Duijnhoven 155

References 171

Index 183

Contributors 187
Preface

Carel Roessingh

This book is the result of cooperation between students working on their final thesis together with a lecturer from both the department of Culture, Organization and Management at the Vrije Universiteit and the department of Leisure Studies at InHolland University, both in Amsterdam.

Together these parties formed the Caribbean Project Group whose aim was to carry out research into the role of entrepreneurs in tourism development in four different countries, namely Jamaica, Belize, the Dominican Republic and Suriname. The Caribbean Project group started in September 2002 by gathering once a month. The initial idea for this project sprung from the first fieldwork projects that took place in 2000 in Jamaica, resulting in three theses. This was the start of something that was easier to talk about than to actually make it happen. The notion of using fieldwork experiences as the basis for a book about tourism and entrepreneurship did not only develop keenness but also friendship within the group. All the former students taking part in this project did it in their free time, based on pure enthusiasm. I would like to thank all of you for your input and cooperation. Due to jobs and other responsibilities the meetings had to take place in the evenings, with people coming to Amsterdam from different parts of the country, like Zwolle, Den Haag, Utrecht and Rotterdam. Therefore, the meetings were sometimes more social than constructive, but Pieter Masmeijer always made sure that the necessary work was done. Thank you for that.

I also want to thank our publisher, Auke van der Berg, for his incomprehensible trust in this project and his wise words, “let's make a beautiful book out of it”. Many thanks. Dear Giles Bonnet, as native speaker you were willing to check our English on grammar, style and inconsistencies. As a top field hockey coach, with a hectic and busy job, you showed without any hesitation your kindness to work through the concept edition of the book. The photo on the cover of the book was made by Jan Verstegen during a work/vacation trip to Belize. Jan, when you took the photo you did not know that we would use it for our book. One could wonder which picture you would have taken, had you known its destiny. Hanneke Duijnhoven and Myrte Berendse, two important contributors to this book, are also the ones who did not talk too much about the project but they made it happen. Without their impressive effort and almost workaholic attitude in the final phase of the project, some of us would still be dreaming of a day somewhere in the future when this book would be finished. Once again, thank you all very much.
Introduction

Carel Roessingh, Karin Bras, Myrte Berendse and Hanneke Duijnhoven

When you go to any random travel agency, you will likely find a wide variety of holiday-offers to ‘the Caribbean’. Such offers are usually accompanied by tropical photographs showing blue water and white-sand beaches, colourful flowers, tropical rainforests or beautiful sunsets on the background of a deserted beach with only a few palm-trees. These holidays vary from luxury, yet low-priced, all-inclusive package deals to adventurous hiking trips through the jungle or vacations on a more individual basis. The variation in holiday possibilities is indicative of the diversity of the Caribbean countries. Each country has its own characteristics and its own tourist attractions. However, these are just the frontstage images of the tourism industry in this region.

This book offers a varied collection of cases that deal with the backstage of tourism in the Caribbean Basin. It focuses on the structures and dynamics of the tourism industry. These cases are the result of different research projects, carried out between 2000 and 2004. Each chapter represents a different research project in one of the four countries that have been selected for this volume. The countries: Belize, the Dominican Republic, Jamaica and Suriname, together illustrate the great diversity of this region. The book aims to provide an insight in the diversity of the tourism industry in these four countries. In this introduction, the central themes of the book will be introduced along with some background information of the region and an outline of the different chapters.

The tourism industry is the central subject of each of the different case studies in this book. To understand the structure and social aspect of the tourism industry in the four different countries, the research projects all focused on the position and daily life of entrepreneurs and employees active in this industry. Furthermore, because the development of the tourism industry is to a large extent dependent on the policies and regulations of the national government and international tourism organizations, they serve as another central theme of this book. Within this general context, each of the eight case studies explores a specific theme related to a particular local issue.

Another factor, which connects the different chapters, is the choice of the countries involved. Belize, the Dominican Republic, Jamaica and Suriname are all located in the same geographical area; the Caribbean Basin (Randall and Mount 1998). Although the Caribbean is usually considered to include only the islands in the Caribbean Sea, Randall and Mount, among others, argue that this area in fact stretches along the entire coastline surrounding this sea. Thus,
they include countries like Belize, Suriname, Venezuela, and Costa Rica among others. As they put it: [these countries] “have had a common historical past rooted in European colonialism and economic dependency, combined with a heavily Afro-Caribbean population” (Randall and Mount 1998: 1). Because the countries surrounding the Caribbean Sea have much commonality, they argue that it is reasonable to define these countries together as the ‘Caribbean Basin’. This book contributes to research on Caribbean tourism by focusing on both Caribbean islands and Caribbean coastal regions, thereby presenting Caribbean tourism as more than just ‘sun-sea-sand tourism’ or cruise tourism. It attempts to show the diversity of tourism in the entire Caribbean Basin.

With regard to the common colonial history it has to be noted that of the four countries represented in the book two of them have a history of English colonialism (Belize and Jamaica), while Suriname has a Dutch colonial past, and the Dominican Republic used to be a Spanish colony. Today the societies of the countries are clearly still influenced by their former colonists. This is manifested in the language, the organization of the government and the political system, as well as aspects of the culture.

When it comes to their tourism industries, each of these countries has experienced different processes of development. The countries all operate in specific sectors of the tourism industry. Jamaica and the Dominican Republic are mainly focused on beach tourism on a massive scale, while both Belize and Suriname are more oriented towards small-scale nature and adventure tourism. The types of tourism present in a destination have significant consequences for the role of the entrepreneurs in the industry and the type of organizations that are active in the field. For example, in Belize and Suriname, the industry is dominated by (small) entrepreneurs as opposed to the Dominican Republic and Jamaica, where most organizations are part of large international chains.

Another relevant consequence of the type of products that are offered is the kind of tourists that are attracted. Suriname, for instance, has a relatively undeveloped tourism industry and mainly attracts people that have relatives or other relationships with the country. Thus Suriname is still at the beginning stage of tourism development and has the potential of becoming an influential and popular destination. The Dominican Republic as well as Jamaica offers cheap holidays for a wider public. Both countries have a well-established tourism industry with few expansion possibilities. These destinations need to find other ways to maintain their position in the market. Finally, Belize operates in a specific market niche. This country has a special attraction for divers, bird-watchers, or adventure-seekers, and has an image of a ‘green’ destination. However, the rise of the cruise-ship industry seems to point at a turning point in the Belizean tourism industry. It might be argued that Belize finds itself between two markets; the small-scale tourism market on one side and mass tourism market on the other side.

Tourism, as an industry is an important economic sector in all these countries. In the first place, the government has important interests in the development of a strong and stable tourism industry because this offers them a solid position in the
international market. In the second place, the industry is important on a micro-
level as well. Large numbers of individuals or small groups of people (like family
based enterprises or other networks) benefit from the tourism activities. Although
it has often been argued that these individual benefits are rather marginal, due to
economic leakages, it should be reminded that these countries usually have very
few alternative industries. The question is to what extent the local entrepreneurs
can move around freely within the margins of the industry in order to benefit
from tourism. This book focuses on the position and opportunities of the
entrepreneurs within the (international) tourism industry.

The book consists of five different parts. The first four parts each represent one
of the countries. These sections all start with an introductory chapter to provide
the reader with the relevant contextual information of the tourism industry of the
country concerned. This introductory chapter is followed by two chapters, each
presenting a different case study. At the end of each case study, some information
is provided regarding the researchers and their research projects.

The first segment offers two case studies on Belize. The first case study (chapter
2) focuses on the way the Government of Belize has to manoeuvre between its
aim to work towards a nation-state mentality and the existence of local ethnic
manifestations, which emphasizes the internal diversity in this multi-ethnic
society. The government and all kinds of (non-) government-related organizations
in Belize promote Belize as an attractive tourism destination. In doing so it is
important to promote the great variety of possibilities, which are available in
the country. Ethnic celebrations are one of them. As a tourist attraction these
ethnic-related manifestations do have an economic value not only for both the
government and business organizations, but also for local entrepreneurs.

Chapter 3 addresses the way in which tourism entrepreneurs and the
government of Belize cope with the apparently conflicting processes they come
across while developing their tourism product. Although traditionally focused on
small-scale, sustainable tourism, Belize has recently been discovered by cruise
ship lines. The impact of this on the world of tourism entrepreneurs is not yet
clear and there is a discussion going on between those who argue that cruise
ship tourism and sustainable tourism can go hand in hand, and those who
consider this impossible. This case is used to further develop ideas on practicing
sustainable tourism and cruise tourism, with a focus on the role of governments
and tourism entrepreneurs in this development.

The fifth and sixth chapters focus on resort-tourism in Puerto Plata, the
Dominican Republic. The first case, ‘The Concept of All-Inclusive Tourism:
The Case of Puerto Plata, the Dominican Republic’, aims to provide an insight
into the structure of the all-inclusive tourism system, which dominates the
tourism industry in the Dominican Republic. The chapter explores the aspects
of this system by discussing the characteristics within the framework of
McDonaldization (Ritzer 1996) and McDisneyization (Ritzer and Liska 1997).
Furthermore, the chapter discusses the consequences of this system on the
image of this destination.
Chapter 6 focuses on the way small entrepreneurs in the tourism industry of the Puerto Plata region try to cope with contextual changes caused by the development of (mass) tourism. These entrepreneurs struggle with all sorts of problems, mainly resulting from the dominance of the large, multinational, all-inclusive resorts in the tourism industry. Many locals shifted from their previous jobs to professions in the tourism industry. Today, most of them are disappointed with the results, but because of the region’s dependence on tourism they feel they have no way out. It is argued in this chapter that in order to maintain themselves in the industry, they are shifting between different roles and identities.

Part three of the book discusses some issues of the Jamaican tourism industry. Chapter 8 shows that the colonial history of Jamaica is still visible in contemporary society. The relationship between international managers and the local employees of two large hotels are used to describe the cultural differences and conflicts that are part of the daily life in the Jamaican tourism industry. Theories on intercultural management are used to explore the management strategies in these hotels. It becomes clear that the hotels create a kind of ‘artificial paradise’ according to western standards to cater for the wishes of western tourists, without taking into account the culture and traditions of the local employees.

Chapter 9 ‘Jamaican Tourist Guides: Ya Mon!, I’ll Show You the Real Jamaica!’, gives a good example of the contrast between different types of tourist guides that operate in the Jamaican tourism industry. On the one hand, the chapter describes a well-organized daytrip to the Dunn's Riverfalls and on the other hand a seemingly more improvised excursion to the Blue Mountains. Although both these guides have completely different ways in approaching their clients, the chapter suggests that at the same time the practices are quite similar. The difference lies in the presentation of their product. It becomes clear that in both cases, the tourist guides are highly dependent on their network.

The fourth part addresses the tourism industry in Suriname. Chapter 11 examines the ways Suriname tourism entrepreneurs have become involved in the tourism industry. Because of the fact that the tourism industry in Suriname is still rather undeveloped, these entrepreneurs have hardly any support from the government or international organizations. The industry is to a large extent dependent on these small-scale initiatives. Consequently the industry might seem somewhat unstructured. The chapter shows that these small entrepreneurs use their networking skills and cultural capital to obtain a position in this new industry.

Chapter 12, the last case study in the book, describes the tourism development in Galibi, an indigenous community in eastern Suriname. The chapter illustrates the way in which the community is affected by the growing number of tourists that visit the area. Galibi is partly a protected nature reserve and the nesting sea turtles form a popular tourist attraction. The presence of tourists in the community has caused some conflict within the local villages between those people who are involved in tourism and those who oppose the tourism development. Furthermore, it is pointed out how the government, through the management of the nature reserve, tries to stimulate a stable tourism development in the area.
Finally, the fifth part of the book contains a chapter on the methodological background of the case studies. It discusses some issues with regard to conducting qualitative research in the field of tourism and reflects upon the position of the researcher. In addition, it aims to provide an insight into the way the research projects in the book have come about. This chapter might be of particular interest for students who are preparing for research projects in the field of tourism research.
PART I
Belize

Eva’s Bar, San Ignacio (Photo: Myrte Berendse)
1 THE TOURISM INDUSTRY OF BELIZE – AN INTRODUCTION
Myrte Berendse

Introduction
In the 1960s Belize was known only amongst divers as a diving destination, while in the years to come Belize was also discovered by the eco-tourism and adventure tourism market. Apart from the marine reserves, nowadays the natural beauty and historical past of the mainland are also used in the Belizean tourism industry. By presenting Belize as ‘The Adventure Coast’ and ‘Mother Nature’s Best Kept Secret’, not just pleasure, but action, exploration and an authentic experience are promoted. Belize is one of the smallest (partly due to the small size of the country, its dense vegetation, and low level of population) but also one of the fastest growing tourism destinations in the Caribbean with 230,832 tourist arrivals and 851,436 cruise ship arrivals in 2004 (Belize Tourism Board 2005). For a long time the Belizean tourism industry was based mainly on overnight tourists interested in the barrier reef, eco-tourism activities and the Maya sites on the mainland. Next to the traditional overnight tourist Belize now also receives more and more cruise tourists. The Belizean tourism industry is a growing industry, changing in size and in scope, serving different tourism markets.

This chapter introduces the tourism destination Belize. Next to the development of tourism in Belize, some important economical, historical and geographical aspects will be described in order to facilitate the reading of the two following chapters on Belize. The first chapter explores the ways in which the Garifuna in Dangriga use their ethnic identity to differentiate themselves from other groups. The celebration of Garifuna Settlement Day exemplifies how the Garifuna’s rethinking and capitalizing on ethnicity is not just part of a political process, but also reflects economical opportunities, including chances in tourism. The second case describes how the rise of a new form of tourism, mass tourism, results in fragmentation in the tourism arena. The example of cave tourism in Belize illustrates how a discussion on marketing and image building in fact reveals different interests and economic opportunities.

Belize
With Mexico as its giant northern neighbour and Guatemala bordering west and south, Belize appears to be a Central American country. But the Caribbean Sea and hundreds of small islands, locally called cayes (‘little islands’) at the east make Belize part of the Caribbean basin as well. The climate varies from tropical in the south to subtropical in the north. In the rainy season (June – November)
the region is often hit by tropical depressions. Around this time of the year, which is often referred to as the ‘hurricane season’, tourism is slow.

Besides being small in size with no more than 22,966 sq. km. Belize only has 279,457 inhabitants (est. July 2005, CIA factbook 2005a). The diverse population (Mestizo, Creole, Maya, Garifuna, Mennonites, others) is the result of a long history of migration in and out of the country. The Ancient Maya Civilization, European imperialism, Central American and Mexican civil wars, Garifuna and Mennonite settlement and ongoing foreign relations have turned present day Belize into a multi-ethnic country (Peedle 1999: 4). Tourists that travel through the country will encounter a great diversity of communities. For example, the agricultural communities of the Mennonites (Roessingh and Schoonderwoerd 2005) are a big contrast to the colourful Garifuna (Roessingh 2001). English is the official language, but a great part of the population speaks Belizean Creole or Spanish and the different ethnic groups have their own languages, like Mopan or Kekchi Maya, Low German (Mennonites), Chinese or Garifuna.

A big part of Belize is covered by forest. It also holds the largest coral reef in the Western Hemisphere (second only to Australia’s) and the largest cave system in Central America. Over 40% of the land has been granted some form of legal protected status, either as a Wildlife Sanctuary, National Park, Forest or Marine Reserve (Pact Belize 2005).

Compared to other Central American countries, Belize appears to be the odd man out. The former British Honduras only became independent in 1981. The country is not well-known outside the region; no dictatorship or ongoing civil wars have made the country famous and by Central American standards, its economic position is relatively stable and favourable. However, Belize is not a very rich country and natural resources are scarce. Tourism is seen as a sector that could bring economic growth.

**Tourism Development in Belize**

Belize’s tourism industry started out in the 1960s, mainly with divers that were attracted to the second longest barrier reef in the world. Pearce (1984: 293) describes this first period as a development characterized by “individual effort and initiative and a general absence of planning and coordination”. Private entrepreneurs took a leading role. This occurred in San Pedro, on Ambergris Caye, where small, mainly American investors started promoting Belize as a fishing, diving and snorkelling paradise (Barry 1995: 52). The plans of the entrepreneurs from San Pedro reflect the active use of what the island and the barrier reef had to offer, as Sutherland (1998: 96) points out: “Their goal was to establish nature recreational tourism (sport fishing, wind surfing, sailing, snorkelling, diving) as well as some hunting-and-gathering tourism (hunting deer and peccary, shell collecting, archaeological ruins)”. San Pedro today is a well-developed tourism town. But questions have been raised about the impact of tourism on the social and natural environment. Sewage problems, destruction of the reef, economic leakages and increasing cost of living amongst others, are major issues of concern. ‘The case of San Pedro’ is often cited as an example of growth without control, where the
government could and should play a regulatory and facilitative role to diminish the negative impacts and increase the positive ones (Dachary and Arnaiz 1991; McMinn and Cater 1998; Sutherland 1998).

However it was only in the 1980s, when the government changed seats for the first time in the electoral history of Belize, that the Belizean Government started to pay attention to tourism as a serious option for development. Until then the ruling People's United Party (PUP) had been resenting tourism, mainly driven by anti-colonial feelings (Barry 1995: 53). Prime Minister George Price and the PUP condemned “tourism as whorish” (Munt and Higinio 1993: 61). Economic development was to be obtained through import substitution and tourism did not fit into Price's ultimate goal of creating a sense of national identity and purpose. Belize had to deal with many economic setbacks once it had acquired independence. In this period (the eighties) Belize's export consisted mainly of products from the agricultural industry, such as sugar, molasses, citrus fruits and bananas. Due to high oil prices, low sugar prices and a declining world market, the country was on the verge of bankruptcy in 1981 (Barry 1995: 39). According to a tourism study from the United Nations, the government at that time “virtually frowned on the industry and from all accounts, did its utmost to discourage its development” (Woods et al. 1992: 83). This radically changed when in 1984, the United Democratic Party (UDP) embraced tourism as an option for development.

The UDP government, forced by the World Bank and IMF to diversify the Belizean economy after the worldwide recession, started to develop tourism as a potential sector for economic growth. The tourism industry was raised from seventh to second in the overall development plan of the country. Funding and loans were provided to improve the tourism infrastructure (Woods et al. 1992: 82; Barry 1995: 52). The Ministry of Tourism was established and integrated with the Ministry of Environment. This already reflected the government's focus on the rapidly growing eco-tourism market. Tourist attractions were identified and a strategy plan was defined with recommendations for the institutionalization of the sector, the protection of national resources and the promotion of the industry as a whole (Berl-Cawtran Consortium 1984). The preparations paid off. Ten years later this period was even referred to as the 'golden' years for Belizean tourism: “Although reasonably reliable tourist arrival estimates are not available until 1991, it appears that after twenty years as a diving destination Belize, in the late 1980s, entered a ‘golden’ period of tourism growth coinciding with its appeal to the “new” ecotourism market. Arrivals grew rapidly, from less than 77,000 in 1991 to more than 100,000 by 1993” (Blackstone Corporation 1998: 1-3).

In 1989 the PUP won the elections but contrary to its previous attitude, the policy of the PUP now strongly favoured tourism. Special attention was paid to Belizean entrepreneurship through education, training, assistance, (tax) incentives, joint ventures and joint-ownerships between Belizeans and foreign investors. With “Belize, the Adventure Coast”, a new promotional campaign was developed (Ministry of Tourism and Environment 1991). After the elections of 1993, which brought the UDP back into power, the government continued
with improvements to the overall professional appearance of the sector (Volker and Sorée 2002: 105). However, the growth in tourism arrivals of the late 1980s and early 1990s appeared to have ended. Between 1993 and 1997 tourist arrivals stagnated at approximately 100,000 annually and concerns were raised that without targeted action, the industry would further decline (Blackstone Corporation 1998: 1-1).

In 1997 the Ministry of Tourism and Environment and the Belize Tourism Board saw the need for a long-term development plan. A study was undertaken by the Blackstone Corporation, resulting in a National Tourism Development Plan for the next ten years; also known as the ‘Blackstone Report’ (Blackstone Corporation 1998). The guiding principles were similar to the earlier strategy and action plans with a focus on a strong environmental ethic and a preference for smaller-scale development. Attention was paid to public-private partnerships, price competitiveness and market-driven strategies. Amongst others this led to a new institutional framework of the government. In 1998 the Ministry of Tourism and Environment ceased and in 2001 Culture (including the Department of Archaeology) was added to the Ministry of Tourism. In 2003 this resulted in the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Development. The latter reflects what the development of tourism in Belize is all about “a catalyst for economic growth” (Belize Tourism Board 2003a).

The Belize Tourism Board (BTB) was revitalized as a statutory board under the ministry and since then is responsible for marketing and public relations as well as tourism product development. Functioning as an executing government agency, the BTB communicates with the private sector, represented by The Belize Tourism Industry Association (BTIA). The BTIA (officially recognized in 1989) communicates the interests, views, needs and priorities of the private stakeholders in the Belizean tourism industry by marketing and promoting Belize as a tourism destination and by influencing the development of the tourism sector through the representation of the private sector, lobbies and by providing a network and forum to address tourism related concerns. Public-private partnership is highly valued by both sectors in Belize and together they engage in the concept of ‘sustainable-eco-cultural tourism’ as a market-driven strategy.

The marketability of Belize might best be summarized by ‘three Rs’ (Blackstone Corporation 1998: 1-3) rather than by the famous Caribbean ‘three Ss’, since ‘rainforest, reef and ruins’ better encompass the Belizean tourism assets than ‘sun-sea-sand’. Frankly, Belize does not have that many spectacular beaches and apart from San Pedro, Caye Caulker and Placentia, Belize’s tourism industry is aimed at ‘alternative’ ways of attracting tourists, by offering all sorts of adventures and small-scale accommodations. Sutherland (1998: 99) characterizes the 1970s in Belize by adventure tourism, the 1980s by recreational tourism and the 1990s as the decade of eco-tourism. Woods et al. (1992: 81) rather describe this shift in the 1990s as one towards eco-tourism and archaeo-tourism as niche markets. The Blackstone Corporation (1998: 1-2) claims that the 1990s witnessed the rise of a ‘new tourist’ that has grown largely from the ‘eco-tourism phenomenon’: elite, few in number, experienced in world travel, looking for a unique experience
that integrates spontaneity, authenticity, novelty and safe adventure. This ‘new
tourist’ is keen to learn about the natural environment and new cultures, has
a high level of concern for the well being of both, demands high quality and is
willing to pay for it. According to the Blackstone Corporation, Belize is attracting
this highly sought-after type of tourist. Apparently Belize’s tourism product
closely resembles what the ‘new tourist’ is looking for. Market research revealed
that tour operators characterized Belize as an “undiscovered, uncrowded, off the
beaten track and ‘premium’ product” (Blackstone Corporation 1998: 7-6). Labels
such as ‘English-speaking’, ‘charm’, ‘authenticity’, ‘accessibility’ and the ability to
‘offer more’ apply to various tourism products in Belize and are therefore used to
differentiate the country from other destinations (Blackstone Corporation 1998:
7-6). In 1999 this resulted in a new campaign. ‘Mother Nature’s Best Kept Secret’
and a new logo for the Belize Tourism Board to replace the slogan ‘Belize – The
Adventure Coast, Undiscovered and Unspoiled’:

The colorful new logo sports a toucan, a rising sun and the headline,
‘Catch the adventure’. The various colors indicate the diversity of our
country. The sun represents the tropics where Belize is located. The toucan
was chosen because of its friendly nature and the fact that it is the national
bird (…) The words of the logo should also lead the tourist to believe that
there are more activities to do here than lay back on a beach. Additionally
many advertisements are carrying the slogan ‘Mother Nature’s Best Kept
Secret’ which surveys showed represented tourists returning to Belize,
who believed they were the only ones who had discovered something new
(San Pedro Sun 1999).

Though still focusing on eco-tourism Belize started promoting ‘responsible
tourism’. Responsible tourism refers to a way of doing tourism rather than a type
or segment of tourism. It encompasses what can be called eco-tourism, but also
‘natural heritage’ tourism, diving and marine-oriented tourism as Belize’s specific
niche markets. It refers to an ethic and a set of practices that chart a sensible
course for all types of tourism (Belize Tourism Board 2003a). It is expected that
the ‘new enlightened tourist’ that forms Belize's most important existing and
potential future market, will be attracted by the image of ‘a destination that cares’
(Blackstone Corporation 1998: 4-1 & 4-2). Responsible tourism thus serves both
as a concept for sustainable development and as a marketing image to attract
tourists.

The natural beauty of Belize is thus used as one of the main attractions for
tourists. As Sutherland mentions: “With its natural resources of forests and
coastline and its multicultural, English-speaking population friendly to the
United States, Belize is an important tourist destination for the alternative
tourist and the eco-tourist, as well as the recreational “sun-sea-sand-sex” tourist”
(Sutherland 1998: 92-93). The natural environment is a source of national
pride and a symbol for national identity. Problems caused by unemployment,
the politically and economically marginal role of the country in the region, the
everlasting conflict over land with Guatemala and the fact that Belize is a young, independent country, make it necessary for the government to create a sense of internal self-awareness on a national level. One of the government's tools to develop a national identity is the use of symbols related to 'sources of income for the country'. These symbols are for instance Belizean rum, sugar cane, citrus, shrimps or lobsters. For tourism, the government uses the natural environment and wildlife as symbols for national identity. Amongst others this can be found in the promotion of local tourism in the country. Articles in the local newspapers frequently mention the continuous growth in tourist arrivals and invite Belizeans to “experience first hand why Belize is the Jewel of the Caribbean and Central America” (Belize Times 2002a). Where Belize's first Prime Minister, George Price, saw the development of tourism and the creation of national identity as incompatible, the current government tries to use a sense of national pride in the tourism industry.

One of the main attractions for local and national tourists (besides the reef) is the rich Maya heritage of Belize. As mentioned before, the department of Archaeology is part of the Ministry of Tourism and this is not without reason. Visitation numbers for major Mayan sites in Guatemala, Mexico and Honduras are evidence of the increased popularity of the Mundo Maya (Maya World) circuit amongst tourists. Belize however did not have a strong position in the Ruta Maya and was primarily serving as a through-way for tours between Mexico and Guatemala with minimal stops in the country itself (Blackstone Corporation 1998: 5). Caracol (situated in the Maya Mountains, Western Belize) is recognized as an 'anchor destination' for its potential to 'rival' with major sites like Chitzen Itza in Mexico, Tikal in Guatemala or Copan in Honduras (Blackstone Corporation 1998: 9-5). In order to put Belize on the Mundo Maya tourism map, a project was established for the development and conservation of the major archaeological sites. In 2000 the Inter-American Development Bank provided Belize with an $11 million loan to strengthen the tourism sector and to preserve and protect environmental and cultural assets (Inter-American Development Bank 2000). Together with loans from several funding sources this resulted in the four-year Tourism Development Project (TDP). The project is generally looked upon as 'the biggest project' ever undertaken in tourism development in Belize and the outputs have been noteworthy. With archaeology being the most advanced component of the project, five sites have undergone major changes as a result of archaeological work and the upgrading and expansion of access roads, sanitary and parking facilities and the construction of visitor centres. One group specifically benefits from this increased accessibility, the growing number of cruise tourists.

Cruise passenger arrivals to the Caribbean grew by an estimated 10% in 2002 as reported by the Caribbean Tourism Organization (CTO 2003). With a growth of 564.4% in cruise visitor arrivals in the same year, Belize is the fastest growing cruise tourism destination in the region. The number of tourist arrivals in Belize in 1991 is 77,542. This number rises to a total of 172,292 in 1999. Since 1991, there has been an average annual increase of 2.7% in the number of overnight tourist arrivals (Central Statistical Office 2000a). On the one hand, the early
figures of the new millennium show no remarkable growth (185,705 tourists in 2001 and 186,087 in 2002). But on the other hand, when looking at the figures of cruise ship arrivals (48,116 in 2001 and 319,690 in 2002) there is an explosive growth of 585% between 2001 and 2002 (Belize Tourism Board 2003b).

The Belizian tourism industry is changing. From just a diving destination to a well established tourism concept in terms of ‘eco-cultural tourism’ or ‘responsible tourism’. From an ill-defined or non-existing marketing strategy to strong campaigns focused on promoting a ‘natural, unspoiled, and unique destination’. From private initiative to institutionalization of the tourism sector, defining the role of the government and growing public-private linkages. And from relatively small-scale tourism to small-scale and mass tourism side by side (Roessingh and Berendse 2005). The tourism industry in Belize experienced tremendous growth and changes in the last decades. The two case studies that follow, describe the different ways people are trying to capitalize on these changes.
2 A National Celebration Day as Local Tourist Attraction in Dangriga, Belize

Carel Roessingh and Karin Bras

Introduction
‘Where the Hell is Belize’. This slogan - written on the front of t-shirts and baseball caps - implies that Belize sells itself as a rather unknown country. This slogan, but also others such as the phrase ‘Discover Hidden Belize’ on the cover of a magazine (Philips 1994: 11), gives this country in Central America the image of a place that is unique, unspoiled, and somehow exclusive. The immediate question that arises is what is so unique and unspoiled about Belize? Sutherland states that the “recent ‘discovery’ of Belize by foreigners as a tourist Mecca and destination for the ‘authentic’ experience could only happen because in the past, Belize was undeveloped, under populated, unknown” (1998: 92-93). She connects ‘authenticity’ directly with being undeveloped and unknown. In this chapter we want to further explore this relationship by analyzing the revival of Garifuna culture; an ethnic group of mixed indigenous Caribbean and African descent which makes up eleven percent of the country’s population. We chose the Garifuna case because the Garifuna have always been a rather invisible ethnic group to most tourists (Roessingh 2001). The number of tourists exploring Belize is increasing. Amongst these tourists are also visitors who are interested in Belize’s culture and its ethnic groups. This creates a situation in which different ethnic groups have become more prominent in the image making of Belize as a tourism destination. As a result ethnic groups feel the need to differentiate themselves from other groups. Therefore, the Garifuna are rethinking their ethnic background and trying to capitalize on it. The revitalization of ethnicity in this context does not only apply to processes of self-awareness and politics, but also to the notion of economic opportunities. An important actor in this process is the Belizean Government. How does their effort to create a sense of national identity correspond with revitalization of culture on a local level? What is the content of the Belizean national identity and how does the Belizean government steer this process of nation building? After a short introduction to Dangriga and the Garifuna, we will elaborate on ethnic tourism (Van den Berghe 1994), the importance of authenticity in this type of tourism and the role of the state. With the Garifuna case, and more precisely the analysis of Garifuna Settlement Day, we will illustrate the processes discussed earlier in more detail.
The Garifuna: an Invisible Ethnic Group?

Dangriga, formerly called Stann Creek, is the district capital and the largest town in southern Belize. It’s also the cultural centre of the Garifuna, a people of mixed indigenous Caribbean and African descent, who overall form about eleven percent of the country’s population. Since the early 1980s Garifuna culture has undergone a tremendous revival; as part of this movement the town was renamed Dangriga, a Garifuna word meaning “sweet waters” - applied to the North Stann Creek flowing through the centre. The most important day in the Garifuna calendar is November 19, Garifuna Settlement Day, when Dangriga is packed solid with expatriate Belizians returning to their roots and the town erupts into wild celebration. The party begins the evening before, and the drumming and punta dancing pulsate all night long. In the morning there’s a re-enactment of the arrival from Honduras, with people landing on the beach in dugout canoes decorated with palm leaves. (Eltringham 2001: 187)

The above paragraph in ‘The Rough Guide to Belize’ focuses on a town, in the southern part of Belize called Dangriga. Actually, there is not much to do in Dangriga (8814 inhabitants; Central Statistical Office 2000b). You can take the boat to Tobacco Caye. In front of the Belizean coast there is a long, drawn-out area of coral reefs. These coral reefs rise above the water in many places and form chains of ‘exotic’ islands that, in Belize, are called ‘cayes’. These ‘bounty islands’ are the largest attraction for tourists and have the reputation of being gorgeous places to go snorkelling and diving. But if you are in Dangriga it seems there is nothing interesting to do. No beautiful Maya temple, no howler monkey or jaguar reserve. At first sight Dangriga seems a simple small town having no special attraction. Often tourists are not aware that they are in an area in which a specific ethnic group, the Garifuna, is in the majority. Their perception is that they are in a place where a remarkable number of Afro-Belizeans are living. The atmosphere is more Caribbean than Latin American. The Garifuna are an invisible ethnic group to most tourists (Roessingh 2001). That idea declines once the unsuspecting tourist meets one of the ‘I-am-your-best-friend’ types (for no apparent reason). These are young men hanging around near the bus station who can sense that tourists are in Dangriga for the first time. They take you to the best and cheapest hotel in town or they accompany you on a walk through the town for your own safety. However, the ‘I-am-your-best-friend’ type also needs to make a living, so he gladly receives some Belizean dollars in return for his help. Too few or no dollars will lead to an enormous flood of abuse; too many and you will not get rid of them (Roessingh 2001: 156). These entrepreneurs are not the prototype of grass-root professional guides who passes on cultural information (Bras 2000; Cohen 1985; Volker and Sorée 2002) and point out to the tourist that Dangriga is more than just a Belizean town with an Afro-Caribbean tint to it. Nonetheless, the trademark of these small entrepreneurs is the Garifuna culture. They are often a source of firsthand information, approaching outsiders and, commercially
motivated, pointing out that Dangriga is a Garifuna town. Because the Garifuna have an Afro-American appearance and can also point out that they have an Indian background, most middlemen know that they have a pretty surprising story to tell (Roessingh 2001). In contrast to these small, informal entrepreneurs who use their ethnic identity in an uncontrolled way to make a living in tourism, the government of Belize has its own more controlled way of using different kind of cultural expressions from ethnic groups for their tourist policy.

Ethnic Tourism as a Means for Nation-Building?

In the shadow of the development in which different kinds of tourists explore the country, the ‘meeting ground’ with the Belizean people has become more occupied. Like the small Garifuna middlemen in Dangriga, representatives of other ethnic groups in Belize have become more visible. Showing one’s ethnic background became attractive. As a result of this, tourist programs are designed with a strong emphasis on the culture of specific (regional local, ethnic) groups. These programs are characterized by cultural differentiation and tend to promote the cultural or ethnic ‘uniqueness’ of a place. They are inextricably linked with local or regional efforts to revitalize a region’s heritage and attractions. In different places in Belize the ‘culture thing’ is going on. If it is the way people dance or make music or the way they produce handicrafts, all these ‘culture things’ can be very characteristic for the identity of an ethnic group. In the region of Belize, Guatemala and Chiapas (Mexico) the weaving products made by the Mayas are not only popular among the tourists, but are also characteristic for their identity. The drums and baskets have the same position among the Garifuna. They represent their identity but are also products that are interesting for the tourist market. Most of these ethnic products and artistic expressions are visible on market days and days that the ethnic community collectively emphasizes its common background. In Belize organizations like the National Garifuna Council and the Toledo Maya Cultural Council represent the historical and cultural aspects of the two ethnic groups rather than their political interests. It seems that these kinds of organizations try to preserve their own cultural heritage but also work towards a climate in which there is space for the demands of the ethnic tourist. Van den Berghe describes this kind of tourist as follows: “This tourist wants unspoiled natives, not bilingual waiters and beachboys. The native is not merely a host, a provider of creature comforts, a servant, but becomes, quite literally, the spectacle” (1994: 9). The demands of ethnic tourism are described as the eagerness of tourists to discover the real life as experienced by people of different cultures and the urge to participate in some aspects of daily life. Alienated tourists go abroad in search of other lives. This quest for authenticity is considered by some to be a prominent motive of modern tourism which wells up from a feeling of alienation (MacCannell 1976). Whether or not these tourists will succeed in their search for authenticity, the result of the arrival of tourists in an area is that local communities become the spectacle.

If the native is the spectacle, who is the provider: the National Garifuna Council,
the Toledo Maya Cultural Council or the government? Besides the influence of the ethnic group itself there is another important player, the government. Many scholars (Bras 2000; Hooker & Dick 1993; Kipp 1993; Picard 1997) interpret this focus on cultural and ethnic diversity as part of the process of nation-building. The way different cultures are displayed for a domestic and foreign audience is defined by the state, whose main interest is to create an indigenous national culture. This national culture is defined as “a combination of high points (...) a hybrid mix of the best of existing cultures in the nation” (Hooker & Dick 1993: 4). This focus on cultural and ethnic diversity as part of a nation-building process has been one of the main issues of the Belizean Government since independence. Until a few years ago the policy of the government was focused on the attitude of ‘being a Belizean’. This means that for a long time the government has been working towards an image, which accentuates what is ‘common’ to all inhabitants. The context in which this commonality takes form is the nation state and inside this context the interest of the government is national unification, in which the various ethnic groups work towards the consolidation of a community of interests of the ‘citizens’ (Baud et al. 1994: 50).

The message of being a Belizean is reflected in the way people deal with questions of nationality. During conversations in Dangriga, the question of whether the country was developing into a nation state or not, was generally answered positively. People like to suggest to the outside world that there is a national identity. It was striking that they based their national identity on the natural state of the country. People could passionately argue that Belize is the most beautiful country in the world. “Once you have drunk Belizean water it is certain that you will come back one day”. Beside these kind of remarks from individual Belizeans, the government uses ceremonial ‘moments’ and national symbols as signs in which the unity of the state is represented. Independence Day for example is celebrated on the 21st of September in Belize. Another Belizean holiday is all about patriotism and heroism. On this day, the Belizeans remember that a group of colonists, who had strong ties with the British kingdom, beat the Spaniards in the battle for St. George Caye on September 10, 1798. The crew of a Spanish squadron was the victim of a surprise attack by the local militia, which resulted in their surrender in spite of their material and military superiority (Dobson 1973: 77-78). This victory is still regarded as the historic moment which signalled the freedom of the British colony from the Spanish claim to this region. Therefore, many Belizeans regard St. George Caye Day as a day that reflects the British colonial rule and is primarily treasured by the descendants of the first colonists. This group can be found within the Creole community and is a subgroup within the nation with a certain status. In Dangriga, hardly any attention is paid to St. George Caye Day. This day is seen as a typical Creole celebration. Like Garifuna Settlement Day on the 19 November, St. George Caye Day is a national holiday initiated by the government. But in spite of the nation-building efforts of the government both national holidays are also related to historical events that are coloured by ethnicity.

Beside these ceremonial ‘moments’, which can be used as a political instrument
by the government to make unification tangible, there are monuments in which the nation state is symbolized. In Belize City there are three historic buildings, the Government House, the courthouse and St. John’s Anglican Church, which represent monumental value. The National Assembly in Belmopan is built on Independence Hill and is inspired by Maya architecture. Also due to the design, the parliament building is the symbol of the centripetal power of the nation state. Some of the Maya temples, like Altun Ha, Lubaantun, Xunantunich and lately the site of Caracol, are, besides their tourist value, also symbols of national identity. On Tuesday February 5, 2002 the museum of Belize was officially opened. The ruling government-related newspaper the Belize Times of Sunday, February 10, 2002 printed the following phrase on the front-page under the title “The Cultural Revolution Cometh”:

A major cultural milestone was reached last, Tuesday, with the official opening of the Museum of Belize. One hundred thirty-eight years ago the slaves of Belize attained freedom. Twenty-one years ago Belize attained political independence. And now in 2002 Belize has finally broken the shackles of cultural slavery and attained artistic independence. Cultural freedom (Belize Times 2002b).

This article expresses an awareness of national identity and emancipation. During the elections of 1998, one of the popular political slogans, ‘Belize for the Belizeans’ was scrawled on many walls. These slogans express the internal dissatisfaction among the Belizeans with national policies. Issues at stake were: the admission of refugees from Guatemala and El Salvador, the possibilities for foreign investors to buy and own land in the country, and the influence that the United States had on internal affairs.

The media also plays an important part in the process of nation-building. It is primarily Radio Belize that creates the impression that Belize has national unity. The various programs provide the listener with an image of a unique state in which the multiform compilation of the population assures a varied content of the nation state. Radio Belize is primarily directed towards internal current affairs. The various independent newspapers in Belize, such as The Belize Times, The Reporter and Amandala, show the same tendency. Belizean television is just starting off. Its broadcast is just a few hours a day and the programs are primarily focused on offering national subjects to those that are watching. Through this the impression is given that Belize is a friendly, democratic country in which each Belizenian is treated equally.

Another area in which the processes of nation-building in Belize are discussed is the academic world. On the 25 and 26 May 1987, the First Annual Studies on Belize Conference took place in Belize City. The theme was ‘Ethnicity and Development’. During this congress, Bolland (1987) presented his article “Race, Ethnicity and National Integration in Belize”. In his analysis of the multi-ethnic Belize his point of departure was the fact that the majority of the Belizeans descend from migrants (Bolland 1987: 1). This is one of the problems for policy-
making officials in turning the different ethnic groups into an integrated whole, the principal of a nation state.

Bolland (1987: 1) calls the process of working towards a nation state nation-building. He places the mutual ethnic problems that stagnate the formation of the nation state in a historic frame. In a revised edition of the above-mentioned article, Bolland states that the colonial state promotes racial and ethnic stereotypes by placing different ethnic groups against each other and mutually playing them out. People had to look up to the elite, because they had the political and economic power (Bolland 1988: 200). Belize has to deal with this inheritance that is primarily based on political and social-economic class stratification. The country has wound up in a process of decolonization. Ethnic contrasts mostly manifest themselves in the political and economic arenas. Bolland (1988: 200) does not deem it likely that the process of decolonization in Belize will go hand in hand with interethnic and/or class violence, because Belize does not have such a tradition.

At the same congress, the late Belizean scientist, Topsey, presented an article entitled “The Ethnic War in Belize” (1987). In this article Topsey expressed his concern for the strong increase of ethnic interest groups, such as the Toledo Maya Cultural Council, the National Garifuna Council and the Belizean Creole organization Isiah Mortar Harambee (Topsey 1987). He thought it probable that these organizations might strengthen mutual prejudices and therefore have a polarizing effect. In time this could result in ethnic separatism. A year later, on 26 and 27 March, during the National Cross-Cultural Awareness Conference in Belize City, Palacio (1988) stated in “May the New Belize Creole Please Rise”, that the academic discussion on the ethnic differences plays the first fiddle too much in Belize. Attention should be paid to the large differences in living standards between the social-economic classes and not to the lack of a clear national identity. Palacio’s opinion is that two important obstacles must be overcome on the road to the ‘new Belize Creole’. In the first place, ethnicity must be emphasized less as characteristic for a group. After all, the creolization process has been going on for three centuries, and in the cities many people are offspring of parents with diverse ethnic backgrounds. In the second place, people in Belize will have to accept that both phenotypic and cultural characteristics of the different ethnic groups represent the national identity of what Palacio calls the new Belize Creole. Belize’s identity has always been based on a national ‘us-feeling’ of an ethnically heterogeneous population that was threatened by ‘them’ from outside. The contrast in appearance of the various ethnic groups in Belize is much more visible compared to its Latin-American neighbours. But still when we follow Wilk (1995) in his article “Learning to be local in Belize: global systems of common difference” this ‘we - they’ mentality did not emerge a consensus on the intrinsic meaning of the concept of ‘national identity’. There is the sense of this ‘national identity’, but nobody knows precisely what it contains. So what is sold to the tourists: the natural beauty of the country, the beaches and the different cultural elements of some of the ethnic groups, which is a part of what is supposed to be the national identity of the people in this country.

The Belizean Government’s role is a dual one. On the one hand their general
interest is the well-being of the nation state. By supporting specific Garifuna art and commemoration days, the government can underline the multi-ethnic face of the country in a harmless manner. It is not culture in its broadest meaning that is cultivated for tourists, but those aspects of regional culture that can serve as tourist objects, like rituals, dances and architecture. Several scholars (Acciaioli 1985, Kipp 1993, Picard 1996, 1997) have called these the ‘showcase’ elements of culture; those elements which are harmless in the sense that they do not conflict with the government’s ideas of a national identity and have gained acceptance as an original form of national culture. These ‘showcase’ elements are suitable to be transformed and translated into tourist attractions. As Sofield stated: “culture is increasingly the province of the state rather than the community, its definition rendered not by its people but by its governments for political ends, with the energetic involvement of a number of agencies of the state including national tourism organizations” (2000: 109, see also Leong 1997). On the other hand, the national government also regards the cultural expressions of some of the ethnic groups of Belize as important sources of income. It provides them with the possibility of transforming Garifuna culture into a product for the tourist market. The expectation of high economic returns is another way to legitimize the special attention for ethnic groups in their creation of a national identity.

Garifuna Settlement Day

Several days before November 19, the festivities that finally explode on Garifuna Settlement Day start in Dangriga. This ‘national’ holiday is dedicated to the day that a large group of Garifuna refugees in 1832 established themselves in the Stann Creek District. Garifuna Settlement Day is officially a national holiday. Nevertheless, this festival is primarily celebrated in the four Garifuna villages and in the places Punta Gorda and Dangriga. This celebration is so strongly entwined in the historic and cultural background of the Garifuna that it is practically impossible to transform this day into a national Belizean celebration, which could be shared by all ethnic groups in the country. The founder of this day of commemoration was Thomas Vincent Ramos (1887-1955). In 1941, he organized the first Settlement Day in Stann Creek. The initiative was embraced so enthusiastically that all of the other Garifuna places followed the example in 1942. The following year, Ramos requested the governor of British Honduras, Sir John Hunter, to give November 19 an official status. This was granted on the understanding that Settlement Day would first only be recognized as an official holiday for those places in which the majority of the population was Garifuna. In practice, this meant that there was practically no economic or administrative life in the largest places in the Stann Creek District and the Toledo District in the days before and after Settlement Day. It is likely that due to this inconvenience and to stimulate the process of nation-building, this commemoration day was upgraded in 1977 and became a national holiday. With this act it seems as if the national government has recognized the position of the Garifuna as an ethnic group within Belize. By doing so, they basically admit that cultural and ethnic diversity is part of the process of nation-building.
Garifuna Settlement Day is completely dominated by two elements. First, it is a commemoration upon which the landing of 1832 is reenacted. Furthermore, like the days prior to it, this day is one of continuous celebration. Today, Garifuna Settlement Day has expanded and become an exhibition of what being a Garifuna is all about. Several elements of their culture are highlighted. A lot of attention is paid to various dances like the Punta and the John Canoe. And a Garifuna queen contest is organized in which the competitors have to show their ability to perform all kinds of Garifuna songs and dances and their knowledge of the Garifuna culture. The whole town is crowded with small food stalls selling Garifuna specialties like hudut (banana porridge with fish) and ereba (cassava bread). The whole celebration is accompanied by heavy drinking. Besides Garifuna from other parts of Belize, Honduras, Guatemala and the United States, tourists (read outsiders) account for a considerable part of those present.

The official part of Garifuna Settlement Day starts at sunrise on November 19. Garifuna men and women, decorated with palm tree leaves, sail in from the sea and up the North Stann Creek in canoes and motorboats. The quay is filled with spectators. Both in the boats and on the wharf, participants and spectators wave the yellow, white and black Garifuna flag. After those on the water arrive ashore, they offer cassava and other ingredients of traditional Garifuna food to thank Bungiu (God) and the ancestors for the safe and successful crossing. Then the procession led by a few drummers, heads for the Catholic Church where a mass is held in front of the parish. This is done in Garifuna. The nice thing about this service is that certain cultural influences that the Garifuna have absorbed from three very different cultural areas in time come together. These cultural areas are the South American, the West African and the West-European. After the church service, musical performances are held on every street corner, the pubs are open and everything is festive.

In the afternoon, dignitaries who represent various parts of the community interrupt the revelry. Their speeches can be accompanied by a lot of rhetoric. In general, the content is linked to the historical context of the day. The speeches also always emphasize the importance of the nation state and democracy. It is usually clear what the speakers’ background is. Political figures do not shy from, for example, praising their own party and attacking the opposition. All of this is happening during a commemoration, which accentuates the common descent of the ethnic group. During the day, a tractor with a trailer rides up and down Dangriga. It is the heart of the parade. On the trailer there are countless people dancing. In between them, hardly visible, there is a band. In front of and behind the tractor there are people singing loudly, dancing and cheering. Besides these commemoration days and holidays with the status of a ‘national’ day off, there are a number of regional festivities in which an ethnic group, for instance, expresses its ‘religious gratefulness’ or internally organizes a competition.

These days generally contain events that have received a permanent position in society and it becomes clear that dance and musical expression, art and all kind of ethnic handcrafts are cultural symbols with an internal binding message. Roessingh (2001) showed in his research that Garifuna who live in, for example,
Belize City and participate on Garifuna Settlement Day in Dangriga figuratively walk up front during the parade in order to show to the audience that they are conscious of their ethnic identity. In a way, this conspicuous expression of ‘belonging’ is a sort of ethnic confession. It is not at all remarkable that these feelings of confession are expressed at commemoration days, because many of these people live in other non-Garifuna places and generally do not advertise their ethnic background. Outside of their geographic ethnic area, socio-economic and politically correct expressions are used and one’s life-strategy is based on a low-profile attitude. It is no surprise that these people then grab Garifuna Settlement Day as a chance to openly express themselves as a Garifuna.

At the same time, a commemoration day such as Garifuna Settlement Day creates an interesting possibility to attract outsiders to the area. This new audience consists of a variety of people: Garifuna from other areas (expatriates), domestic tourists and foreign tourists. Until now, foreign tourists only came across this event by accident. The Garifuna are still relatively unknown among foreign tourists. As a result expressions of their daily life and cultural heritage are not yet commercialized for tourism. Nonetheless Dangriga has its share of tourism growth. Mainly responding to tourism, investors have opened a considerable number of new hotels and guesthouses (Humphreys 2002). This probably suits the tourist who is interested in ethnic groups as they come to see a manifestation of an ‘authentic lifestyle’.

Conclusion
How ‘authentic’ is Garifuna Settlement Day? Is this day a local ethnic celebration or a day in which the government presents itself as strategic spin-doctor with the ability to use this ethnic celebration day in a two-level way? Or is the public attention for Garifuna Settlement Day the result of a revitalization process of the ethnic identity of the Garifuna? And what is the role of the tourist in this arena?

For the Garifuna this day is a commemoration day. This means that it represents the symbolic recollection of the day the Garifuna arrived at the shores of a country, which was dominated by the British Crown. The most striking fact is that the colonial power - which deported the defeated Garifuna from their native island, St Vincent in the Caribbean Sea - was the British Crown (Gonzalez 1988). This day is a historical and emotional reminder for the Garifuna of their past and their position as ethnic minority in this country. All the symbolic and ritual parts of the celebration were invented by a committee as a reflection of the moment that a large group of Garifuna refugees in 1832 established themselves in Stann Creek. Garifuna Settlement Day is the outcome of this historical event. This kind of ‘authenticity’ is based on essentialist feelings and the revitalization of ethnic identity, which is reflected in the construction of ceremony and the celebration of a historical event. In the end this event was not created as a tourist attraction, but the tourist came anyway. Besides the fellow countryman and Garifuna people from abroad, a new audience of foreign tourists can be recognized.

The tourists are looking at what Goffman (1959) calls the frontstage, but in Goffman’s perspective there is also a backstage. The tourists who are spectators
of an ethnic oriented celebration, the frontstage, are maybe not aware that the other side, the backstage, of this celebration is deeply rooted in historical and politically complicated susceptibilities. Officially the National Garifuna Council organizes this day as a cultural and not as a political manifestation. The invitation for outsiders to celebrate this day together with the ‘indigenous’ Garifuna is open. The cultural status of this manifestation makes it less problematic to join the party. Settlement Day is not designed for mass tourism, like Chichen Itza the Maya site in Yucatan, Mexico and the fun-sun-beach mass tourism in Cancun in Quintana Roo also in nearby Mexico or to a lesser degree the beaches and diving opportunities in the village of San Pedro on Ambergris Caye in Belize. Settlement day is an event for the accidental tourist, the backpacker who is travelling through or the tourist who is spending his time in another place but is attracted to the scene because of its well-known eruption of festivities. More and more Dangriga is the place to be if you want to experience a manifestation of ethnic identity in the context of a national celebration day.

The government’s most important task is to work towards a nation-state mentality in this multi-ethnic society. At the same time, the government has to deal with the internal relationship between the different ethnic groups and ethnic minorities and their collective intrinsic sentiments about the past. From this perspective the government uses this celebration day not only in a two-level way, but even on a three-level way. First of all, the government recognizes this day as a national holiday, which makes it more cultural and less political. Garifuna Settlement Day is an ethnic manifestation but it is integrated in a politically neutral discourse about ‘indigenous national culture’. The second level is based on controlling the position of the Garifuna community in the country. The National Garifuna Council is an important instrument for the government. This organization is ‘spokesperson’ for the cultural needs of the ethnic group. As long as the National Garifuna Council puts itself in the position of the representative of the cultural heritage and the culture of the Garifuna community, the government will support them. The Garifuna community in Belize is politically strongly divided, which makes it easier for the government to control the situation. The Garifuna are culturally united and politically divided. This means that the government is focusing on the cultural aspects of this ethnic minority. It gives the government control over the ‘showcase’ elements of their local culture. Finally the government uses Garifuna Settlement Day as a tourist attraction. It is one of the billboards by which the country puts itself in the spotlight on the tourist market. By making it attractive to spend a holiday in Belize the government creates an interesting ‘source of income for the country’. On this level Garifuna Settlement Day is an attractive sales product. Economically Garifuna Settlement Day is an opportunity for the Garifuna to sell their ethnic merchandise. The government uses the ‘indigenous national culture’ as part of a representation of the nation-building process in which the tourist is not confronted with threatening situations but rather with the relaxed party atmosphere of this hidden country. ‘You better Belize it’.
This chapter finds its origin in Carel Roessingh’s research on the organization of identity in the ethnic community of the Belizean Garifuna. Carel Roessingh lived among the Garinagu of Belize for quite a long period of time (four times between 1990 and 1994). He was particularly interested in the question of how the Garinagu deal with their own culture within a multi-ethnic state and in the politically sensitive issues of ethnicity and ethnic groups. Since 1994 Carel annually returns to Belize and the focus of his research has been broadened to other ethnic groups (such as the Mennonite community) and tourism. He combined his knowledge of the history and culture of the Belizean Garifuna and of the government’s policies towards ethnicity and national integration, with material from students conducting research on tourism in several regions in Belize (from 2003 onwards), to present Garifuna Settlement Day from different points of view, that of the Garifuna, the Government and ... the tourist.

For this chapter, Carel Roessingh’s knowledge of Belize and the Garifuna has been combined with Karin Bras’ extensive knowledge of tourism theory. Karin Bras conducted research on tourist guides in Lombok, Indonesia between 1994 and 1996. She has published several articles and books on small tourism entrepreneurs and has been working with tourism students for many years.

Parts of this chapter have been previously published as Roessingh, C. and K. Bras (2003). Garifuna Settlement Day. Tourism Attraction, National Celebration Day, or Manifestation of Ethnic Identity? Tourism, Culture & Communication. 4: 163-172.
3 Differentiation in the Belizean Tourism Industry: Small-scale Tourism and Cruise-ships

Myrte Berendse and Carel Roessingh

Introduction

Although Belize has traditionally been focused on small-scale, sustainable tourism, since the beginning of the new millennium the country has been discovered by cruise ship lines. The impact of this on the daily practice of tourism entrepreneurs in Belize is not yet clear. Since the growth of cruise tourism one can see a social discussion between those who argue that the Belizean tourism industry should further expand this new form of (mass) tourism and those who argue that Belize should stay close to its well-developed and small-scale tourism product. This chapter focuses on the way tourism entrepreneurs and the government of Belize cope with the apparently conflicting processes they come across while developing their tourism destination. How does the rise of another form of tourism change the established tourism network? How is the marketing of Belize as ‘Mother Nature’s Best Kept Secret’ used to influence decisions regarding the development of new tourism products? Who are the ones in favour or against cruise tourism and what strategies do they use in their tourism practices. Both cruise tourists as well as overnight tourists visit the limestone caves of Belize. The case of cave tourism in Belize will be used to further develop ideas on practicing small-scale tourism and cruise tourism, with a focus on the interaction between the governments and tourism entrepreneurs in this development.

The Maya Caves in Belize

While Belize is better known for its barrier reef, islands, atolls, forests and Maya temples, just beneath the surface are some of the most spectacular and extensive cave systems in the world (Belize Tourism Industry Association 2003).

Actun Tunichil Muknal. Even though tourists find it difficult to pronounce this name, most visitors to the Cayo district will know what you are talking about. It is a cave. In 2003 only two companies were allowed to bring tourists to this place in the Tapir Mountain Nature Reserve. It is not easy to get there. Leaving the highway at Teakettle, you still have a half hour bumpy ride and a forty-five minute walk through the jungle ahead of you. After reaching the jungle camp and just before the entrance of the cave everybody is given helmets and headlights. The guide puts all the cameras and a huge supply of batteries in a dry bag and tells
you to be really careful and to follow his exact instructions. Upon entering the cave you have to cross a pool. All wet you continue wading through underground streams, climbing over gigantic rocks while trying to avoid touching the fragile formations. Sometimes the guide will stop to tell about the way stalactites and stalagmites are formed, to explain that it is bats living in the black holes in the ceiling or to point out unusual formations that might have been slightly polished by the Maya to obtain certain figures. That way you imagine seeing the mask of Chac Mul (the Maya rain god) or the head of a Jaguar. Most guides will also convince you to turn off your light for a while and be completely silent. Do you hear voices? The darkness is immense and it is the echo of the water running through the cave that makes you hear this sound that the Maya believed to be the voices of their ancestors. Eventually you reach a slope which not everybody is fond of climbing, but it is the entrance to a huge labyrinth of chambers full of ceramic pots, artifacts and skeletal remains. Before continuing, the guide asks you to take off your shoes. Visitors to the chamber are only allowed to go barefoot to minimize the risk of stepping on the artifacts. Again the guide stresses the importance of watching your steps, of following his trail and above all not to touch anything. He leads you through the chamber, pointing out the different vessels, some of them intentionally broken by the Maya, others still in perfect shape. The tour ends in the sacrificial chamber where the remains of a young woman are calcified on the floor. Actun Tunichil Muknal ... Cave of the Crystal Sepulchre. Maybe tourists will easily forget the Mayan name for it, but not the sight.

Actun Tunichil Muknal is one of the caving tours offered to tourists visiting Belize. Caving is booming business in Belize. Especially in the Cayo district, a cave tour will be on most of the visitors’ itinerary. Barton Creek Cave, Che Chem Ha, Actun Tunichil Muknal, Rio Frio Cave, St. Herman’s Cave, Jaguar Paw and the Caves Branch River System are all increasingly popular underground spots for the tourists. Some of these caves are dry caves, others are wet caves where you either have to swim, canoe or tube. Many caves in Belize contain pottery and other relics which were used by the Maya to perform their ceremonies. Some guides start their tours with: “Let’s go to Xibalba”, as Xibalba means underworld in Maya and the cave was seen as the entrance. Belize has a high concentration of archaeologically significant caves and this is an increasingly popular tourist attraction in addition to the Maya remains found on the surface (Veni 1996: 67). Most Belizeans say that it is not just the formation of the limestone caves that make caving in Belize special. Caving in Belize is spectacular, because it might be one of the only countries offering tours to places where you can see Maya artifacts exactly where they have been discovered:

If you were to think of that cave without having any of the skeletal remains or any of the artifacts, you would basically be doing just a plain cave, a tour of just the formations, but with the artifacts exactly the way they were found, and skeletal remains and stone tools, you are able to look at these things and know that the Mayan people had a lot going on in there. There
is a lot more to say about the place with the artifacts there then without (Tour operator going to Actun Tunichil Muknal).

Though highly popular, cave tourism is a sensitive subject as well. This has to do with both local feelings towards caves and the matter of destroying the caves easily. For the Maya a cave is still a sacred place. Some guides explicitly tell you that the Maya do not like people going into the cave because you should respect the cave and the ancestors. Some even doubt whether it would be possible to enter similar places in Guatemala or Chiapas because “the indigenous people would fight for their land”. For others respect is more connected towards seeing caves as dangerous places where you can become badly injured, get lost or caught in an unexpected flooding. Most guides are proud of their heritage. When taking tourists into the cave, they are often told to show respect by not touching the artifacts or the formations:

It doesn't matter if you are Spanish, Maya or Creole. It's the Belize heritage. My heritage. If people put their steps in that cave, I tell them to be careful. People pay to get the experience, but they don't pay to be able to destroy it (Tour guide).

The increasing number of tourists interested in caving tours raises concerns about the fragile nature of cave sites. In 2003 action had just been undertaken by the Department of Archaeology to control the number of people going into Actun Tunichil Muknal and it is most likely that in the near future a rope, separating the tourists from places where they can damage the remains, will protect the artifacts. Some people see this as a loss of authenticity or as a violation of the cave. On the contrary, other people admit that using ropes and designing pathways is a necessity to protect the condition of the cave. As one of the tour guides said: “It may not look natural in the cave, but you have to decide whether you want something to look natural or whether you want to protect it.” In the tourism literature authenticity is seen as the pristine, the primitive and the natural, that which is as yet untouched by modernity (Cohen 1988: 374). This is exactly what some tour operators make this cave look like when promoting the tour: “Travel back in time and follow pathways used by the Maya and discover lost worlds that have been hidden deep within the jungle for centuries” (Belize Explorer 2003). A cave where the artifacts are hidden behind a rope does not seem that undiscovered or untouched any more. On the other hand, to control the impact of tourism in the cave is just keeping the cave from being destroyed. That way it is preventing it from losing its pristine aspect as well.

Since the growth of tourism more and more people start raising questions about the way to protect the caves. It is heavily debated how much tourists this spelunker's paradise can handle. Some people ask for strict regulations by limiting the number of people going into the caves and by properly training guides to protect both the cave and the well being of the visitors. Others do not
see any harm in sending massive groups to a cave like Jaguar Paw as “it is a very roomy cave that can hold a lot of people and there is no need to worry about people stepping on artifacts as they are simply tubing.” These opposing opinions about preservation of the country and the image of Belize as an unspoiled tourism destination are getting stronger since the increasing popularity of Belize as a cruise destination.

The Cruise-Ships are Coming
Over the years the sea view from Belize City has changed. Walking on the seafront you might see the silhouette of huge ships on the horizon. That means it is cruise ship day. Small boat tenders continually come and go, bridging the distance between the ship and the tourism village where their passengers disembark. The Fort George Tourism Village is situated at the mouth of the Belize River. If you head north across the famous Swing Bridge and follow North Front Street, you will walk straight into it. At your right hand you see the booths of local vendors selling t-shirts, jewelry, wood carving and other souvenirs. In between these booths some Garifuna people are dancing.

The Garifuna are people who belong to an ethnic group of mixed indigenous Caribbean and African descent which makes up eleven percent of the country’s population (Roessingh 2001). They are proud of their ethnic background and they also use this as an opportunity to benefit economically (see also Roessingh and Bras, chapter 2). The tourists at the tourism village occasionally stop to look at the dancing scene. The Garifuna men are playing the drums. A small kid sits in a chair and moves on the rhythm of the music, while the women try to get the attention of tourists by shaking their hips. A sign in front of them says ‘take picture 2 dollar’. When cruise ship passengers pass by everybody tries to get their attention. “Taxi sweetie, or you go back to the ship already?” After the last booth the road is blocked. It is not really clear who are to stay out of the area behind. Cruise ship passengers certainly not. Neither are the hair braiders. “Want your hair braided beautiful, you got the perfect hair for it”, sometimes followed by “You don’t wanna give me job?”, when the tourist refuses.

The entrance of the tourism village is surrounded by a huge iron gate. Taxi drivers are hanging around with plastic maps and brochures. They offer their service to the tourists who are walking in and out: “Where you wanna go today ... I bring you to Lamanai, Altun Ha, Belize Zoo ...”. The village is made up of three terminals and courtyards. You enter the buildings by going through the shuttered doors. The taxi drivers and hair braiders stay behind. Huge waiting areas are surrounded by small gift shops, restaurants and bars. The Belize Tourism Board has an information desk in the main terminal. The colorful magazines ‘Belize’s Watersports’ and ‘Inland Adventure’ are spread on the counter. Also available is a brochure on Belize City by one of the cruise lines, which advises their passengers to shop only in recommended stores for ‘shopping protection and peace of mind’. Looking around you see people waiting on the chairs, sleeping, talking, looking at other people or at the things that they have just bought. Some people walk around with t-shirts with the print ‘Hardrock café Belize’. People are walking
in and out of the village. A sign tells you ‘how to get around in tourism village’. And directs you to the different shopping areas. A band is playing country music. Besides looking at more t-shirts and jewellery, a lot of people walk in and out of a drugstore. ‘Psoriasis cream, arthritis cream (not available in US) … medications (cheap cheap) and Viagra’ it says on the front door. At the waterfront of the village is the docking area for the water taxis that bring tourists back to their ship. People are waiting in lines to get on the boats. It is 12.30. This afternoon their ship will leave for another Caribbean destination. What have they done this morning in Belize? The ‘Cruise Ship Taxi Association’ holds office inside the tourism village. Big signs show the different trips: ‘Altun Ha, Belize Zoo … Cave tubing at Jaguar Paw.’ Upon leaving the village you see a sign of NICH (the National Institute of Culture and History) saying that ‘Cruise ship visitors are required to purchase tickets for all archaeological parks and sites at this location’. Traffic signs tell you where to go for the ‘craft market, hair braiding, handicrafts or entertainment.’ Leaving the site one could hear the same questions again: “What are you doing sweetie?” followed by “where you going today … taxi?”

The tourism village opened its doors at the end of 2001 to cater for the increasing number of cruise passengers. Before the opening of the tourism village, cruise ships were using the pier of one of the hotels, the only area that was deep enough for the tender boats to dock. Half a year after the opening of the Tourism Village the ruling government-related newspaper comments: “Since we now have the Tourism Village and thanks to the dredging of the harbour by the government, the area is more suitable and Belize now has multiple cruise lines coming into the country” (Belize Times 2002c). Numbers certainly testify this growth. Cruise passenger arrivals to the Caribbean grew by an estimated 10% in 2002 as reported by the Caribbean Tourism Organization (CTO 2003). With a growth of 564.4% in cruise visitor arrivals in the same year (48,116 in 2001 and 319,690 in 2002), Belize is the fastest growing cruise tourism destination in the region (Belize Tourism Board 2003b). The number of cruise visitors already exceeds the number of traditional overnight tourist. Johnson mentions that this is not unique to Belize, as “many established Caribbean destinations receive more cruises than stopover tourists” (Johnson 2002: 262). However this new development appears to be slightly underestimated in Belize.

A few years earlier, the Ten Year National Development Plan mentions the dramatic decline in cruise ship visitation in 1996 when there were only 152 cruise visitors. At the same time it points to the growth projections in the rest of the Caribbean: “it is likely that there would need to be significant upgrading of cruise ship infrastructure for Belize to compete with the many countries that are aggressively pursuing this market” (Blackstone Corporation 1998: 7-5). Although it draws attention to the ongoing discussion on developing a waterfront tourism zone in Belize City and revitalizing Belize City to make it a more welcoming tourist gateway, the plan does not give any guidelines for the growth and development of the cruise ship industry.

With the consistent growth in cruise tourism and future projections in mind, the first Cruise Ship Policy comes into existence in 1999-2000. In this Cruise
Ship Policy conditions are formulated that aim at optimizing the development of the cruise industry while securing that the growth is environmentally and socio-culturally sustainable (Belize Tourism Board 1999: 3). However, it also mentions mixed feelings by both the public and private sectors of the tourism industry towards cruise tourism as an intrusive and incompatible sub-sector. In the view of the government, cruise tourism and the traditional overnight (eco-cultural) tourism are complementary (Belize Tourism Board 1999: 2). Still the cruise sector gets significant resistance from different parts of the country. The government is aware of this tension and continually stresses its commitment to its unique tourism product. As the Minister of Tourism, Mark Espat said in a speech at the Tourism Industry Presentation in April 2003:

Let us at the start of this term renew our commitment to pursuing the eco/cultural/adventure tourism that has delivered this balanced and genuine development to our country and its people. The glitter of mass casino and mass cruise tourism is but a ruse that will fall far short of its apparent shine.

The question remains as to how the government and tourism entrepreneurs will deal with these different types of tourism. Next to the traditional overnight tourist most of the local entrepreneurs have to consider how to deal with an increasing number of visitors that will only be in Belize for a few hours. A fragmented picture arises between people who welcome cruise tourism and the ones that are against the current developments. The discussion on how the Belizean tourism industry should develop not only reflects arguments pro and contra mass tourism, but also the business opportunities for both individual entrepreneurs and government actors. This will be analyzed by first focusing on the caves again.

Opposing Views: Cave Tourism and Entrepreneurs’ Strategies
Caving is increasingly popular as a tourist attraction in Belize. Not only the traditional overnight tourists have caving on their itinerary. The growing stream of cruise passengers are also interested in Belize’s underground activities. Jaguar Paw is probably one of the best-known places for cave tubing expeditions amongst cruise tourists. Most cruise passengers will go to Jaguar Paw for a two-hour cave tubing trip. They are equipped with a tube and flashlights and accompanied by a guide they are dropped off up stream to float through the caves and the rain forest. The cave tube expeditions at Jaguar Paw and the caving trip to Actun Tunichil Muknal as described before are two different experiences, but they are examples of the different types of tourism in the country. The distinction first of all consists of different numbers. On ‘cruise ship days’ up to 40 buses filled with tubers can arrive at Jaguar Paw. The various actors in the tourism industry in Belize have different ideas on the actual numbers of cruise passengers visiting the caves: “At Jaguar Paw they take up to three, four hundred people at a time” or “Sometimes you have three, four thousand cave tubers!” Actun Tunichil Muknal on the contrary receives less people (1,941 visitors in 2003, according to the Belize
Tourism Board). The owner of one of the tour operators licensed to take tourists into ATM explains: “We have a maximum of about thirty people and we have several guides (...) I decided on that and I decided that that is as far as I want to go”.

But the increase of cruise passenger arrivals and hence the idea of different ‘types of tourism’ is more than a contrast between ‘mass’ tourism and ‘small-scale’ tourism. Most tour operators differentiate between cruise tourists and overnight tourists in terms of a different type of tourists: “The kind of people that are on cruise ships are not the kind of people that are fit for Tunichil” (Tour operator). Where the cruise ship passenger might be satisfied with the experience of tubing in bigger groups, the overnight tourist is supposed to look for places that are still relatively undisturbed. Some tourists might even distinguish between caves with and without ropes. McCannell (1976) argues that modern tourists are motivated by a search for authenticity. But where McCannell only distinguishes between the authentic and the inauthentic, others prefer to look at authenticity as a social construction. Cohen (1988: 376) for example points to the fact that tourists “appear to seek authenticity in varying degrees of intensity”. A cave trip to Actun Tunichil Muknal might be less crowded and “more authentic” in the eyes of some visitors, but for other tourists tubing at Jaguar Paw is the ultimate adventure or “authentic” tour. Authenticity then depends on the point of reference. Besides that, authenticity is just one explanatory reason for travel. Motivations for traveling can also be pleasure, sampling the local cuisine or interaction with the local people (Morgan and Pritchard 1998: 10). Cruise tourists might have different reasons for visiting the caves. The caves that are used for cruise tourism are closer to the dock and easily accessible by bus, the tour takes less time and is not that strenuous. The differentiation then is not solely a matter of motivation, whether this is a quest for authenticity or not, but also of (amongst others) accessibility, the physical condition of the tourists and the carrying capacity of the cave.

Some tour operators and resort owners refuse to deal with cruise ship passengers because they do not want to see their business turn into “just another high-impact destructive tourism operation”, as one resort owner mentioned. Various operators use strategies to continue doing business according to their own philosophy. This for example leads to ranking the caves in order of ‘high adventure in wild and unspoiled caves’ to the more group oriented cave tubing in a place like Jaguar Paw. Others try to minimize the assumed destruction of the caves by simply saying: “They can screw up that cave as long as they stay out of the other caves” (tour operator). People start to rank the caves, leaving some to cruise passengers while moving their own tours somewhere else.

I will not send my guests to that destination, because I can’t run the risk of them going there and floating inside the cave with seven hundred cruise ship passengers. And we know a lot of other caves that the cruise ship people would never go to. It just means that we would become more unique in our product (Resort owner).
I like to be out there with only my guests, I don't like to be seeing other tourists with other tour guides doing the same thing that I’m doing, in the same area when I’m there. I want them to feel that the tour is special, that they are the only ones there. If I can't offer that kind of experience any more at that cave, it’s time for me to move on again (Tour guide).

Another common-heard phrase is to avoid going to these places on ‘cruise ship day’, because the cruise ships (still) only arrive on certain days of the week. When asked why they fear cruise tourism, opponents, those who do not work or meet with cruise passengers, refer to the “unspoiled” or “special character” of Belize and the “uniqueness” of the tours. The image of Belize therefore takes a central role in the discussion on tourism development and the growing importance of cruise tourism in Belize.

**Image Building and Tourism Development**

As mentioned before, the growing number of people visiting the caves in Belize raises questions about the way to protect the caves and the image of Belize as a unique, undiscovered tourism destination. When asking people from both public and private sector if the slogan ‘Mother Nature’s Best Kept Secret’ still fits Belize as a tourism destination, answers range considerably. An informant’s comment on this slogan was that “a secret can only be a secret once”, implying that at a certain point in time the secret will just be gone. Others relate it to the number of tourists that are arriving (“when being inundated with two thousand other tourists, what is the secret being kept?”), the level of awareness (“still a lot of people know very little about our country”) or the state of the industry (“Belize is a destination that is up and coming”). An informant at the Belize Tourism Board is very clear: “I don’t even want to begin to think that we have reached the edge”.

Several people point to the expectations that the current slogan brings along. Images in tourism marketing are used to create a perception that the tourism experience will satisfy the tourist’s needs (Morgan and Pritchard 1998). Critics in Belize point to the problem of the image not living up to the reality. As a resort owner remarked: “The slogan makes a promise. ‘Mother Nature’s best kept secret’ sounds like an oatmeal cookie to me, or you know ... something sweet. So once you are thinking of that it makes hard to live up to.” Most people seem to agree that the current image of Belize is a desirable one and that efforts should be undertaken to maintain it. However, the ideas on the proper way to do this vary. This has to do with the fact that people experience both the image and the reality in different ways. Unspoiled, hidden and secret can be looked upon literally: as soon as too many people know about it, then it is not a secret or hidden any more. Or in other words, the presence of tourism spoils the product. In a way this agrees with the argument by Van den Berghe (1994) and MacCannell (1976) that such forms of tourism searching for the ‘undiscovered’ or the ‘unspoiled’ are ‘self-destroying’. It is generally assumed that the traditional overnight tourist is looking for something ‘more hidden’ than the cruise passenger. So when talking about destroying or losing its image as a pristine and undiscovered destination
most people are talking about the assumed overnight tourists’ image, which is destroyed by the presence of cruise tourism in the country. Problems mainly arise as soon as these ‘different’ tourists participate in the same activities, when they visit the same tourist attraction. This is also a matter of government planning. Besides that, the discussion on future developments and its related image does not only reflect the ideas of what tourists are looking for, but also the interests of the local stakeholders.

Tourism Entrepreneurs and the Government: a Search for Economic Opportunities

The arena of the Belizean tourism industry consists of different stakeholders. As mentioned above, this chapter focuses on two of them in particular: tourism entrepreneurs and the government. Dahles defines an entrepreneur as “a person who builds and manages an enterprise for the pursuit of profit in the course of which she/he innovates and takes risks, as the outcome of an innovation is usually not certain” (1999: 3). The tourism entrepreneurs in this chapter include tour operators, hair braiders, owners of resorts and independent tour guides. The government is responsible for policy development, decision-making and it sets the stage and the legislation for tourism in the country. Both stakeholders, tourism entrepreneurs and the government, see tourism as a source of income. Most entrepreneurs however are only active on a local level, whereas the government also acts on a national level. Keune and Dahles argue that a good government not only has to be active “in developing sound conditions for the expansion of tourism sales potential, but also in embedding that sector in conditions and interests that offer guarantees for sustainable development in the broadest sense of the word” (2002: 158). This means that the government regulates the space in which the entrepreneur is able to act.

Volker and Sorée (2002: 101-114) show with their case study of competing entrepreneurs in a small town in western Belize that government interference can lead to quarrels on the local level. The arrival of cruise tourism changes the tourism arena in Belize and it is the task of the government to monitor and guide these changes. Sometimes this leads to open clashes such as in November 2002 for instance, when the hair braiders and vendors in front of the tourism village in Belize City were relocated against their will (Amandala 2002). Though encounters like this do not represent the every day practices, the growth of cruise tourism and the way the government guides (or according to some does not guide) this development, does result in a heavy discussion.

Difference has to be made between the people that embrace cruise tourism as a new opportunity to gain income and the ones that do not benefit economically or even feel threatened by it. Opposition to cruise tourism is strongest in the Cayo district, which has a tradition in eco-cultural tourism and is mainly focused on overnight tourists. Most of the opponents claim that cruise tourism does not bring much profit to the country. They compare the low expenditures of cruise ship passengers with the money that is spent by the more elite overnight-tourist.
The government doesn't have full appreciation for this type of tourism. What we in Cayo have. While it is beneficial (...) I would like to see a fair study. It would probably prove that the kind of tourism we are practicing here, is good. Especially here. The world is looking at us. We don't want to become a second Jamaica or the Bahamas (...) We have three employees for one guest. Quite some employees for the number of guests (Manager at resort).

Still most tour operators and lodge owners do not totally disagree with the arrival of cruise ships, but with the way this development has been regulated by the government.

A lot of people think that because I’m involved in heavy eco-tourism, adventure travel that I would be against cruise ships. No, I’m not. I’m not against anything, if it’s done right and if the way it’s done makes sense (Resort owner).

These entrepreneurs lobby with the government for guidelines on the development of cruise tourism. For example both the ‘cruise ship task force’ and the Cayo Belize Tourism Industry Association have sent letters to the Minister of Tourism and the Belize Tourism Board urging for better guidelines. But even within the Belize Tourism Industry Association it is recognized that members have different (economical) interests:

There are members on our national basis, especially and even on the local basis, who are benefiting by cruise ship tourism. The Belize Tourism Industry Association (BTIA) umbrella. So it covers a lot of businesses (Manager of Resort at Meeting Cayo Belize Industry Association 2003).

Just like the different tourism entrepreneurs, the government of Belize looks at tourism as an important catalyst for economic growth. This is communicated with slogans like “tourism means business” (Belize Tourism Board 2003c) and “Tourism is our future, and it is for all of us!” (Belize Tourism Board 2003d). In many countries all over the world governments and industries justify the development of tourism in terms of the revenues and employment opportunities from the tourism sector (Dahles 2001: 217). And in the case of Belize this is the same. Besides looking at cruise ship tourism as a diversification of the tourism industry, it is also argued that some of these passengers will return to Belize as overnight tourists. In this view both eco-tourism and cruise tourism can go hand in hand, providing the country with a source of income. The government defies the arguments made by the opponents of cruise tourism:

It’s interesting to see the strong opposition in Cayo. It has a reason. First of all, Cayo is mainly and traditionally focused on overnight tourists (eco-lodges). Cruise ship tourists just come in for a day. The people in Cayo are
not benefiting as much as they think they should. Cruise ship tourists just go, get there and go back. One person even said ‘we don't want cruise ships at all’. But people in Belize City welcomed it more. Tour operators, taxi drivers, gift shop owners, hair braiders. These businesses have been put together and try to benefit as much as they can. San Ignacio doesn't benefit. These tourists board a bus, they come with a tour guide and go back to Belize City. San Ignacio has always been opposed to cruise ship tourism (Informant Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Economic Development).

It's a narrow view that cruise ships don't benefit the country. The country is large enough. The western part of the country may be the eco-cultural heart. But for Belize City it's a different story. Cruise ships provided the city with many jobs and income opportunities. Besides that, it’s a naïve view that cruise ships will go away. The cruise ship industry is growing every single day. We will not survive without looking into it. We can't be exclusionary. Though the way it's growing now is not sustainable. The government has to make some adjustments (Informant Belize Tourism Board).

In 2003 a consultation process with the different stakeholders was started to revise the Cruise Ship Policy. At the same time the benefits of cruise ship tourism to local entrepreneurs were regularly being stressed in the earlier mentioned government-related newspaper. Headlines such as “Cruise tourism soars to new heights” (Belize Times 2002c) and “Braiding = big bucks” (Belize Times 2003) feature the job and revenue opportunities for Belizeans as a result of cruise tourism. On the other hand, the opposition-related newspaper the Guardian continually attacks the government's tourism policy as being foolish and dishonest, claiming that they sell-out the country to “private interest, party interest, special interest, foreign interest - every interest other than the national interest” (Guardian 2003). Also the more opposition oriented Reporter once questioned the supposedly growth in income opportunities by saying: “there seems to be an attempt by big money interests to control the cruise ship industry at the expense of the small artisans and vendors and possibly also at the expense of the small tour operators” (Reporter 2003).

A fragmented picture seems to arise not only at the micro level of tourism entrepreneurs, but also at the macro level of the government and the related political parties. One can wonder what tourism means on the political agenda. As Richter states: “There is often a political agenda – wise or foolish, benign or selfish, compatible or incompatible – underlying the explicit tourism program” (1989: 19). Cheong and Miller comment that “tourism policy is often entangled with, or subordinate to, other policies, which may well hinder policy intervention in development and weaken the representation of the stakeholders in such places” (2000: 373). This is the case in Belize as well. The earlier mentioned entrepreneurs that complained of a lack of structuring by the government in the development of cruise tourism often praised the current Belize Tourism Board
and the Ministry of Tourism. But they carefully wondered about the understanding of tourism in the broader arena of the government. Others are afraid that “this industry [the cruise sector] has power that goes beyond the ministry [of Tourism] and the BTIA” (resort owner). At the end of the earlier-cited speech at the Annual Tourism Industry Presentation in 2003, Mark Espat, the Minister of Tourism, even touches upon this matter himself by saying:

The BTB is but a spoke in a giant wheel of tourism, willing to play whatever role benefits our industry. In most instances this role is as advocate, a supporter, a promoter rather than leader. Our sister Ministries of Government, City Councils, Town Boards and the Village Councils will find a willing partner in our BTB and will find themselves in the leadership role if they too are serious about tourism (April 2003).

But a lot of actors think that these other ‘sisters’ (Ministries for example) are not serious about tourism:

The rest of the government, including the Minister of Finance, the Prima Minister and the other Ministries, although they can see that they are making finance from tourism, they really don’t understand how it works. And they tend to look at it as a cash cow for increasing taxation. They don’t realize how vulnerable tourism is, how fickle (Resort owner).

Power arrangements govern the interaction between the different actors. And the different stakeholders often do not join the process as equal partners. It is good to realize that this is not only the case between private actors in the tourism sector, but also within the government itself. The Ministry of Tourism and the Belize Tourism Board are seen as responsive to the needs of the industry, but as weak actors in the broader political arena. Obviously there are different levels involved in the formation and the development of Belize’s tourism policy. All these actors with various points of views have one thing in common. They all try to benefit economically from tourism.

Conclusion
This chapter focused on how the government and tourism entrepreneurs cope with the apparently conflicting processes in the development of tourism in Belize and how this is reflected in their daily practices. The growth of cruise tourism has changed the traditional focus of the tourism industry on small-scale overnight tourism, towards a more complex interaction between different stakeholders. On the surface it seems that the discussion on the new development on cruise tourism is only a matter of image. This discussion is nourished by questions on the tenability of the slogan ‘Mother Nature’s Best Kept Secret’, the assumed quest for authenticity by tourists, the idea the cruise ships will destroy the supposed unspoiled character of the country and that cruise tourism in itself is unsustainable and not in line with the current focus and image of Belize as a
country in which responsible tourism has a high priority. However, when looking closer at the different actors in this discussion, it is not just a matter of image building and marketing, but rather a discussion in which economic opportunities play a central role. First of all, the government and tourism entrepreneurs cannot be analyzed as single actors. Differentiation arises not only between government and tourism entrepreneurs, but also inside the government between different departments and in the private sector between well-established and newly starting tourism entrepreneurs. In this interplay between the different stakeholders economic interest plays a vital role and the actors have different opportunities to influence the developments depending on their power and position in the tourism arena.

The data presented in this chapter are the result of ethnographic research undertaken by Myrte Berendse in Belize between January and June 2003. During the fieldwork she lived in the Cayo district, in the town of San Ignacio, the main tourism centre on the mainland and the starting point of many excursions. Myrte was interested in how the government of Belize and tourism entrepreneurs tried to influence the development and representation of Belize as a tourism destination, thereby focusing on the concepts of image building, authenticity and responsible tourism. This inevitably led her to the issue of cruise tourism as well. Formal and informal, low-keyed conversations were held with tour guides, tour operators, lodge owners, government representatives and people working in tourism education and private or government related tourism projects. She participated in guided tours to caves, the jungle and the river, was ‘hanging out’ downtown where most of the tour guides would gather before and after their tours. She visited archaeological sites with people from the Tourism Development Program and attended the monthly meetings of the Cayo branch of the Belize Tourism Industry Association and the Cayo Tour Guide Association. Additionally, secondary data like statistics, case studies, consultancy reports, and government action plans and policies were obtained from the national archives, government agencies and through the weekly newspapers.

Parts of this chapter have been previously published as: Roessingh, C. and M. Berendse (2005). Combining sustainable tourism and cruise ships in Belize. Journal of Hospitality and Tourism, 3 (1): 55-75.
PART II

The Dominican Republic
4 The Tourism Industry of the Dominican Republic – An Introduction

Hanneke Duijnhoven

Introduction
‘Come to the land Columbus loved best’. With this slogan the Dominican government tried to attract tourists to the island in the 1980s. Pictures of clear-blue water, white beaches, tropical landscapes with palm trees and colourful people, luxury hotels, coconuts, lively merengue music and cocktails; all ingredients of the ultimate dream vacation in paradise. According to many, this image fits perfectly with a tourism destination in the Caribbean, like the Dominican Republic. The Dominican Republic is currently one of the largest and best-known holiday destinations in the region. Statistical figures from the Caribbean Tourism Organization (CTO) show that the Dominican Republic has the highest number of stopover tourists, before Cancún (Mexico), Cuba, The Bahamas, Jamaica, and Puerto Rico (CTO 2005). The Dominican tourism industry is mainly based on the enclave model. Most accommodations are large resorts, based on an all-inclusive structure. “The all-inclusive holiday, as a generic concept, involves the visitor paying for a package, which includes most or all ingredients of the holiday such as transfers, food and beverages, use of facilities on the complex, tips and taxes” (Lumsdon and Swift 2001: 88). Furthermore a segment of the tourism sector, although very small, is dedicated to small-scale tourism. Unlike other Caribbean tourism destinations, the cruise ship industry is rather insignificant in the Dominican Republic. To illustrate: in 2004 there were only 361,537 cruise passenger visits, which amounts to less than 10% of the total number of visitors (CTO 2005).

In this chapter an overview of the history of the Dominican tourism industry will be provided, along with other important aspects of the history of the Dominican Republic. This overview aims at offering the necessary contextual information to facilitate the reading of the next two chapters that will discuss two specific case studies from the Dominican Republic. The first case focuses on the concept of all-inclusive tourism and the implications of the domination of this concept in the Dominican tourism industry. The second case approaches this subject from the point of view of the local community, offering an insight into the strategies of local entrepreneurs to compete with the large international (all-inclusive) resorts. Both these cases are based upon qualitative field-research in the Puerto Plata region, on the North coast of the country. Together with Punta Cana (east coast) this is the most important tourist area of the Dominican Republic. Therefore this region will receive special attention in the historical overview.
THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC
The Dominican Republic shares with Haiti the island of Hispaniola, the second largest island in the Caribbean. Haiti forms the western part of the island (one third of the land) and the eastern two-thirds of the island is occupied by the Dominican Republic. The Dominican Republic has a surface of 48,730 sq. km., 48,380 sq. km. of which is covered by land and 350 sq. km. by water (CIA factbook 2005b). At the north the island borders with the Atlantic Ocean and the Caribbean Sea is at the south.

The Dominican countryside is much diversified, from extensive beaches to fertile valleys and from desert areas to mountain chains. Both the highest point in the Caribbean (Pico Duarte, with 3,175 meters) and the lowest point (Lake Enriquillo, 144 meters below sea level) can be found in the Dominican Republic (Pellerano and Herrera 2003: 9). The Dominican Republic currently has a population of 8,950,034 inhabitants (est. July 2005, CIA factbook 2005b). The majority of the Dominicans are poor and 25% even live under the poverty border (CIA factbook 2005b).

TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC
The Dominican Republic started relatively late with the development of its tourism industry compared to other countries in the Caribbean region. This can principally be attributed to the political instability of the country during the dictatorship of Trujillo between 1930 and 1961. It was not until 1967 that the Dominican government started to take an interest in the tourism industry as a means of development for the country. As in many other ‘Less Developed Countries’ (LDCs) the Dominican government saw tourism as a promising industry that could provide their population with employment and generate the necessary financial resources to improve their economic position (Freitag 1994: 538). This development could be witnessed in many other Latin American (and especially Caribbean) countries. After the big economic crisis in the 1930s it became painfully clear that much of the economic growth generated in the region in the 19th and early 20th century was not sustainable. The majority of Latin American countries found themselves in a deep economic crisis that lasted after most industrial countries began to climb up again. It seemed as if the economic growth had been nothing more than a bubble, ready to burst. To overcome this crisis, Latin American governments tried to attract foreign investments to be able to diversify their economy (Keune and Vugts 2002: 32). One of the industries that emerged due to this planned diversification was the tourism industry. There are few regions in the world where governments were so determined to promote and stimulate the growth of this industry (Freitag 1994: 538). The Dominican Republic was no exception to this tendency although, as mentioned before, they started relatively late with the development of this industry.

In 1967 the Dominican government created a special Ministry of Tourism and there was a strong support for both public and private investments in the tourism industry. This support led to the introduction of a special law in 1971, the ‘Tourist Incentive Law’, that offered tax breaks and other benefits for private investors.
The goal of the development of this new industry was to improve the economic situation in the country and to raise the living standard of its poor population. The Dominican Republic is a third world country, whose main industry has long been the cultivation of sugarcane, tobacco plantations, coffee beans, and fruits. The country’s economy depended on the export of its agricultural products (García Bernal 1991: 579). The introduction of an industry such as tourism created new possibilities for growth and development. But at the same time concessions had to be made. The Dominican government had to make a far-reaching decision to use land and financial means to develop this new industry at the expense of other sectors in the economy (Freitag 1994: 541). Both the Dominican government and the entrepreneurs saw the tourism industry as an opportunity to expand their underdeveloped economy. Thus, the government actively stimulated the expansion of the sector by providing all kinds of economic and tax benefits to attract (private) investments (Freitag 1994: 540). Many local entrepreneurs, in turn, shifted from their previous economic activities to the tourism industry, because the alternatives were scarce.

Together with the Central Bank, the government created an organization called INFRATUR (El Desarrollo de la Infraestructura Turística) to support and finance the development of the necessary infrastructure in the country’s designated tourist zones (Wiarda and Kryzanek 1992: 90). The first region to receive wide attention from the government through this organization was the Puerto Plata zone (the 60-kilometer stretch of northern coastal land from Maimón to Cabarete). Going back in the history of this region, the first tourist activities took place as early as the 1940s. Many Cuban and Spanish cruise ships would make a stopover in the port of Puerto Plata. It was not until the 1970s however that the stops of the first transatlantic cruise ship, the Boheme - every Monday - turned Puerto Plata into a real tourism destination (Camarena 2003: 402). The Boheme would arrive early in the morning to refuel and would stay in the port all day. The passengers would disembark and walk around in the port area of the city. This created a lively business of souvenir-salesmen, restaurants and other small tourism businesses although the industry still retained a very small portion of the region’s economy (Dwyer and Forsyth 1998). By the 1980s there were six transatlantic cruise lines that used the Puerto Plata port as a regular stopover.

In order to attract foreign investors for the northern coastal tourist zone (the Puerto Plata zone), the Dominican government invested over $76 million between 1974 and 1982, most of this money borrowed from international credit agencies (Freitag 1994: 541). The construction of the international airport Gregorio Luperón in 1979/1980 was one of the most important actions the government took to develop the Puerto Plata region because this made the transport of tourists in and out of the area much easier (Castaños Morales 2002: 98-99).

During that time, another tourist zone was starting to lose attention. The Boca Chica zone (on the south coast, near the country’s capital Santo Domingo) had been a popular destination for domestic weekend-escapes since the 1930s. In the 1960s, a few large hotels were built and attracted guests from the international jet set. When in the early 1970s the government started with the development
of other tourist zones, particularly the Puerto Plata zone, Boca Chica lost its major attraction and it was not until the 1990s that the area regained its name in international tourism with the construction of several new hotels (Doggett and Connolly 2002: 141). Another tourist zone in the southeast is La Romana. In the mid-1970s, La Romana was the first destination in the Dominican Republic to have a foreign investor build a resort, the Casa de Campo (Doggett and Connolly 2002: 162). In the 1970s and early 1980s, the government focused on these and three other zones with their development plans for the tourism industry. The other zones were the Samaná zone (the peninsula in the north-east), the Jarabacoa zone (in the central highlands) and the Barahona zone (in the southwest). In the 1970s and early 1980s, the government focused on these zones with their development plans for the tourism industry.

Initially local investors dominated the tourism industry and it was not until the 1980s that foreign investors started to show a wider interest in the Dominican tourism industry. Even as late as 1987, it was estimated that only 21% of the hotel rooms in the Dominican Republic were foreign owned (Freitag 1994: 540). Today there is still a high level of locally owned tourism enterprises, although the major resorts generally belong to an international chain.

The tourism development in the Dominican Republic has always been primarily based on the inclusive resort development model, which means that special resort areas were created with all the necessary ingredients to attract tourists. From the beginning of the tourism development in the 1970s, many resorts offered package holidays that included flight, transfer, accommodation and most of the meals (Vial et al. 2002). Because most developing countries, like the Dominican Republic, lack the necessary infrastructure to be able to attract large number of tourists, the choice of an enclave resort-developing model is considered to be the best option. The costs of developing the infrastructure and services in a few enclosed areas are much lower than developing the entire country in a random way (Freitag 1994: 541).

During the 1980s and early 1990s, the tourism industry bloomed in the Puerto Plata region. The number of international arrivals grew steadily each year; the area was full of small businesses like restaurants and shops, and the infrastructure improved significantly. By this time, the vast majority of local residents were working in the tourism industry, either directly or indirectly. It seemed as if the development of this new industry was a great success. However, by the late 1990s the situation was quite different. The port of Puerto Plata had deteriorated considerably and it was no longer possible to harbour large cruise ships. This in contrast to other cruise ship destinations where this type of tourism is increasing at a fast rate (Wood 2000). Plans to renovate the port are being developed but it seems that due to bureaucratic and financial difficulties these plans will likely not be carried out any time soon. The disappearance of the cruise ship industry meant a major loss of clientele for the small businesses in Puerto Plata.

By the late 1980s, the tourism industry had become an important source of income for the Dominican Republic and it was at that time that a private investor decided to develop the unpopulated area on the east coast into a luxury resort
area. In the next decade this area (the Punta Cana/Bávaro zone) rapidly became the number one tourism destination of the Dominican Republic with its luxury hotels and white sandy beaches. What was different about this area was the concept of the ‘all-inclusive’ holidays, a market trend in tourism that became popular in the Caribbean in the late 1980s. As mentioned before, at that time most resorts in the Dominican Republic were already offering inclusive packages with flight, accommodation and meals, however the difference with the modern all-inclusive resorts was that these offer luxury vacations for an affordable price. Furthermore the total package was extended with all kinds of extra services such as excursions and other activities. Many resorts also offered meals in a la carte restaurants in addition to the standard buffets (Vial et al. 2002). Because of the competitive prices in the Punta Cana/Bávaro zone and other Caribbean destinations, due to this ‘all-inclusive’ structure, the remaining destinations in the Dominican Republic were forced to follow this new trend in tourism. This development meant another setback for the local businesses in the Puerto Plata region, as this all-inclusive system resulted in a further loss of business for the small shops, restaurants and hotels because tourists were provided with all the services they needed within the resort. Most tourists do not even leave the premises at all during their stay.

The attempts of the resorts in the Puerto Plata region to keep up with these new developments could not help prevent the decline in tourist arrivals starting from the year 2000. By 2002, the region was back at the level of international visitors of the early 1990s (Banco Central 2003). It appeared that Puerto Plata, with its relatively old hotels, could not compete with the much more modern resorts in Punta Cana, the country’s number one destination since the mid-90s.

These setbacks in the tourism industry in the Puerto Plata area showed the weak economic position of the region. Already during the Trujillo dictatorship (1930-1961), many big companies were moved to Santo Domingo and with the development of the tourism industry most of the remaining businesses had to move as well to make place for this new and promising industry. Almost all residents of the region are employed in the tourism industry in one way or another and the economic decline made it clear that the whole economy depends on this industry. The region is going through a difficult period, even though the resorts are still fully occupied during the high seasons. The ‘all-inclusive’ enclave resorts tend to lead to local dependency rather than the development that was expected (Freitag 1994: 542). The infrastructure and city are deteriorating while the only benefit the region seems to enjoy from its number one industry is the employment in the resorts.

Nowadays the vast part of the tourism destinations in the Dominican Republic is dominated by this ‘all-inclusive’ structure, even though increasing evidence contradicts the beneficial character of this structure and shows that negative effects on the destinations have occurred. These negative effects of ‘all-inclusive’ resort tourism will be discussed further in the following two chapters. Recent debates about the problems brought about by mass tourism have resulted in growing attention to alternative types of tourism. Among these are eco-tourism,
community-based tourism, ethical tourism, and sustainable tourism (Smith and Duffy 2003: 135). This trend also has consequences for destinations that are almost entirely focussed on mass tourism, like the Dominican Republic. It is to be expected that destinations will have to adapt to these new demands in order to continue to compete in the international tourist market. Although the Dominican government is directing some attention to alternative forms of tourism in their ten-year plan (Secretaría de Estado de Turismo 2003), there are no signs yet that this will improve the opportunities for small entrepreneurs.

The Dominican tourism industry, although generating revenues for the government, has been “unable to decrease economic leakage, minimize environmental destruction, or find long-term solutions to the plight of the Dominican poor” (Freitag 1996: 225). The revenues for the local community remain low, even though statistical data show an incredible growth in the industry over the past few decades. While in 1970 there were only 67,000 tourists in the Dominican Republic, by 1989 this number had increased to over a million visitors (Wiarda and Kryzanek 1992) and, despite the problems in the 1990s, in 2000 the Dominican Republic welcomed 2,972,600 tourists, the highest number until then (CTO 2003). After the start of the new millennium, the problems that the Dominican Tourism industry was faced with continued, especially in the Puerto Plata region. However, the statistics still show an annual increase in visitor numbers. For 2004, the Dominican Republic counted with a total of 3,443,205 stop-over tourists, which meant an increase of 5.4% compared to 2003 (CTO 2005). The future will decide if the Dominican Republic proves to be able to maintain its leading position, and if Puerto Plata can survive as one of the most important destinations in the country, despite all the difficulties.
Map of the Dominican Republic
5 The Concept of All-Inclusive Tourism: the Case of Puerto Plata, the Dominican Republic

Nathalie Pot, Sofie Schrover and Hanneke Duijnhooven

Introduction

Located on beautiful Playa Dorada Beach, Iberostar Costa Dorada offers a truly memorable All-Inclusive vacation. Enjoy quiet days stretched across a private expanse of white sand beach, seek relief from the warm Caribbean sun within the cool waters of the lake-style swimming pool, improve your swing on one of two lighted tennis courts, and enjoy nightly entertainment in the hotel theatre. Lucy’s Mini-Club will keep the kids entertained, while adults participate in the watersports program or relax by the pool with a cool, tropical elixir. (Best Caribbean Tour 2005).

The description of this luxurious vacation, along with several pictures of tropical beaches and swimming pools surrounded with palm trees, is a typical example of the many offers for holidays in the Dominican Republic. Such holidays provide the majority of tourists with the opportunity to do things that were unimaginable not too long ago. While a holiday in the Caribbean used to be a ‘once-in-a-lifetime-dream’ for many people in the industrial world, nowadays it seems to be within reach for almost anybody. Many travel agencies advertise with affordable all-inclusive holidays to the Dominican Republic or other similar destinations like Mexico or Jamaica. The question is what the underlying mechanisms and strategies of this concept are. What makes it possible for travel agencies to offer these ‘dream holidays’ on such a large scale, for such basic prices? And what are the consequences for the tourism sector? This chapter explores the all-inclusive concept on a theoretical level as well as through the description of the all-inclusive resorts in Puerto Plata.

A Holiday of Convenience

The all-inclusive tourism concept is the direct result of the tourism development policies of many Caribbean governments, in which restricted areas were designated for tourism development. These areas were adapted to the needs and wishes of western foreign visitors. In the tourism literature these areas are referred to as ‘environmental bubbles’ (Cohen 1972) or ‘tourist bubbles’ (Jaakson 2004). These bubbles “confine and isolate mass tourists by ‘protective walls’ of the institutional and other arrangements of the travel and hospitality industry, the physical places created for tourists and – significantly – the attitudes and beliefs
of tourists” (Jaakson 2004: 44-45). The tourists who choose such a holiday can enjoy the tropical entourage without having to cope with all the annoying aspects of travelling, without having to endure the smell, the heat or the local hassle. Moreover, these bubbles offer a safe, comfortable, familiar and tightly controlled environment.

In the Dominican Republic, the tourism industry is dominated by the all-inclusive concept. Although the concept of packages that include meals and entertainment has been popular since the beginning of the development of tourist resorts in the Puerto Plata region in the 1970s (Fuller 1999; Vial et al. 2002), it was not until the late 1980s that this concept started to rapidly expand and dominate the industry. The all-inclusive concept originates from the famous Club Med in France in the 1950s (Piñeiro 2001) and was soon being implemented in tourism destinations around the globe. In the Caribbean this concept was introduced in the late 1960s, first in Jamaica and later also in other destinations. The difference with the all-inclusive concept today, which is so widely spread throughout the Caribbean, is that the array of services has expanded significantly. While initially the packages included meals and maybe some activities, “hotels now offer a range of services including meals in informal or formal in-house restaurants, daily and nightly entertainment, and day excursions” (Vial et al. 2002: 25). Furthermore, the number of all-inclusive hotels has increased significantly and the low prices have given these destinations a low-class image, instead of the association with luxury and exclusiveness that the earlier resorts had (Patullo 1996). Although there are variations between the different resort complexes and the services they offer, the basic ingredients are very similar and the trend is to offer all elements of a vacation in one package (Lumsdon and Swift 2001). This development has been subject to a lot of criticism.

The all-inclusive concept is considered to be of little benefit to the local community, as many resorts are foreign-owned and there is a high level of leakages (e.g. Freitag 1994; Lumsdon and Swift 2001; Patullo 1996; Weaver 2001). The large degree of vertical integration (Crick 1989; Lea 1988), and the fact that food and drinks are paid for in advance make it extremely difficult for the local community to participate in the tourism industry. “Once a resort supplies a variety of complementary services to its guests there is little market for outside providers to capture. Over time the result is a cycle that reinforces all-inclusive packages” (Vial et al. 2002: 25). Furthermore these all-inclusive resorts are said to increase the distance between the host community and the tourists. As Freitag notes: “One of the main characteristics of an enclave resort is its inclusiveness” (1994: 541). Tourists mainly stay on the premises of the resort, since everything they need is available and, more importantly, already paid for. There is no need to go out and explore the region or country. Furthermore, they are often told that it is dangerous to go out of the resorts on their own (Coles 2004; Palmer 2000). For this reason, they tend to only participate in excursions and other activities that are offered by their tour operator. As a consequence, tourists hardly spend any money outside the resort, and thereby are impeding the development and viability of local tourism businesses (e.g. Kermath and Thomas 2002; Kusluvan
and Karamustafa 2001; Lumsdon and Swift 2001). For tour operators, the all-inclusive concept is appealing because it allows a high level of standardization of the products, which is cost-efficient and therefore the prices can be driven down to enhance the competitiveness of the products (Lumsdon and Swift 2001; Patullo 1996). As Coles puts it:

Standardisation allows costs to be driven down, an approach that has helped businesses respond to the intense competitive pressures in the challenging global tourism market in recent years. Homogenisation to a high standard also engenders predictability of service provision, and hence can enhance consumer confidence in the quality of experience s/he will have (2004: 238).

The level of quality that is demanded by tourists nowadays, in combination with the high level of standardization has led to the increasing exchangeability of destinations across the world. “Given that the integrated resort process conceptually attempts to homogenize the destination offering in terms of layout, design and facilities, the meaning of place is lost” (Lumsdon and Swift 2001: 95). In other words, the resort complexes, in a way, become islands of luxury that are clearly separated from their surroundings and have lost any sense of place (Jaakson 2004). For the tourists it actually does not make a difference whether they are vacationing in the Dominican Republic, Egypt or Turkey. This creates a situation where the destinations are dependent on the international travel agents and tour operators. The hotels are forced to lower their prices because they face increasing competition from similar destinations (Crick 1989; Lea 1988; Vial et al. 2002). In the next paragraph the organization and strategies of the all-inclusive resorts in general and in Puerto Plata will be explored.

**McDonaldization and the All-Inclusive Concept in Puerto Plata**

Building upon Ritzer’s logic of the ‘McDonaldization of Society’ (1996), several authors have discussed the increasingly standardized and exchangeable characteristics of many contemporary (mass) tourism destinations (Bryman 1995; Coles 2004; Ritzer and Liska 1997). According to Ritzer (1996), the McDonald’s formula epitomizes the increasing tendency in modern society towards predictability, efficiency, calculability and control. When it comes to tourism, the concept of the Walt Disney theme parks have been said to represent the same development (Bryman 1995). Ritzer and Liska (1997: 98) call this “the McDisneyization of the tourist industry”, representing the modern development where “tourist sites have become increasingly places where people can seek out tourist experiences which are predictable, efficient, calculable and controlled” (Cloke and Perkins 2002: 525). The modern cruise ships or resort complexes like those in Puerto Plata are similar in many ways to these theme parks.

Ritzer and Liska (1997) argue that a lot of tourists today are looking for experiences that are similar to their normal lives. That is, as was mentioned earlier in this chapter, they are looking for a sense of exoticness while at the same
time they expect at least the level of comfort from home. They do not want to deal with unfamiliar and unpredictable situations that are associated with different cultures. In other words, they want their vacations to be highly predictable. They need to know in advance what kind of services and facilities they can expect, and that the quality of their vacation is according to ‘western standards’. The all-inclusive resorts respond to this need in a sense that:

Within the resort ‘bubble’ there is the reassurance of security allied with an enhanced level of facilities and the tantalising potential of what lies beyond. There is a feeling of being ‘elsewhere’, but with the sureness born of a comfortingly predictable level of service delivery” (Coles 2004: 236).

Similarly, these tourists want their holidays to be as efficient as possible. “They tend to want the most vacation for the money (hence the popularity of cruises and package tours), to see and do as much as possible in the time allotted” (Ritzer and Liska 1997: 99). Furthermore they want to be able to calculate in advance what the total expenses for the vacation will be. Again, the concept of all-inclusive holidays fits perfectly with this need for calculability. As a manager of a big travel agent in Puerto Plata stated:

It is obviously ... a benefit for the client, because he knows what he is going to spend ... the price of the vacation ... and besides that nothing ‘has’ to be spend. So you don’t have to calculate your coffees.

That the calculability of the all-inclusive vacations appeal to the wishes of many tourists is also expressed by a hostess from an international tour operator in Puerto Plata. She stated that the concept of all-inclusive holidays is particularly suited for families with children:

Seen from a tourist point of view it is ideal for children. You will not have: ‘Mom, dad, may I have 50 peso for an ice cream, may I have some money for this, may I have some money for that’. At that level it is a perfect plan.

The fourth principle of the McDonaldization thesis, control, is manifested in the standardized procedures within the resorts. For example the scheduled activities control and structure to a large extent the daily routines of tourists. This in turn, appeals to the tourists’ need for predictability. In fact, the four principles interact closely with each other (Rothwell 2004). The control of the activities and the highly controlled behaviour of employees within the resort leave little room for unpredictability (Ritzer and Liska 1997).

Thus it becomes clear that the suppliers of these vacations have carefully thought about the wishes of their customers. They cleverly adapt their products to these conditions and are able to create an experience that is ‘everything the tourists ever wanted’. Rothwell, in his analysis of the Bermudian tourism industry, found that: “there has been a calculated attempt to theme Bermuda,
much in the same way that the Disney Amusement Parks are themed to meet the expectations of the tourists” (2004: 11). He points out that the Bermudian Tourist Board deliberately uses the four principles of McDonaldization as a means to conform to the idealistic expectations of tourists, in order to ensure a stable level of arrivals.

From the point of view of the tourism suppliers, the principles of McDonaldization can thus be employed to create a product that is appealing to tourists. Furthermore, these principles are equally appealing for the sake of marketing and profit. The high level of standardization makes the all-inclusive concept both cost-efficient and calculable. The assurance that tourists will consume the services offered in the package makes it possible to buy food and drinks in large quantities. Everyday the tourists can eat as much as they like from the perfectly set buffet, offering a variance of tropical fruits, vegetables and salads. Furthermore, many packages include a limited number of meals in the in-resort ‘a-la-Carte restaurants’ for the necessary variation. The decoration and setting of the meals, combined with the idea of being served gives the tourists a feeling of luxury and exclusiveness. As a couple of visitors of one of the resorts in the Playa Dorada complex wrote in a review of their holiday:

Food: the best we’ve ever had travelling, excellent choices and nice presentation of food we never went hungry everyone made comments on the food, drinks were very well. Pizza and fries hotdog and pasta is served on the beach with all the drinks you want (Debbie’s Dominican Republic Travel Page 2005).

Despite the apparent abundance of the meals, this concept is very economic for the suppliers because the buffet is practically the same everyday. Just like McDonalds, these resorts aim at selling the illusion of ‘getting more for less’ (Ritzer 1996). The consumers are faced with “a façade of choice when, in fact, consumption has become increasingly globalized and standardized” (Coles 2004: 237).

This façade of choice is not limited to food or drinks. As we have seen, the travel packages include various activities for tourists. Beforehand the tourists are given lists of all the activities available, and as soon as they arrive in the resort the tourists are provided with additional information from their tour operator’s representative about the opportunities they have to participate in excursions and in-resort activities. While this gives them an insight in what they can expect, at the same time it gives the suppliers a means of control and predictability. By standardizing and harmonizing the activity schedules, they are able to predict to a large extent the daily routines of their customers. “This portfolio is intended to imply a choice of leisure activities to punctuate visitors’ time spent around the pool or on the beach” (Coles 2004: 246). Furthermore, the spatial organization of the resorts is often designed to make sure that tourists have to visit the shops and casinos (where extra money is likely to be spent). As Ritzer and Liska put it:
They are of great symbolic importance, but they are also carefully designed structures that lead people not only to come, but also to behave the way the designers want them to. In the case of the Disney theme park people are forced to make at least two treks through Main Street and to distribute themselves in a certain way throughout the park (1997: 105).

The authors link this level of control over the tourists with what Erving Goffman has called ‘total institutions’. Although his description concerned prisons or mental hospitals, the definition can just as easy be applied to Disney theme parks, cruise ships or resort complexes. They are also “places of residence and work where a large number of like situated individuals, cut off from the wider society for an appreciable period of time, together lead an enclosed, formally administered round of life” (Goffman in Ritzer and Liska 1997: 106). Clearly the way these individuals are controlled is much more subtle, in a sense that most of them do not even know that they are being controlled or constrained. The impressive entering gates of the resorts and the armed guards give some people the impression of “concentration camps of leisure” (Freitag 1994). Nevertheless, most tourists experience this control as something positive and assuring. It is associated with safety and protection from the uncertainty and danger that lies beyond the walls of the complex. As was stated by a security guard in one of the resorts in the Dominican Republic, these high walls and other safety measures are more for the peace of mind of the tourists than for actual security reasons.

As became clear, for many tourists, travel involves high levels of anxiety and thus they are very comfortable remaining inside the safe ‘environmental bubble’ of the resort, where they can experience both the exoticness without being confronted with anything unknown (Cohen 1972; Crick 1989). Again, the suppliers respond to these feelings in a way that they are able to control the behaviour of the tourists in order to sell those excursions that are organized by them or their partners. The fear of leaving the premises is reinforced by travel books, brochures, and through the lectures given by the tour operator’s representatives (e.g. Coles 2004; Palmer 2000).

So far it has been described how the all-inclusive concept stimulates the application of the principles of McDonaldization in the tourism industry. In the next paragraph further empirical evidence from Puerto Plata will be used to gain more insight into the consequences of the all-inclusive concept for the local tourism sector.

**Consequences for Puerto Plata as a Tourism Destination**

It became clear that the tour operators and representatives in all-inclusive resorts employ the four principles of efficiency, calculability, predictability and control in their business and marketing strategies. Their practices are both aimed at satisfying the tourists and at creating extended business opportunities for themselves. With regard to the latter, Palmer (2000: 6) found the following text from a local Dominican tour operator to be spread among tourists in the Playa Dorada resort:
Very important: If someone should approach you who is not from the [company] or from the hotel, we suggest you take certain precautions, do not buy anything, do not accept any gift, do not agree to be taken outside the hotel and above all, do not buy any excursions, as they are sold by unauthorized suppliers without the proper insurance required. Our [company] team is at your service to provide any information you require or make reservations on your behalf.

In a similar manner, a Dominican beach vendor on a public beach near Puerto Plata explained what he witnessed while he worked in one of the resorts in Playa Dorada:

I used to work in one of the resorts and I have seen how the representatives of the large tour operators tell the tourists that it is better to stay in the resorts. They tell them that it is dangerous to go outside because the locals will swindle or even rob them. The food and water is unhealthy and the restaurants unhygienic. This is of course not true, but the large foreign enterprises are manipulating the tourist to stay inside the resort, buy all the souvenirs there, and only participate in the excursions they organize. It’s all for their own profit, leaving the locals out of business.

These are just a few examples of the ways in which the tourism suppliers try to convince their guests that it is safer to buy excursions organized by their tour operator. In the long run this can result in several problems. In the first place, tourists that are told that the Dominican Republic is very dangerous and that they should not go outside on their own might very likely be inclined not to return to the island. When Palmer asked what guests of the Playa Dorada resort thought of their vacation, a couple told her:

This is our first time here in the Dominican Republic. Usually we go to Tenerife and would really like to retire there. We normally hire a car or use public transport and generally go off and do our own thing. We are surprised that we can’t do that here because it is too dangerous to leave the resort complex except on an organized tour. We’ve never felt so restricted before. We’re having a nice time but it’s unlikely we will come back, after all there must be more to the country than sun and beaches but if it’s too dangerous to go out... We have friends that come from the Caribbean, the picture they painted is so different to what we have been told about here (Palmer 2000: 11).

Another result of these marketing strategies is that the country is likely to obtain a negative image among tourists around the world. An employee of an international tour operator in Puerto Plata explained that she thought that these strategies were very bad because in the end it will only lead to a decline in arrivals.
In the past, the Dominican Republic has had quite a negative image in some markets. This was caused by negative stories about the country. Tourists that were told things such as that it is dangerous to rent a car or that the food in local restaurants is unhygienic, will tell this to their friends and family and that is where these rumours start. Furthermore, a television program that was broadcasted in the Netherlands a few years ago portrayed the island as a place where people are drunk all day. It doesn't take much for a negative image to be created.

Such a negative image is especially damaging to a destination like the Dominican Republic, where many people depend on the tourism industry. The substitutability of the ‘sun-sea-sand’ destinations make these destinations dependent on the international tourism industry for a steady flow of visitors (Crick 1989; Lea 1988). When such a destination obtains a negative image among tourists, tourists will stop coming. As was explained before, these tourists are looking for a vacation with certain ingredients, which they can easily find elsewhere. The international tour operators are the destination’s link with their guests and therefore they hold a powerful position. To keep the tourists coming, the hotels are forced to lower their price, which is generally done at the cost of the quality of the services. As a consequence, the destination will get a reputation as a ‘cheap’ destination.

According to the director of the Asociación de Hoteles de Puerto Plata the Dominican Republic is:

...hostage to the tour operators (...) Promotion has been in the hands of tour operators for many years. I mean, our image, our country, our property, our product has been sold to the liking of the tour operators. The way they want to sell it. That is why it became a kind of cheap destination. Because they want to get low prices, so they can sell it cheap. The image has been affecting us, but it is our own fault, because the government has never been a leader in promoting the destination.

Thus the tour operators sustain their monopoly position within the Dominican tourism sector by applying the four principles of McDonaldization. The all-inclusive system creates a cycle that reinforces their power position.

Another issue that is related to the all-inclusive concept is the loss of a sense of place. Because these resorts are so isolated from the actual country, the uniqueness of the destination is lost. The resorts are built conform the international standards, leading to highly substitutable products. This development is also reflected in the promotion of these destinations. The photos that are displayed do not show anything that is ‘real’ or ‘typical’ from that particular destination. As was pointed out, tour operators have most power when it comes to the promotion of the destination. The destinations are dependent on their goodwill to promote their product among the tourists. Due to the substitutability and the increased competition, the prices are lowered, giving the destination a negative image. This
is very frustrating for the locals that are involved in tourism, as becomes clear from what the director of the Asociación de Hoteles de Puerto Plata said:

... if you see a brochure, you only see a room, a beach, a coconut tree and a lady in a bikini. We are trying to convince them that there is more to offer in Puerto Plata than a beach, a coconut tree, a piña colada and a lady in a bikini. That there is history in Puerto Plata (…) When you see many tour operators’ brochures and you open them to view Punta Cana and then Puerto Plata, you don’t see any difference between Punta Cana and Puerto Plata. On the front page you see a vast beach with coconut trees and resorts. We would like to ask tour operators and the DR Government, please invest more money in the promotion of e.g. Puerto Plata you can’t highlight Puerto Plata with one photo. You should have two to three pages dealing with this destination, elaborate on the historic buildings, the indigenous population and their history, natural beauty on land and in the sea, and-so-on.

The disregard for attractions outside the resorts invigorates the tendency of tourists not to leave the resorts. This means that there is virtually no market for tourist-related business outside the resort. As a Dutch hostess from a small tour operator in Puerto Plata puts it:

Puerto Plata does not develop. They have, however, a Puerto Plata city tour and there are always people who catch a cab, but you do not see Puerto Plata developing to a tourist level. I think that this all has to do with the fact that tourists have already paid and that they therefore have little desire to spend money outside the resort for food and drinks.

Due to this ‘cheap’ image and the unfamiliarity of the tourists with the uniqueness of the Dominican Republic, the tourists that travel to the island are considered to be ‘cheap’ or ‘low-class’. This is a type of tourist who comes with little or no money and can or will not spend much outside the resort. As a Canadian hostess from a local tour operator said:

...and it’s the worst kind. Because they don't spend their money anywhere and they are content staying in their resort, don't bother to go into town. Getting their hair waved and sitting on the beach, that's all they want to do.

This quote represents a general negative opinion of the tourists that travel to destinations like Puerto Plata. These tourists are portrayed as ‘barbaric creatures’ that come and destroy the local environment, who seek nothing more than sun-sea-sand-sex, and who have no respect or interest whatsoever in the local culture.
Conclusion
In this chapter it became clear that the four principles of the McDonaldization thesis might also be used to explore the structure of the mass tourism industry. From the perspective of both the tourists and the suppliers of their holidays, these principles represent an appealing approach to tourism. It has been shown that the all-inclusive concept that is so widely spread in tourism is organized around the principles of efficiency, calculability, predictability and control. The system provides the tourists with an affordable ‘fun-filled holiday in paradise’, without the insecurities and inconveniences associated with a third world destination like the Dominican Republic. At the same time, the concept offers the suppliers all kinds of economic benefits and means to predict and control the behaviour of their clients.

Nevertheless, it has become clear that there are some negative aspects involved with this type of tourism. One of the major criticisms is that all-inclusive resorts have very little association with their environment. They appear to be enclaves or bubbles that are shut off from their surroundings by high protective walls and armed guards. The question is whether they are designed to keep the outside out or the inside in. There seems to be a mutual misunderstanding between the resort tourists and the local community. The tourists get a negative image of the country because they are told that it is dangerous and unhygienic, while the local community sees the tourists as (party) animals that only want to get a tan and drink cocktails. However, following from the fact that the tour operators are largely responsible for creating these images, it can also be argued that this view of the tourists is too negative.

Is it fair to maintain this image while it has been shown that their behaviour is controlled and manipulated by the tourism suppliers? As it happens, the choices (before, during and after their trip) these tourists make are to a large extent influenced by the tour operators and travel agents. Similarly, the negative images of the destination are also amplified through all kinds of stories and the ambience of the resorts. The power of the large international tourism organizations has led to the dominance of the all-inclusive concept, thereby determining the type of development that destinations like Puerto Plata experience. The tourists are not to blame, they merely choose for one of the holidays that are offered to them, and as was pointed out, these offers are all alike.
This chapter is based on data gathered by Sofie Schrover and Nathalie Pot in the course of their research projects in the Puerto Plata region in the period between February and July 2003. Through family members that were living in the Dominican Republic, Nathalie was able to establish contacts in the small village of Costambar, near the city of Puerto Plata. During their research, Nathalie and Sofie shared an apartment in this village. Most inhabitants of Costambar were expatriates from Europe or North America, many of them working in the tourism industry. Through this extensive network, Sofie and Nathalie were able to establish many contacts with different people in the industry. Informants included people at the ministry of tourism, independent tour operators, hotel owners, resort owners, travel agents, representatives in the resorts, and tourists. Together they did a survey among tourists in some of the biggest all-inclusive resorts in the Puerto Plata region. Although this survey was conducted on behalf of one of their key-informants, a small tour operator, both of them could use the data for their own research. Sofie, in her research, focused on the sustainability of all-inclusive tourism in the region. Her central question regarded the extent to which the all-inclusive concept prevents or adds to the development of sustainable tourism. Nathalie, on the other hand, was interested in the process of image building of different actors in the Dominican tourism industry. She wondered how the Dominican Republic, as a tourism destination, is seen by tourists and other actors. Central to her research was the influence of the government and other tourism organizations on these images.

All quotes in this chapter that were originally in Spanish or any other language were translated to English by the authors.
Coping with Mass Tourism: The Small Entrepreneurs of Puerto Plata, the Dominican Republic

Hanneke Duijnhoven and Carel Roessingh

Introduction

For most bars and restaurants it is not easy to survive. Many of them are having serious problems or are already closed because they hardly get any customers. For us, as a souvenir shop, it is not so bad because the tourists come here when they go on their city tour. We made some arrangements with the tour operators; they bring their guests here and get a commission on the things we sell. But that is different for the restaurants; tourists don’t want to eat in town.

This fragment from an owner of a souvenir shop in Puerto Plata shows that the small entrepreneurs have a hard time maintaining themselves in the local tourism arena. Unless they have some sort of arrangement with the tour operators from the large all-inclusive hotels, they are experiencing difficulties in attracting customers. At the same time it makes it clear that the tour operators have a very powerful position because they can decide to a large extent where their guests go and what they do. In the previous chapter it was clearly shown that these companies employ different strategies to maintain their powerful position and to control the tourists’ behaviour.

This chapter deals with the other side of the same coin. It explores the situation of the small entrepreneurs in the tourism industry of Puerto Plata. The aim of this chapter is twofold. On the one hand a description will be provided of the position of these small entrepreneurs within the overall system of tourism. It concentrates on the interaction (or lack thereof) between different actors in the sector. On the other hand, the chapter focuses on the ways this particular group of small entrepreneurs are trying, on a daily basis, to cope with the socio-economical consequences of the structure of the tourism industry.

Tourism in Puerto Plata: All-Inclusive Resorts, the Government, and Small Entrepreneurs

As became clear in the previous chapters, the Dominican tourism industry is dominated by large, luxury (all-inclusive) resorts. Although these resorts traditionally constitute the larger part of the tourism industry, from the beginning there have also been many small local tourism entrepreneurs who started working in the industry expecting to gain a steady income from the rise of this
promising economic sector. Because of the arrival of a growing number of cruise ships each week, bringing tourists into the local community, these entrepreneurs reacted by entering the industry in a variety of ways. Restaurants, bars, and shops were opened, street vendors and individual tour guides became a regular sight in the port area, and the (motor) taxi business grew significantly. This has initially led to a lively industry with many small businesses and independent guides or vendors. For a while, small-scale tourism businesses appeared to be successful and the region was prospering thanks to this new industry. This apparent success is seen in many developing countries where the initial development of tourism takes place before this industry becomes a point of interest to the government, thus leaving the development up to the initiatives of the private sector (Dahles 1999). When at the end of the 1960s the government started to direct attention to the development of the tourism industry in the region, the involvement of the local workforce in the tourism industry increased even more. Many of these entrepreneurs were forced to start working in the tourism industry simply because there was no alternative. As a local owner of a colmado (small bar/restaurant), who had to change his business due to changes in the economy, stated:

The whole region depends on tourism, we had no choice, all the other industries were taken away from Puerto Plata during the [Trujillo] dictatorship and later because of tourism. The only option for us to earn some kind of a living was in tourism. I used to be in the import business, I imported all kinds of goods from Europe, like butter, cheese and salami, there was a lot of trade in this region, but later all this business moved away and I had to do something else.

In many developing countries the governments have started to promote the development of the tourism industry to earn foreign exchange, to attract investments, to increase income and employment levels, and to achieve general progress. Nevertheless, there are strong doubts among scholars about the effectiveness of the tourism industry as a strategy for development. What has to be remembered, however, is that when it comes to the economies of developing countries, these societies often do not have many alternative industries at hand and therefore they are dependent on the tourism industry. Tourism is often the last resort in the search for progress and development (Lea 1988). As a result, the governments in developing countries are forced to base their decisions on the wishes of the dominant actors in the industry, therefore they generally tend to favour the large-scale development of (multinational) tourism enterprises. Furthermore, these enterprises usually bring along large investments, knowledge and technology, and therefore are said to contribute more to the economical growth of the country (Kamsma and Bras 1999). Nevertheless, in practice these contributions seem to be rather overstated, as has been explained before.

With the interference of the Dominican government and international investors, the tourism industry was moving from the informal to the more formal economical sphere, even though the two spheres continue to exist side by side.
The informal sector contains the small-scale, mostly self-built and unorganized entrepreneurs. The formal sphere, on the other hand contains the large, capital intensive, well-structured, mostly multinational enterprises (Kermath and Thomas 1992). Although the newly developed (international) hotels offered employment to a large group of local residents, they affected the local entrepreneurs in a negative way. These new large hotels were owned by (multinational) chains that had connections in the important tourist markets, knowledge about the demands and standards of these western tourists and money to invest; all assets that the local entrepreneurs did not have. In cooperation with the western tour operators, these multinational companies were able to rapidly obtain a monopoly position and the local hotel owners and tour operators were left with nothing. Many of the local shops and bars have been forced to close their doors, due to a lack of clientele.

The wide spread of the all-inclusive structure of the resorts, in the late 1980s and early 1990s, along with the deterioration of the Puerto Plata port, has further aggravated the situation for the small entrepreneurs. Tourists can now book relatively cheap holidays through a network of international tour operators and hotel chains, making the market even more inaccessible for small entrepreneurs. These large (multinational) hotels work together with international tour operators and as a result, local independent hotels have a hard time reaching the tourist because they cannot compete with the prices offered by the strong network of resort hotels and international tour operators (Crick 1989). In addition, the resorts are offering an increasingly diverse array of services and activities, which further diminishes the need for tourists to look for services outside the resorts (Vial et al. 2002). The scarce opportunities for locals to find employment in other sectors leaves a significant group of locals struggling to survive within the tourism industry. A foreign small entrepreneur, who sold his possessions in Europe and bought a small apartment building in the Puerto Plata region, said the following on the vertical integration of tourist enterprises and their monopoly position:

Initially I got some guests from a Dutch tour operator because the demand was so high due to a very rainy summer in Europe and they would otherwise have to cancel guests. I thought this would be the same every high season and was very excited about the future; I even made plans to buy a second building. The next year, however, things were very different. I had mysteriously disappeared from the tour operators’ list. They told me that that was because my building was too far from the resort where all the other accommodations are located, while it’s only 15 minutes away. Later I found that it was because all the other hotels belong to international chains and they profit from selling only those accommodations. The only tourists that come here now are a few satisfied guests who return or tell about my place to friends and relatives.

Furthermore, tourists are ‘kept’ inside the resorts because everything is paid for as long as they stay on the premises. More adventurous tourists are discouraged
to go out of the resort on their own, supposedly because it would be dangerous. This warning of tourists to stay inside the safe (westernized) resort often begins with the travel agent trying to convince the tourist to buy a certain package. These travel agents are usually integrated in large, multinational enterprises with an airline, hotel chains and tour operators (Sinclair et al. 1992: 51), therefore it is logical that they want to sell those products to make the best profit. As another owner of an apartment building was able to tell about this:

When my guests would go on a jeep-safari or other excursion, they would be the only ones not wearing a colourful wristband. Other tourists would ask them how it could be that they weren’t wearing one. When my guests explained them that they were staying in a small hotel in town the rest of the tourists would look at them with big eyes: ‘Isn’t it dangerous there?’, ‘I heard it can be really dangerous at night’, ‘Do you really have to eat the food there, that cannot be safe can it?’, ‘The life is really expensive out there I’ve heard’. My guests would tell them that the food is cheap, good and safe, that the locals are really friendly, and that it is really peaceful, quiet and beautiful here. The other guests would have a hard time believing that and would be glad that they booked the safe trip to the all-inclusive resort. I know that it is better for those travel agents to sell their own vacations instead of mine because in that way they make a larger profit. That is why they tell these things to their clients, and what can I do about it?

The former examples show that the local entrepreneurs have a hard time competing with the large multinational enterprises, who are part of a strong international tourism network and who have the power, capital, and knowledge to dominate the sector. In addition, these multinational enterprises are supported by the local government. The government has few alternatives then to follow the leads from the tourism multinationals and from international organizations such as the IMF, World Tourism Organization (WTO), or World Bank, in order to keep its economy and industry going. As the following example from a small local tour operator shows, the power held by these large multinational organizations and foreign investors can have extensive consequences for small entrepreneurs:

I had been working for several months to open up my own tour operating business. My main objective was to sell excursions and to rent out villas and apartments to tourists. I knew that there was going to be a strong competition but I was determined to make my business a success. I gathered all the necessary information and drew up a list of excursions I could offer the tourists. The only thing left to do was to obtain a tour-operator-license from the Ministry of Tourism. I contacted the local office of the Ministry and filed all the necessary papers. They told me that I had to go to the Headquarters in Santo Domingo the next week to pick up my license. When I arrived in Santo Domingo they told me that there were some problems and that I would have to come back the next week. Later
I heard that the Ministry was putting a stop on the licenses because the large international tour operators had complained that all these small tour operators were selling cheaper excursions to their customers. So the Ministry decided to only give out licenses to those entrepreneurs that could prove that they would not only sell excursions but also complete holidays. In other words, they will have to bring new tourists into the country. After all these months of preparation it seemed as if I wasn't going to receive my license, as it is almost impossible to compete with the (multinational) tour operators operating in the tourist providing countries. In the end I did get the license, but only after paying a considerable amount of money to a couple of government officials.

Thus it becomes clear that the international tourism enterprises have considerable power over the tourism industry in the Dominican Republic. In the first place this power is due to the high level of vertical integration of this network of tourism enterprises, which makes these companies highly autonomous. Furthermore, these companies have the best access to the tourist markets and promotion channels. Finally, the power is intensified by the high degree of standardization of destinations like the Dominican Republic.

The standardization of the tourist package increases the substitutability of one 'surf, sand sun, and sex' destination by another, decreasing the ability of host communities to gain adequate control over their own visitor industry (Lea 1988: 13).

In other words, because of the high level of substitutability of the Dominican Republic as a tourism destination, the local community and government have a weak position. They are dependent on these organizations for their progress and development. These organizations can just as easily send their customers to another, similar destination. The highly standardized character of the Dominican tourism industry, along with the monopoly position of large (transnational) tour operators, the minimal support from the government, and the lack of viable alternative industries, has created a very harsh climate for the small tourism entrepreneurs.

Small entrepreneurs have to develop strategies to be able to coexist with the large, dominant enterprises. As was explained before, small entrepreneurs usually cannot count on much support from governments or networks of multinational enterprises, and they have difficulties reaching their source of income; the tourist (Dahles 1999). As became clear from the examples described above, the small entrepreneurs feel that they are left without opportunities to compete in the industry. In fact, they are often angry and blame the government or multinational corporations. How do they cope with these feelings? What strategies do they employ to be able to survive? It will be argued that the small entrepreneurs are shifting between different identities in order to survive and make a living (Roessingh and Duijnhoven 2004).
The Daily Struggle: Cultural Change and Coping Strategies

When it comes to the strategies developed by the small entrepreneurs in the tourism industry, these include risk reduction through imitation (Dahles 1999) and the playing of roles. With regard to the latter it can be noted that several scholars have applied Goffman’s theory of frontstage and backstage (1959) to show that actors in tourism destinations use ethnic acts to attract tourists. These performances (on the frontstage) are somewhat different from the so-called ‘authentic’ (backstage) manifestations of culture (e.g. MacCannell 1976; Medina 2003; Roessingh and Bras 2003). In this chapter it will be stated that this concept of frontstage and backstage performances can also be applied to explain the behaviour of small entrepreneurs when they are coping with the changes and difficulties brought about by the development of the (mass) tourism industry.

In literature on tourism, much has been written on changes in the domestic culture caused by the encounters between locals and outsiders (Besculides et al. 2002; De Kadt 1979; Smith 1977; Van den Berghe 1994). It has to be kept in mind that most of these studies focus on the social and cultural impacts of tourism on the (ethnic) identity of the hosts. And although these impacts cannot be denied, Lanfant argues that in the majority of these studies tourism is depicted as “a force of social change coming to destroy territorial and local identities” (1995: 5). She argues for a more active instead of passive approach, considering tourism as a driving force for cultural change, and focusing on the dynamics between the local population, the tourism industry and visitors and describing to the local community its “rightful status as actor” (Lanfant 1995: 6-7). She rejects the rather one-sided perspective of these studies. It is not possible to extract the role of tourism as a catalyst for cultural change, because of the interdisciplinary nature of the field. Social change is a complex concept and cannot be reduced to separate, independent causes and effects. Therefore, it cannot be said that tourism has changed the culture and identity of the host community independently. Changes due to other processes (e.g. immigration, access to global media, etcetera) have played an equally important and intertwined role.

In this chapter, this dynamic approach towards tourism and cultural change will be applied to further explore the interactions between tourism and the culture and identity of small entrepreneurs. Robinson (1999) states that tourism functions in many ways as a lever for intercultural conflict, but he reminds us that it is important to note that tourism is not the only mechanism for cultural conflict, for intercultural interaction has become a globally recognized phenomenon. Translating this to the case of the Puerto Plata region it can be noted that prior to the introduction of the tourism industry the region was not an isolated community without any form of outside contact. Ever since the arrival of Columbus in the 15th century there have been interactions with ‘foreign’ cultures, inducing ongoing processes of cultural change. However, with the rapid development of tourism the level of these interactions increased considerably and therefore it may seem as if this was a starting point for cultural change.

What remains clear is that tourism leads to intercultural interactions and as such it is likely that intercultural conflicts occur. Especially in destinations
where enclave tourism is dominant, the gap between lifestyles of the hosts and the tourists tends to be larger, and thus there is increasing ground for conflict (De Kadt 1979). In any situation where tourists enter the local community such conflicts are likely to arise, for example an elderly Dominican woman who gets angry when a couple of tourists ride with the *gua-gua* (local bus). She complains that the tourists are taking their places and destroying the life in Puerto Plata. According to her, tourists are rich and therefore should take a taxi or stay inside the resorts. While she speaks she is pointing and looking angrily towards the tourists and although they do not understand what she is saying they clearly feel uncomfortable. This woman obviously feels threatened by the tourists; they have invaded a place that was supposed to be for locals only, according to her. They have trespassed into the ‘backstage’ area where she thought she was ‘safe’ from tourists and where she should be able to express her true feelings. The aforementioned situation is an example of what Goffman (1959) described in his theory on social behaviour. He distinguishes between what he calls the frontstage and the backstage, as two different settings for everyday life social behaviour. In the frontstage the performers (in this case the locals) act in a way they want the audience (the tourists) to think is their ‘normal behaviour’, while in the backstage they can express their ‘true feelings’ because the audience is supposed to be absent (Goffman 1959). Whenever these front- and backstage areas coincide conflicts will arise.

Cultural conflicts can occur at different moments and places, but also at different levels (Robinson 1999). The most obvious level is that of cultural conflicts between tourists and hosts. Different values, behaviour patterns, language, and so on, are all possible causes for conflicts between the visiting and visited as was shown in the example above. Furthermore, there are the possible conflicts between the tourists and the tourism industry. These conflicts are most likely to occur due to different expectations about the product. The next level of cultural conflict is one of great importance, namely that of conflicts between the host community and the tourism industry. Tourists are usually seen as the factor that influences the host community the most, but in reality they enter the host community only for a short time. The tourism enterprises and institutions are of a more definite kind and therefore have a larger influence on the community structure. The last level of conflict is not directly linked to tourism but tourism can be the cause for conflict between members of the host community. All the aforementioned levels are part of the complex system of cultural (ex)change. Again it has to be noted that tourism is but one of the mechanisms active in this system, but it is one of the most direct mechanisms.

The local entrepreneurs hold a central position in the system of cultural (ex)change, for they play a role in all of the abovementioned levels of conflict. They are part of the tourism industry as well as the local community, and as such they interact more than any other group with ‘outsiders’. But this also means that they are more likely to encounter confusing situations regarding their role or identity. Local entrepreneurs will generally try to keep their ‘local’ emotions away from the tourist. Just like that they will disguise their ‘work attitude towards tourists as the
friendly entrepreneur’ for their family and friends. Nevertheless, the separation of these frontstage and backstage areas is not as strict as they would want them to be. Therefore a constant shifting between identities is necessary.

**Small Entrepreneurs and Shifting Identities**

The changing identities of residents of tourism destinations is a popular subject among social scientists. Numerous authors have written about the redefinition of a community’s (ethnic) identity as a result of the attention tourists give to their ‘ethnic culture’; long lost traditions are being revived and even new ‘staged traditions’ are being invented in order to comply with the tourists’ growing demand for ‘authentic cultures’. In other words, a commoditization of culture is taking place (Cohen 1988; MacCannell 1976; MacDonald 1997; Van den Berghe 1994). The increasing number of tourists that locals are constantly confronted with provokes a stronger feeling of ‘Dominican identity’ among the residents; they idealize the past and blame the ‘intruders’ for changes. This idealization becomes clear from the statements of an elderly Dominican man who talks about the changes in Puerto Plata since the increasing presence of ‘outsiders’ (tourists):

> When I grew up, everything was better. There would be a wide sense of community. All the *Puertoplateños* would gather during the weekends on the beach to eat, drink and dance. We had no television or fancy toys, we appreciated every small thing. Now all that has changed. The presence of the *gringos* has transformed the mentality of the youth; they are materialistic and feel no love or friendship for each other. It is all about making money and showing off their expensive clothes. It is not their fault, they cannot help being influenced by television and *gringos*, but it is a shame, a lot of beautiful traditions have been lost over time.

Although this man is not specifically talking about tourists, but generalizing all outsiders, he blames them for the changes in his society. As in many tourism destinations tourists are not seen as individuals from different countries, but as one group of ‘outsiders’. It becomes a matter of ‘we’ against ‘they’ (Nogués Pedregal 1996). In other words, social groups emerge with the development of the tourism industry. The most obvious division is that of locals versus tourists. Yet within these groups there are other groups: mass tourists versus independent tourists, locals who work in tourism versus those who do not, those who work in a resort versus those who have their own business, Dominican locals versus foreign locals, etcetera. People tend to be part of more than one social group and will adapt their behaviour accordingly (Tajfel 1978). The small entrepreneurs play a special role in this situation. As has been indicated before, the small entrepreneurs are members of many (tourism related) social groups and therefore constantly have to switch between different sets of behaviour. Furthermore, these entrepreneurs depend economically on the willingness of tourists to come in and spend money in their enterprise and for this reason the entrepreneurs will tend to keep up
a good relationship with the tourists, even though they might not feel like it. They have to apply different strategies to cope with the difficult task of attracting tourists and with the conflicting emotions that are linked with their confusing position within the different social groups.

For example, the small entrepreneurs are trying to create the impression that business is going very well, to show that they offer a good product that is worth consuming. To do so they might pretend to be very busy. Most entrepreneurs blame the government for their lack of opportunities within the tourism industry. One moment they display their frustrations with the structure of the industry. The next moment however they return to their role as successful entrepreneur trying to convince tourists to spend some money. It is likely that these entrepreneurs save yet another part of their true feelings for the backstage. It is clear that such situations lead to inner conflicts for the entrepreneurs. On the one hand they have to do what is good for their business and cannot afford to show any negative emotions, but at the same time it is seems that the entrepreneurs foster strong feelings of frustration, unhappiness, and alienation towards the tourists and the tourism industry.

Yet another problem is the increasing competitiveness among small entrepreneurs. In their case study on competing entrepreneurs in Belize, Volker and Sorée describe how local tour guides are fighting over tourists (2002). The same strategy can be witnessed among small entrepreneurs in the Puerto Plata region. Entrepreneurs use the negative image that many tourists have of the pushy, swindling vendors, guides, taxi drivers, and so on, in order to sell their products. Approaching the tourists they will say things like: “I know there are a lot of bad Dominicans, but I am not like that, I will give you a good price and good quality”, or “Don’t go there, he will charge way too much. I know where you can get a better deal”. By trying to inspire the tourist’s confidence they hope to sell their product (which is exactly the same as the one their competitors sell). Such strong competition among small entrepreneurs in developing countries often has the opposite effect, creating irritation among the tourists and leaving all entrepreneurs with less business (Dahles 1999). The small entrepreneurs apply a variety of different acts when approaching possible clients. The experienced entrepreneur is able to guess what a tourist is looking for and changes his/her story in order to please this demand. Using different acts the entrepreneurs have to keep the different audiences strictly separated in order not to cause conflicting situations (Goffman 1959). An example of such a conflicting situation is the Dominican man who hangs out with female tourists for food, drinks, clothes, sex and/or money. He will make it look as if the tourist in question is his only ‘special friend’, while in reality he has several girlfriends at the same time, and in his ‘real’ life he is married and has a family. Unexpected confrontations with more than one of his ‘victims’ can create delicate situations.

Looking at the examples above, one wonders why the local entrepreneurs do not work together and form a network of cooperation. By combining their forces they can have more power in competing with the multinational enterprises and regain some control over the situation (Dahles 1999). Although there are some
examples of entrepreneurial organization in the Puerto Plata region (Asociación de Hoteles de Puerto Plata, Asociación de Gift Shops, Asociación de Guías Turísticas), the effectiveness of these organizations is at least questionable. Most of these organizations are linked to the government and the goals and objectives are designed to meet with government policies. As was explained before, the government is dependent on the investments and other benefits the large tourism enterprises bring along, and thus they will tend to favour these businesses over the small entrepreneurs. This makes the actual participation of local entrepreneurs limited. In addition, they tend to have a negative attitude towards the government, and therefore it cannot be expected that local entrepreneurs feel a strong identification with these kinds of organizations.

Conclusion
This chapter aimed at exploring the ways in which the small tourism entrepreneurs of Puerto Plata are coping with the changes they encounter in the tourism industry due to the dominance of the all-inclusive resorts. On the one hand it has been noted that tourism is often approached as a means for progress for developing countries. On the other hand the effectiveness of this industry to provide a steady income for local entrepreneurs and residents is shown to be limited. Therefore these entrepreneurs and residents are increasingly dissatisfied about the (lack of) possibility of participating in the 'processes of modernization', brought about by the tourism industry. Several examples have shown the struggle that these small entrepreneurs are confronted with.

Local entrepreneurs use different strategies on separate levels to cope with the strong competition and cultural changes. The different levels of coping strategies reveal themselves in shifting identities. The entrepreneurs, more than others, have to switch between behavioural patterns or identities to maintain their position within different social groups. One of these identities is represented by the idealization of the 'good old times' when everything was better. This kind of idealization could be described as an ‘old timer attitude’ (Ybema 1996). The next level of coping strategies can be described as the negative attitude towards tourists. Even though it is important to keep in mind that tourism is but part of the wider system of intercultural exchange and conflict, local entrepreneurs and residents are blaming the government and tourism industry for their dependent position and their feelings of alienation. This creates a strong identity of ‘us’ versus ‘them’. In the case of the small entrepreneurs we see that the use of different identities manifests itself in three ways. First, they are dependent upon the tourists for their income so they perform a positive act to attract the customers. However, some attitudes revealed during conversations indicate that in reality they think in a more negative way about their situation. Thirdly, they use a set of different roles to compete with other entrepreneurs.

The levels of strategies the entrepreneurs use lead to yet another, bigger problem. Because the individual entrepreneur is constantly shifting between identities, competing with other entrepreneurs and the large multinational enterprises, and even idealizing the past, it seems hard for them to work
together, let alone develop collective organizational structures to deal with the economic harshness of the tourism industry. Part of this problem is caused by the government's tourism policy. They have been focussing on attracting foreign investments and thus leaving the small entrepreneurs in the tourism industry without access to the necessary resources for development. By favouring the development of large resorts, financed by private investors, the government was able to attract large numbers of tourists and become an important tourism destination. But by ignoring the small entrepreneurs they have created a situation of economic dependency, frustration and confusion among local entrepreneurs. Furthermore the focus on one type of tourism, ‘sun-sea-sand tourism’, creates the risk that in the fast changing tourism industry, where alternative types of tourism are of growing demand, the Dominican Republic might lose its attraction.

For her research project in the Dominican Republic, Hanneke Duijnhoven lived in a small apartment building in Costambar, Puerto Plata. This chapter results from the data she gathered in the period between August 2003 and January 2004. Her main research interest was on the position and identity of small entrepreneurs in the tourism industry in the Puerto Plata region, an industry that is dominated by all-inclusive resorts. During the 6 months of her fieldwork she travelled around the area by means of local public transportation. She found that valuable data could be gathered by listening to and chatting with locals in these buses. Her knowledge of Spanish proved to be an important asset in this research project. Furthermore, she had a lot of informal conversations with a variety of small entrepreneurs in many of the small towns and beaches in the region. She spoke to beach vendors, hotel or restaurant owners, tour operators and guides and in addition, she participated in a number of excursions. She also conducted several interviews with key-persons in the tourism industry like people from the tourism association and the government. Apart from the conversations and interviews, she gathered as many relevant documents as possible to establish a broad picture of the tourism industry in Puerto Plata. These documents included newspaper articles, statistical data from the ministry of tourism and books on the history of the area, as well as several papers on the tourism industry.

All quotes in this chapter that were originally in Spanish or any other language were translated to English by the authors.

Parts of this chapter have been previously published as:
The Tourism Industry of Jamaica – An Introduction

Pieter Masmeijer and Ewout van der Meer

Introduction
The island of Jamaica has one of the oldest and largest tourist industries in the Caribbean. Since early history foreigners have explored Jamaica to enjoy its natural beauty. This goes as far back as 1494 when Christopher Columbus discovered Jamaica. The small town Discovery Bay, situated on the north coast of the island, was named after this event. “Jamaica’s sun-drenched shores, fine white sands and crystal clear, turquoise seas have attracted visitors since the arrival of Christopher Columbus” (European Commission 2000: 50). Because of its diversified scenery Jamaica is considered to be one of the most beautiful islands of the Caribbean. The appreciation tourists have for Jamaica’s natural wonders, has ensured that nowadays tourism is one of the most important sources of income on the island. This traditional ‘sun-sea-sand’ destination is complemented with a lot of diverse activities:

Unlike other nearby islands, it caters to all-comers: you can choose a private villa with your own private beach; laugh your vacation away at a party-hearty resort; throw yourself into the thick of the island’s life, or concentrate on experiencing the three Rs: reggae, reefers and rum (Loney Planet Online 2005).

Apart from the famous Rastafarians and Reggae music, Jamaica is known for its tourism industry. The Jamaican tourism industry is characterized by the domination of luxury all-inclusive resorts. However, traditionally, the cruise ship industry has held a significant share as well. Beside these mass tourism features, there are also areas that focus mainly on small-scale tourism.

In this chapter, the important highlights of the history and development of the tourism sector in Jamaica will be described, along with some relevant political and social aspects of the country. In the following two chapters, the Jamaican tourism industry will be further discussed and illustrated through two case studies. The first case study aims to provide an insight into the management strategies applied by two large hotels in Negril. It focuses on the communication and cooperation between international managers and local employees. These management practices are interpreted by placing them within the broader context of the Jamaican culture and tourism industry. The second case study describes the daily reality of three different types of tourist guides in Jamaica.
Jamaica
Jamaica is the third largest island in the Caribbean basin and the largest English-speaking Island in the Caribbean. It is located 140 kilometres south of Cuba and 180 kilometres southeast of Haiti and the Dominican Republic. Jamaica has a surface of 10,962 square kilometres (Van Dijk 1993: 33). Its greatest length is approximately 240 kilometres and its greatest width some 80 kilometres. Just like the other Greater Antilles, Jamaica is for 80% hilly and mountainous. Almost half of its surface lies above 500 meters. The other 20% of the island is flat and is useful for agriculture and farming. Numerous rivers and waterfalls intersect the country. Along the beautiful coastline of over 1,000 kilometres, sand beaches take turns with stunning rock formations and steep cliffs. Located in the eastern part of the island lies the impressive Blue Mountain Range, with the highest point at 2292 meters; the Blue Mountain Peak (Van Dijk 1993: 33).

In contrast to this beautiful scenery the majority of the 2,731,832 (July 2005 est.) Jamaicans are poor and no less than 19,7% lives under the poverty border (CIA factbook 2005c). In Kingston, the capital of Jamaica, the stark contrast between rich and poor is more obvious than in other parts of the country. The richer people live in uptown suburbs with names like Beverly Hills, while a reality of poverty and exclusion can be found in downtown West-Kingston. That is where most of the poor people of Jamaica live. The people living in these inner-city ghettos have very limited access to public services (European Commission 2000: 31). As will be described in the following paragraph, the tourism industry is concentrated far away from Kingston’s ghettos.

Tourism Development in Jamaica
Jamaica experienced a long period of Spanish and British occupation after the discovery by Columbus. This period is marked by the massive importation of African slaves (Sherlock and Bennett 1998: 76). In 1655 Jamaica was established as a British colony and the period that follows is considered to be the most significant for contemporary Jamaican society and culture (Alleyne 1989: 34). Evidence from the violent and dreadful history of Jamaica is still present in Jamaican society. The British colonists can be considered to be the first visitors of Jamaica. Their main reason to visit was financial and focussed on personal profit. Many of them were wealthy plantation owners who did not live on the island; they lived in England and visited Jamaica mainly during winter. They often brought friends who sailed with them to Jamaica to be guests for the winter in their beautiful residences. These guests were among the earliest tourists of Jamaica (Jamaican Tourist Board 1997:3). Furthermore, since the second half of the 19th century, Jamaica has been promoted as a health resort for visitors with health problems that would travel to Jamaica to escape the cold winter in England or North America (Gilmore 2000).

The year 1890 is generally taken as the starting point of the history of Jamaica’s tourism industry because by that time the United Fruit Company began to use the excess capacity of its ships to transport visitors, which marked the beginning of Jamaica’s cruise ship industry (Country Studies 2005; Gilmore 2000). Around

88
that time the first tourist hotels were built in Montego Bay and Port Antonio. In 1910 the Jamaica Tourist Association was established. The bureau was responsible for the marketing of Jamaica. After the Second World War mass international tourism started to prosper, due to improved transportation methods (Gilmore 2000). For instance, due to the development of reliable air transport form the 1950s onwards, travelling time had diminished significantly (from several days to several hours). In addition, several measures were undertaken by the Jamaican government to further develop this promising industry and to profit from the expected surge in visitors (Jamaica Tourist Board 1997:7). One of such measures was the creation of the Jamaica Tourist Board in 1954. This was the beginning of a new phase of intensive and sophisticated promotion of Jamaica. From 1962, the year of Jamaica’s independence, the government started to gain a serious interest in the development of the tourism sector to reinforce the country’s economy (Taylor 1993). The number of visitors began to climb and in 1963 the demand of rooms outstripped the supply. Due to the increasing number of tourists visiting the island, the tourism industry blossomed. While in 1920 there were no more than a few thousand visitors, in 1938 there were no less than 64,000 visitors, and by 1966 that number had grown to more than 345,000. By the year 1988 the number of visitors had exceeded one million a year (Discover Jamaica 2005).

The north coast is the tourism centre in Jamaica because of the white-sand beaches and pleasant climate. The main attractions on this coast are Montego Bay, Ocho Rios and Port Antonio (Discover Jamaica 2005). Montego Bay is the oldest and most important tourism pole in the nation. Not only in terms of hotel capacity, but also in terms of being the main port for tourist arrivals and departures to other areas (Planning Institute of Jamaica 2000: 68). Ocho Rios is the second major destination as it is located near one of the most popular tourist attractions in Jamaica, the Dunn’s River Falls. The third important tourism center is Negril, a former fishing village on the west coast. Although this is the newest tourist pole, Negril has experienced a dynamic growth in recent times. The main focus in this area has been on the development of large-scale luxurious all-inclusive resorts. At the Eastern end of Jamaica the Blue Mountains are located, which represent the islands eco-tourism development.

Despite the fact that tourism has prospered since the 1950s, the structure of Jamaica’s tourism industry has received a lot of criticism. The British colonial government, as part of a policy for the management of the beaches, had established a system of exclusive licences in 1956 (through the Beach Control Act 1956). The effect of this system was that Jamaicans were being excluded from some of the finest beaches in the country (Chambers and Airey 2001: 98). According to Taylor (1993) this system led to a negative opinion of the industry among the ordinary Jamaicans. This negative tension was even intensified by the fact that locals were denied access to tourist resorts and beaches, which were the almost exclusive domain of wealthy, white tourists.

During this period in time there was a tendency among Jamaicans to develop a negative attitude towards tourism and (white) tourists. In 1972, the Jamaican government, faced with the first serious balance of payments deficit and rising
domestic inflation since independence, had to address the tension between the locals and visitors (Chambers and Airey 2001). The Minister of Industry and Tourism of that time, Patterson, declared that the tourism industry was experiencing a very bad moment. He stated that “one of the factors in our attitudes toward visitors which has pushed our industry to the point of collapse is the growing tendency in our society – as so within the industry – to view everything exclusively in racial terms” (Daily Gleaner in Chambers and Airey 2001: 98). However, according to him the industry should play a central role in the Jamaican economy. The government saw tourism as an important engine of growth and as the solution to the economical downfall.

In 1975 Patterson devised a plan (‘Growth Through Integration’) for the direction of tourism development, dedicated to include the local communities and improve Jamaica’s image (Taylor 1993). According to Chambers and Airey (2001) the period that followed can be characterized as the Socialist period of Jamaican tourism policy history. This period was mainly aimed at maximising the economic benefits of the industry and, more importantly at integrating the tourism industry into all aspects of Jamaican society at the same time. The latter goal resulted in a policy also known as the ‘Jamaicanisation of the tourism industry’. It concerned the increased involvement of Jamaicans in hotels and other tourism facilities with regard to ownership and employment (Chambers and Airey 2001). However, the emotional distance between the Jamaican hosts and their foreign guests remained significant. Despite the policies and other measurements, the performance of the tourism industry continued to deteriorate (Chambers and Airey 2001). The government encountered difficulties in realizing their goals as Jamaican tourism experienced less visitors, low hotel occupancy, less employment and a high level of crime and violence. The incidents of crime in Jamaica were widely reported in the overseas press in which the island obtained a rather dangerous and unstable image. All this had a negative impact on the tourism industry. As a result foreign exchange earnings decreased significantly.

Jamaica’s tourism sector began to recover in the early 1980s (Jamaican Tourist Board 1997: 8). From 1980 onwards, Jamaica entered a new political era: the Capitalist period (Chambers and Airey 2001). The economic crisis and deterioration of the tourism industry led to the opinion that the socialist approach was not working. The Jamaicanisation of the tourism industry caused a flight of foreign capital because it aimed at increasing the number of Jamaican-owned tourist businesses, thereby decreasing the opportunities for foreign investments. Therefore the new administration took a turn when it comes to tourism policies. The policies were exclusively directed at maximising the revenues and facilitating growth of the industry (Chambers and Airey 2001). The government sold almost all of the public tourist properties in order to reduce government intervention and increase private involvement in the industry. In 1980, under this new administration, the tourism industry became for the first time the main foreign exchange earner for Jamaica (Alleyne and Boxill 2003).

In addition, Jamaica was one of the first destinations in the Caribbean to employ the all-inclusive package structure on a large scale (Patullo 1996). In the
1980s this type of accommodation started to dominate the Jamaican tourism landscape, at the cost of other forms of tourism. The all-inclusive concept means that the costs for accommodation, food, drink, entertainment, sport facilities, tips, tours and airport transfers are all paid for in advance. During the vacation the tourists have no need to spend money outside the resort. As a result, the local Jamaican community has a hard time getting involved in the industry. Locals feel they can hardly benefit from the presence of the tourists. This has led to further feelings of resentment and prejudice against tourists, particularly among the poorer segment of Jamaican society. Thus, crime levels and visitor violence continued to dominate Jamaica’s tourism image.

The impact of violence and crime on the tourism industry is considered to be a severe problem in Jamaica because of the island’s reliance on the sector for the national economy. “Visitor crime and harassment are problems related to several social, economic, political, cultural and psychological factors” (Alleyne and Boxill 2003: 382). The tension between hosts and guests is argued to be partly due to the history of slavery. The master-servant relationship dating back to the era of slavery is still present and sometimes this hostile attitude becomes visible towards (white) tourists. Furthermore, the lack of alternative employment possibilities and the economic dependence on tourism arouse feelings of frustration and anger among the Jamaican population.

It is argued that the rise of the all-inclusive system has been a result of the high crime rates and other forms of negative behaviour towards tourists (Alleyne and Boxill 2003; Chambers and Airey 2001; European Commission 2000). What is clear is that the domination of the all-inclusive concept in the Jamaican tourism sector reinforces these problems, as tourists are afraid to visit the island unless in a safe resort where they can enjoy the sun and beach without being confronted with the dangers of Jamaican society (Sloof 2001). In 1997 84.2 % of the accommodation was concentrated in the enclaves of Ocho Rios, Negril and Montego Bay (Alleyne and Boxill 2003: 383). This invigorated the difficulties for the local community to participate in the tourism industry, increasing in turn the feelings of frustration among the locals, resulting in more harassment and violent behaviour towards tourists.

Despite the bad image that Jamaica has among international tourists, the Jamaican tourism industry has performed relatively well. A study on the impact of tourism in Jamaica (1997) found that one out of every four jobs was linked to the tourism industry (Jamaican Tourist Board 1997). Even though many Jamaicans are employed within the tourism industry, the revenues for the local community remain low as the profits are made to a large extent by a minority of (foreign) hotel owners and tour operators. Nevertheless, since the 1980s, the industry has experienced an average growth of 7.4% annually when it comes to visitor numbers (Alleyne and Boxill 2003: 383). Between January and November 2004 there were 1,278,921 stop-over tourists, and 966,022 cruise passenger visits (CTO 2005). The number of stop-over tourists increased 5.5% compared to the previous year, while the cruise passenger visits showed a decline of 4.6%. The reason for this decline can be attributed to the consequences of the extremely
heavy hurricane season in 2004 (Caribbean Net News 2005). Overall the Jamaican
tourism industry performs (surprisingly) well and the prospects are positive for
the future, at least when it comes to the number of arrivals. However, this is
not to say that there are no problems. The position of local entrepreneurs and
employees as well as the influence of tourism on the Jamaican society is not
reflected in these statistics. The following two chapters aim to provide an insight
in the influence of the tourism industry in Jamaica from a social and cultural
point of view.
Managing Cultural Differences - The Daily Life in Two Hotels in Negril, Jamaica

Ewout van der Meer and Hanneke Duijnhoven

Introduction

Jamaica is a country with two ‘faces’. While many Jamaicans have to struggle to survive on a daily basis, the luxury all-inclusive resorts in the Negril area are trying to create an image of ‘tropical paradise’ for tourists. The tour operators and hotel owners seek to sell Jamaica as an exotic vacation in a land of love, reggae, and peace. However, the difference between the poor, struggling Jamaicans and the luxury within the resorts is overwhelming. Within the hotels the contrast between rich and poor, tourists and employees is obvious. Not only between the guests and hosts this difference is perceptible, even among the hotel staff there is a stark contrast between the (international) management and the (local) personnel. As became clear, the Jamaican tourism industry in general and Negril in particular is largely based on mass tourism. With its luxury all-inclusive hotels, Negril seems to be a typical Caribbean destination. There has been a lot of debate on the benefits of these destinations for the local community. The issue of large economic leakages and a relatively low multiplier are among the many critiques (e.g. Freitag 1994; Haywood and Jayawardena 2004; Keune and Vugts 2002; Lea 1988; Nash 1996). Furthermore, since there is a general lack of skilled employees in developing countries like Jamaica, most of the higher positions are given to foreigners, while locals are left with the unskilled, low paid (service) jobs (Echtner 1995). Furthermore, the presence of these foreigners can easily become a problem due to cultural differences between them and the locals. According to Echtner there often seems to be “insensitivity to the local social and cultural framework” (1995: 121) among these managers.

The unequal employment opportunities are reinforced by many tourism development plans. Tourism in developing countries is often seen as a means of economic development because it brings along private investments and infrastructural improvements among other things. Nevertheless, due to the fact that the development is usually based on foreign investments, it tends to lead to a position of dependency for the developing countries, as well as marginalization of the local population (Liu and Wall 2005). Recently, there is increasing attention for sustainable tourism development and community participation among practitioners as well as scholars, yet the focus is often on environmental issues or the social impacts of the industry on a community. Despite the fact that there is increasing attention for human resources considerations when it comes to development plans for many tourism destinations, this attention generally is very
marginal. It tends to focus only on the number of jobs generated, while the job quality and social aspects of the employment opportunities are often neglected (Liu and Wall 2005). There is a need for adequate training programs to generate local skilled labourers and to prevent cultural conflicts (Echtner 1995). The existing training programs are too simplistic, according to Liu and Wall (2005). They are principally aimed at obtaining the international service standards that western tourists expect and have no regard for the necessity of creating broader community development.

Especially when it comes to mass tourism destinations, the development of human resources strategies are of secondary interest due to the heavy competition from other destinations. Due to the high levels of standardization and exchangeability, the government and local communities are dependent on the international tourism organizations to sell their product to the tourists (Lea 1988). If the destinations do not comply with the international standards, the western tour operators will easily send their customers to another destination. For this reason, social and cultural aspects are generally neglected when it comes to the training of local employees (Liu and Wall 2005). Paradoxically however, in order to obtain an independent position, training should consider the specific context of a destination and contain issues relevant to the local cultural setting (Echtner 1995). As Liu and Wall (2005: 5) state: “This simplistic approach is not only counterproductive in stimulating indigenous tourism growth, it may also further perpetuate and aggravate a culture of subservience”.

In addition, tourism in developing countries deals mostly with people from developed countries. While they are there, these western tourists are served to their (every) needs by the local population, since locals possess most serving jobs. From this perspective tourism can be seen as a modern form of sustaining traditional (unequal) relations of dependency between First and Third World (Harrison 1992). For this reason, mass tourism development has more than once been linked to (neo) colonialism and said to be reinforcing the capitalist world system where the centre dominates the peripheral areas (Clancy 1999; De Kadt 1979; Kermath and Thomas 1992; Nash 1977) and the rich are served by the poor.

In this chapter, the dynamics and consequences of tourism in developing countries and the aspect of conflicts due to job inequality will be discussed from a cross-cultural management perspective. The daily life within two of the most luxury hotels of Jamaica, located on the beautiful beach of Negril, is the setting for this chapter. The relationship between the strategies of international managers and (possible) intercultural conflicts with their Jamaican staff will be explored. These relationships are placed within the context of an ex-slave society, where some Jamaicans still perceive the managers to act like ‘masters’. Before the situation in these hotels will be described, some of the most important theories on intercultural management will be discussed.
Intercultural Management Strategies

When it comes to organizations that consist of a culturally diverse workforce (as is the case with the two hotels in Negril), there is a high risk of misunderstandings and conflicts due to cultural differences. The management strategies to deal with these cultural differences can be broadly divided into three groups (cf. Adler 1991; Fung 1995). The first group of strategies concerns ethnocentric strategies that support the cultural dominance of the home country. Unity, control of the head quarters or parent company, home country values and home country management models characterize this group of strategies. The second group of strategies concerns polycentric strategies that recognize the importance of the local culture. The third group of strategies concerns strategies that suggest a combination of the first and second group of strategies. This group of strategies is based on the assumption that cultural differences can be overcome or constructively used for competitive advantage. Below, these three categories will be further explored to construct a theoretical framework that will be used to interpret the situation in the two hotels in Negril.

According to Adler (1991) a manager can approach cultural diversity in several ways. She describes different ways of managing the impact of cultural diversity on the organization. According to the author the organization's approach to managing that diversity is defined by the extent to which managers recognize cultural diversity and its potential advantages and disadvantages. She sets out the different forms of cultural adaptation on a continuum.

At one end of the continuum the first strategy to deal with cultural diversity in organizations can be found. This strategy is called cultural ‘dominance’ or ‘parochialism’ and refers to strategies in which cultural differences are being ignored. Managers do not accept cultural differences but try to avoid these by sticking to their own cultural behaviour (Adler 1991). This strategy is similar to what Fung calls the ‘ethnocentric strategy’. With this strategy the management tries to impose the headquarters' worldview upon locals in foreign subsidiaries and the organizational culture of the home country organization is spread to other local offices (Fung 1995). Fung states that from this perspective the western management is regarded as superior and universally applicable. As a consequence the structures and procedures are not designed to take alternative behaviours and conceptions into account. Therefore there is a risk that the members of societies where the strategy is imposed upon will not accept the structures and procedures. As Fung argues: “local employees are supposed not only to adapt their organizational behaviour to them, but also to internalise a western work attitude” (Fung 1995: 148).

The second type of strategy, ‘cultural compromise’, aims at creating respect for cultural differences. The manager monitors his behaviour in specific situations and acts according to his own values or in accordance with other (local) cultural values (Adler 1991). Similarly Fung's ‘polycentric strategy’ can be seen as a reaction to the problems that the ethnocentric strategy causes. Fung describes this strategy to be one that assumes that the host-country perspective is the most suitable for local business. Overseas subsidiaries are primarily staffed by local
employees. Furthermore the local employees are left free to develop their own corporate policy and culture (Fung 1995: 226).

At the other end of the continuum Adler places the last and least common approach, ‘cultural synergy’. This approach is aimed at training organization members to recognize cultural differences and to use these cultural differences to their advantage, rather than ignoring them or allowing them to cause problems. Cultural synergy, as an approach to managing the impact of cultural diversity, involves a process in which managers form organizational policies, strategies, structures, and practices based on, but not limited to, the cultural patterns of individual organization members and clients (Adler 1991). Fung calls this type of strategy the ‘non-ethnocentric corporate policy’ (Fung 1995). This strategy consists merely of a methodology for dealing with cultural diversity, instead of trying to create a corporate culture that is based on a particular worldview. According to Van Marrewijk (1999) this strategy is a ‘geocentric strategy’, which is mainly focused on trying to create synergy by finding a balance between global co-ordination and local adaptation. The corporation should “facilitate and stimulate the exposure and negotiation of diverging rationalities among people” (Fung 1995: 227). The third policy offers a middle ground between the ethnocentric and the polycentric strategy. According to Fung (1995) this approach leads to “possible synergy of the western and the local approach, by bringing into the open the underlying considerations of both” (Fung 1995: 149). This geocentric approach attempts to combine the considerations of both perspectives. In this strategy, adaptation to cultural differences becomes a two-way process, which means that western management to some extent adjusts their management style to local circumstances, while locals to some degree accommodate to the manager’s management style.

In the following paragraphs the situation in the two Jamaican hotels will be used to further elaborate on the three types of strategies. In order to establish an extended view of the relationship between (western) management and the (local) staff, a number of issues will be explored. In the first place ‘recruitment and selection’ and ‘training and development’ because both these issues provide an insight into the employment opportunities for local employees. Furthermore, ‘leadership and communication’ will be discussed because these issues are relevant to the understanding of the relationships between the international managers and local employees. Subsequently, the issues of ‘time’, and ‘appraisal and compensation’ are used to illustrate a number of conflicts and cultural differences between the managers and Jamaican staff.

**THE CASE OF INTERCULTURAL MANAGEMENT IN TWO NERGIL HOTELS**

This chapter is based on the evidence from two large hotels in Negril Jamaica. Both these hotels are part of a larger company that owns three hotels in Jamaica. Together, these two hotels have approximately 600 employees. These hotels are divided into several departments (for example Human resources, Food & Beverage, Housekeeping, etcetera). Each department has one or more managers. The majority of these managers are foreigners. The staff is mainly Jamaican.
These Jamaican employees are hired according to specific company policies, as will be explained below.

**Recruitment and Selection**
When it comes to the recruitment and selection procedures of the hotels, most of the Jamaican employees are selected based on the fact that they can read, write, and speak English. They are usually hired directly after graduation from middle or high school and have no work experience, which according to one of the international managers, means that they are not yet ‘spoiled’ by the Jamaican work attitude. As a result they can still be moulded and shaped in a way that they will be able to perform according to the standards set by the management of the hotels. Like a manager said:

Typically in Jamaica they would hire somebody who has been a bartender for 10 years. You can teach anyone how to be a bartender in two days. What we have learned in our previous experience is how to evaluate people and how to find people with good attitudes. We use tests to find out whether the Jamaican job-applicants have the right attitude and we put them on a three-month probation. In addition we train them and if, after 3 months, you are in doubt you release them. There are certain ways that we have learned and used overseas and we introduced them here. Recruitment is definitely one.

The hotels employ large numbers of young Jamaicans who just come from high school, primarily because the international managers are able to train them corresponding to the company’s needs and wishes. A lot of attention is paid to the selection and screening of the staff, in order to see if they ‘fit’ and can work according to the standards. The recruitment strategies seem to be designed to avoid ‘back door’ practices. Where Jamaicans tend to look after each other and some Jamaican businesses would employ brothers and sisters, the international hotels employ Jamaicans based on their skills. For instance, their appearance and knowledge of the English language are important because they have to work for and meet the expectations of the western tourists. After the recruitment and selection procedures, based on the aforementioned qualities, the Jamaican employees will be trained by the management of the hotels in order to develop them into employees that match the organization’s culture and work standards. In the following segment the training and development strategies will be further discussed.

**Training and Development**
The international managers claim that training and development of employees is essential, for it would lead to the transfer of knowledge. However, it seems that they assume that such a transfer should take place in one direction only, from their way of management to local employees. A good example is the answer of one of the managers when asked whether he should adapt to the Jamaican culture or if the Jamaicans should adapt to his international management style:
Honestly what I have noticed is that quite a few Jamaicans have never travelled before. I think it is valuable for them to adapt to a more international type of lifestyle and way of doing things rather than just the Jamaican way. I think they would be better if they would adapt to the international way of doing things because Jamaica is just one island and that is not the way people do things everywhere. An example is the situation where Jamaicans tend to say ‘this is Jamaica and here we do the things the Jamaican way’. We tell them our clients are not Jamaican. They are international clients and therefore we have to provide international standards and service. We teach them to show up for work and for training, showing up when you are on duty, giving good customer service etcetera.

In addition, some of the managers state that they hope local employees will realize that things are done differently in the west, and that they will adapt their behaviour accordingly. It seems as if some managers view themselves as a role model for the Jamaican staff and that the Jamaicans should take full advantage of the international managers’ experience.

Nevertheless, even though managers expect the Jamaicans to adapt to their style of management, the international managers do realize that the Jamaican employees are likely to maintain their cultural identity. This is important because, as Fung argues, “in order to be successful a joint venture has to find an answer to the apparent paradox between westernisation of the local employee, and maintenance of the latter’s cultural identity” (1995: 158). In the particular case of tourism enterprises like these hotels, the preservation of the local culture is part of the strategy to meet the tourists’ expectations. It is essential to remember that many tourists come to Jamaica to experience the Jamaican atmosphere. If the degree of westernisation of Jamaican employees is too high, the hotel will lose its ‘Jamaicanness’, as one of the managers calls it, and this will conflict with the expectations of the guests who come to Jamaica to get to know Jamaicans and their culture. Still, the training of the Jamaican staff seems to be mainly focused on developing them to meet the international standards. As one of the managers argues:

I feel like we should try to give that Jamaican flavour but we have to operate according to international standards. The way I manage is mainly based on an international style that I developed during my career worldwide. I found that in Jamaica you sometimes have to wake up to reality and say ‘I am sorry, I do not care if it is done like that in Jamaica’. That is not how it is done internationally and we are going to do it the right way.

Despite the recognition of the importance of the local culture, the management style of the hotels’ managers is predominantly ‘western’. Where the local culture is adopted, it has been done as part of the strategy to attract and entertain the tourists. Yet, this does not mean that the western management style is not influenced by the local Jamaican culture. In every situation where
intercultural interaction occurs, both cultures will be influenced in some way by that interaction. The leadership style of the international managers and the communication between them and the Jamaican employees show that mutual influence occurs to a certain extent.

**Leadership and Communication**

With regard to the leadership style of the international managers in the two Negril hotels, it becomes clear that the majority of the managers share the view that the ideal boss should be more of a democrat. Yet, at the same time the majority of the managers state that they expect managers to be decisive and assertive. The Jamaicans prefer managers who use their intuition and strive for consensus and they “expect to be consulted before a decision is made that affects their work, but they accept that the boss is the one who finally decides” (Hofstede 1994: 36). An international manager explains that:

A manager who wants to be successful in Jamaica sometimes has to be decisive and assertive but at the same time has to look for consensus. With a Jamaican workforce you are not going to get more output by being assertive and decisive all the time. If you manage like that Jamaicans will look at you and smile at you and say yes boss, no problem boss, but at the end of the day they will do something else. If you consult with them you gain their respect. This is something I have learned as a manager in Jamaica.

The decision-making process is interesting because the nature of decision-making is culturally rooted. The majority of the managers seem to understand that being assertive and decisive all the time instead of also looking for consensus might be interpreted by Jamaicans as not respecting their opinions and ideas. Jamaican employees are willing to accept a manager who is sometimes decisive and assertive, but this does not mean that they do not want to be respected for who they are. The managers try to take this into account in their work. Through a democratic and consultative management strategy employees are being involved and informed about the reasoning behind decisions.

In addition to the decision-making process, the way of communicating is a very important aspect of the leadership style as this can form the basis of a respectful relationship between the international manager and the Jamaican employee. One of the main sources of intercultural conflicts lies in the communication style. According to Adler “The greater the difference in background between senders and receivers, the greater the difference in meanings attached to particular words and behaviours” (1991: 66). In Jamaica respect is essential for the establishment of a successful cooperation between international managers and Jamaicans. The Jamaicans in the two hotels argue that consulting them is a way of showing respect, which is fundamental when it comes to cross-cultural cooperation. Even though the majority of the managers realize that consulting the Jamaican staff is important, a large part of them argue that they prefer to tell subordinates
what to do. Nevertheless, all the managers seem to realize that a foundation of respect between them and the Jamaicans facilitates the cooperation. So it seems that although the managers tend to hold on to their own strategies, some aspects of the Jamaican culture are integrated in their management style, as long as it benefits the business.

Another aspect of communication that sometimes leads to intercultural conflicts is politeness. An example is an international manager who, due to his cultural background, is not used to speaking in a direct way, which he perceives to be impolite. Yet he is confronted with the fact that Jamaicans do not like managers to ‘beat around the bush’, as one of them calls it. As a result, his ‘politeness’ leads to irritations by some of the Jamaicans because they feel that the manager is not straightforward with them. This is an example of cultural miscommunication. The members of two different cultures have different expectations regarding the way to speak and so conflicts are likely to arise (Gudykunst and Kim 1997). The Jamaican culture and their expectations seem to differ from those of the manager, which results in (mutual) irritation.

Even though both managers and Jamaicans learn about each other’s cultural background and habits, trying to comply with them is not always as easy as it seems. Cultural habits can be very distinctive and subtle and it is extremely difficult to learn them (Gudykunst and Kim 1997). As one manager puts it, communicating with Jamaicans sometimes feels like walking on a narrow ‘ridge’ while trying to stay in balance. It is very hard to understand when to be direct or when to be polite. On one side Jamaicans want the managers to be polite, but if they are too polite the Jamaicans take advantage of it. On the other side Jamaicans appreciate it when you are honest and direct, but when you are too direct they will be offended because they interpret this as a form of disrespect.

In other words, it becomes clear that cultural differences can lead to conflicting situations. Adapting to the cultural habits of the other group is not always the best solution because the differences can be very subtle. It is important to find a balance in the behaviour, that each of the actors is comfortable with.

**Time**

Besides the communication style the difference in time perception can also be a source of conflict. Most western managers consider time to be money, and therefore they want to spend time productively. Jamaicans perceive time to be a framework to orient themselves, but not something they are constantly watching. This difference in perception can lead to problems in the two hotels because most managers argue that the hotel is a professional organization where time is money, and Jamaicans need to realize that. As one international manager remarks:

One of the problems for an international manager is that the Jamaican culture tends to be more relaxed. They just do their work the way they did it before and that means that to them time is just a framework for orientation. They don’t always realize that time is money and that at the end of the day the hotel has to make a profit for the shareholders. I
wouldn’t mind Jamaicans adapting my view in relation to the perception of time because I feel it would make them work more efficient.

The difference in time-perception has caused intercultural conflicts. Managers sometimes are frustrated that Jamaicans do not consider time to be money and as a result they do not always work as hard as is expected from them. In addition managers seem to be future-oriented where Jamaicans seem to be present-oriented. The managers seem to focus on the (near) future as they work towards achieving targets and planning ahead. Many Jamaicans, on the other hand, seem to be thinking on a day-to-day basis. This frustrates the managers since they feel that Jamaicans have to learn how important time is to other cultures. An example is a manager who argues that he always tells the Jamaicans “guys, if you organize yourself first thing in the morning and plan ahead, work is a lot easier for you”. But he feels that Jamaicans always think ‘soon come’. The manager finds it frustrating that many Jamaicans have an attitude where they like to take things easy and as a result the work sometimes is not finished when it is supposed to be. This upsets the manager because he feels he warned the Jamaicans in advance that they should plan ahead and this sometimes causes conflicts.

Appraisal and Compensation
With regard to the appraisal and compensation policies, these also seem to produce frustrations and sometimes conflicts between the local staff and international management. Where the international managers generally perceive the wage differences as justified, most Jamaican employees in the two hotels share the view that the differences are enormous and sometimes “sickening” as one Jamaican employee puts it. As a result the Jamaicans state that conflicts sometimes occur. As one of the Jamaican employees says:

In the hotel the salary gap between the international managers and the Jamaican line staff should be narrower. The Jamaican line staff mainly does all the work, and the international managers get paid for it. The difference is frustrating and sometimes Jamaicans get angry. But many Jamaicans will keep this frustration to themselves for quite a while and on an impulse they will resign instead of confronting a manager with it. Afterwards many of them feel bad about the decision.

The huge wage differences between the international managers and the Jamaican staff thus can be a source of conflict. A Jamaican employee said about the privileges and status symbols of the managers:

I expect managers to have a house and a car. This doesn't mean I also accept it. Most Jamaicans, including me, feel that it is our money that pays for the house and car that they have as a privilege because they are a manager.
The majority of the Jamaican interviewees experience problems in accepting the wage differences. Most Jamaicans feel that the wage differences are not reasonable because they are doing all the work while the international managers are getting paid for it. Where Jamaicans emphasize egalitarian payment and a family-atmosphere, the management strategy regarding the payment policy is constructed according to a western model. In general the Jamaicans in the hotels are paid for performance, which is indicative of a western work ethos. Even though some attention is given to the family-atmosphere; most international managers state that in the hotel the task still prevails over the relationship and that the relationship between an employer and an employee is a contract. At the end of the day the hotel is a professional organization that needs to be profitable which means that the Jamaican staff has to perform to the standards set by the managers.

Conclusion

In this chapter theories on intercultural management strategies have been applied to the situation within two luxury hotels in Negril, Jamaica. The strategies managers employ in intercultural settings can be broadly divided into three categories: ethnocentric strategies, polycentric strategies, and geocentric strategies (Adler 1991; Fung 1995; Van Marrewijk 1999). From the empirical evidence presented in this chapter it becomes clear that the situation in the Negril hotels cannot simply be characterized as ethnocentric, polycentric or geocentric. Based on this chapter it can be concluded that in many ways the policy of the managers seems to represent their own management style and is aimed at the westernisation of the Jamaicans. This would indicate that the international managers are applying an ethnocentric strategy. Some managers state that Jamaicans should learn from them and should work conform the international standards that the managers value. However, in some aspects managers do pay attention to the Jamaican culture, which implies a more polycentric approach. For instance the managers have indicated that it is important not to lose the ‘Jamaicaness’ of the atmosphere in the hotels, for this is part of the attractiveness for tourist. For this reason aspects of the local culture are being accentuated.

The question however is, to what extent these concerns for local culture are part of a broader strategy to improve the intercultural cooperation. These practices can also be part of what MacCannell (1976) and Cohen (1988) identify as the commodification of cultures. They argue that the international tourism business often leads to a commodification of local cultures for the purpose of selling experiences to western tourists. These tourists want to get a taste of the ‘authentic’ local culture and the tourism industry strategically adapts to the demands. Thus it could be argued that the attention these international managers seem to have for the Jamaican culture is just a frontstage practice, to create a certain image for the tourists. At the backstage, out of sight for the tourists, the management strategies are predominantly ethnocentric. The international managers aim to control the processes in their organization and are merely ‘using’ some aspects of the local culture in their strategies. However, this does not mean that they actually intend
to incorporate the local Jamaican culture. It is more about creating a ‘local image’ than about the ‘local feeling’.

The specific nature of the tourism industry, especially when it comes to mass tourism, is different from other sectors where intercultural cooperation occurs. The theories that have been discussed in this chapter are mainly based on situations where the intercultural interaction is limited to the interactions between expatriates and locals within organizations. The organizations involved are usually international companies (with several subsidiaries) that produce either for the western markets or for the local market. In these cases however there is generally a clear distinction between the production and consumption of the products. Yet when it comes to (Third World) tourism, the marketing of the products is located in the First World and aimed at First World clients, while the consumption takes place in the Third World: the clients themselves travel to consume the product, as opposed to products that are being shipped to them (Echtner and Prasad 2003). With tourism, the local context is part of the product and therefore the boundaries between production and consumption are unclear. This means that a new dimension of intercultural interaction is involved, namely between the locals and the tourists. Unlike other lines of business, in tourism there is frequent interaction between (low-level) employees and the clients (guests). These interactions are characterized by great difference. Interesting is that

...during the interactions one is at leisure while the other is at work. One has economic assets but little knowledge of the local culture, while the other has cultural capital but little money. One is usually white and the other usually black. One is from the First World and the other from the developing or Third World (Gmelch 2003: 25).

As a consequence, it is not surprising that these interactions are compared to servitude and a subservient mentality, instead of merely providing services (Gmelch 2003). As Crick notes: “in many areas of the Third World [...] tourism is associated strongly with servility; it reawakens memories of the colonial past and so perpetuates resentments and antagonisms” (1989: 330). This is further aggravated by the unequal division of labour in the tourism industry of developing countries. As became clear in this chapter, most management positions are fulfilled by expatriates, while the Jamaicans possess the lower (serving) jobs. The unequal distribution of employment opportunities is caused by a lack of skilled local labourers. As became clear, the strong competition between destinations is one of the reasons why human resource strategies tend to be neglected in development plans (Echtner 1995; Liu and Wall 2005). The (multinational) tourism chains have to comply with the international service quality standards to be able to attract tourists. This requires a more ethnocentric approach to the management of these organizations because the local population generally lacks the expertise to obtain this quality and meet the tourists’ expectations. It is necessary to create a paradise that coincides with the image that the tourists expect. "As a result, the
vast majority of Third World destination marketing is created and distributed by First World promoters who are economically motivated to sell a particular brand of fantasy to a First World market” (Echtner and Prasad 2003: 661). The local culture and local people are an essential part of this fantasy, thus these become artefacts to be strategically employed for marketing purposes.

This might be the paradox of tourism in developing countries. The industry is dominated by western management strategies because the destinations have to meet with international quality standards in order to sell the products. However, the tourists buy an experience that has to coincide with their expectations, thus the local population is needed for the creation of this ‘authentic paradise’. Images of the local culture are used to create the experience of exoticness or strangeness the tourists are looking for without being confronted with anything that might be less comfortable than at home. In other words, the local culture becomes a commodity to be displayed and used on the frontstage, while on the backstage these locals have to work according to western management strategies and please the tourists by offering them services that correspond to western standards.

This chapter is based on research conducted by Ewout van der Meer in spring 2000. Working for a tour operator in the Netherlands at the time, he was able to establish contacts with an international hotel group in Jamaica. Through these contacts Ewout obtained access to two large (all-inclusive) hotels located in Negril. He was allowed to walk through all parts of the hotels and talk to all people employed. These hotels employed several international managers and a large group of local employees. His research concentrated on the cross-cultural differences between international managers and the Jamaican workforce and on the relationship between intercultural conflicts and strategy. During a three-month stay in Negril he conducted in-depth, open ended interviews with people representing different jobs in the hotels; from the general manager, the human resources manager and the food and beverage manager to the bell boy, the secretary to the general manager, team members housekeeping, etcetera. He lived in an apartment near the hotels and had many contacts among the local population, mainly through his network of contacts from the hotel employees. In this way he was able to study his informants both on the job and off duty. Besides, he tried to collect information through observation (the daily work practices, the behaviour of the informants and the environment in which the interview took place) and by documentary analysis (manuals and reports from both hotels).
9 Jamaican Tourist Guides:Ya mon!,
I’ll show you the real Jamaica!

Pieter Masmeijer

Introduction
For decades Jamaica has had a unique attraction to tourists. Sun-blessed beaches, the deep blue sea, Reggae and the magic of the Rasta population have given Jamaica a very special place on the tourist map. Due to these factors large numbers of tourists are drawn to Jamaica every year. The greater part of tourism is concentrated along the island’s north coast. This is the place where large, luxury all-inclusive resorts, all with private beaches, can be found, where the outside world seems to have disappeared for a moment and where – once inside – practically everything is free of charge. Furthermore, this is where gigantic luxury cruise ships arrive for a brief visit to allow their passengers a taste of the Jamaican attractions. The main destinations on the north coast of Jamaica, with its beautiful tropical scenery, are Negril, Montego Bay and Port Antonio.

Far away from the buzz of mass tourism along Jamaica’s north coast the southern and western parts have so far only been discovered by a handful of tourists. Away from the tourist crowds, this part of the island has remained relatively unspoilt and the atmosphere may be described as relaxed and pleasant. Spontaneously created businesses and somewhat decayed tourist facilities give the place a special kind of charming attractiveness. This area can be characterized as the periphery of the Jamaican tourism industry, with the Blue Mountain area in the West as the most important location when it comes to tourism. Tourism development, although growing, has not (yet) reached the level of the tourism centre in the north of Jamaica.

The Jamaican tourism industry evolves around different (groups of) actors. In the first place there are of course the tourists who visit Jamaica mainly for a sun-blessed holiday. The presence of large groups of tourists has caused all sorts of organizations and individuals to become involved in tourist activities. Among these are local tour operators, the hotel and restaurant owners and the tourist guides. All of them hope to be able to generate an attractive income from this sector. Furthermore, the government and all sorts of international organizations are, directly or indirectly, involved in tourism.

This chapter focuses on the organization of the Jamaican tourism industry and the position of the local tourist guides in Jamaica. Different types of tourist guides will be identified and discussed. Special attention will be paid to the way these guides organize their work, their position within the Jamaican tourism industry, the interactions among the different guides, and their strategies to
attract tourists. The chapter focuses on the local Jamaican tourist guides because they comprise the largest group of guides and because they are responsible for the tourist experiences and the image that tourists will get from the island. Therefore it is necessary to understand the relationships among the local guides, the opportunities and barriers they encounter, and the way the tourist attractions are organized.

**Tourist Guides**

A tourist guide is someone, often from the local population, who is engaged in accompanying tourists during excursions through the country or a particular part of it. He owes his existence to his indispensable specialist knowledge about the country. Tourist guides can play different roles, depending upon the situation. Generally speaking the tourist guide acts as an intermediary between the tourist, the local culture and the local population. The tourists’ experiences largely depend upon the information the tourist guide is able or willing to release (Bras 2000). As pointed out by Van den Berghe (1994), the tourist guides, as well as other intermediaries who are employed in the tourism industry, have a certain power. They have the knowledge and the contacts tourists need to be able to do and see the things for which they came to this destination. The tourists, on the other hand, have money to spend, which is indispensable for the intermediaries’ existence. Both groups therefore have an interest in this relationship. An important factor in the relationship between tourists and intermediaries is trust. However, trust is usually moderate and unstable between tourists and guides (Van den Berghe 1994). This mutual dependence, coupled with a shaky relationship of trust between the guides and the tourists, may give rise to tensions resulting in mutual distrust (Van den Berghe 1994). The level of trust is usually linked to the type of guide involved. For the tourist guides, being associated with an official tour operator or some other organization can offer great benefits, since it creates trust among the (western) tourists. As a rule, guides from the informal circuit are less easily trusted by tourists.

Different types of guides will also have different ways of approaching the tourists and persuading them to make use of their specific services. In literature on tourist guides various types of guides are characterized (e.g. Bras 2000; Cohen 1985; Crick 1992; Holloway 1981). These are often based upon the extent to which they are associated with an official organization or tour operator. According to Bras (2000) various guiding styles have developed more or less side by side in order to keep up with the trends in tourism. Hence there are different categories of local tourist guides. She distinguishes professional guides, site-related guides, odd-jobbers and network specialists (Bras 2000: 85). All of them have developed their own guiding style to meet the demand created by tourists.

Professional guides are employed by tour operators or work for them on a freelance basis. Generally, they are given these jobs as a result of their knowledge of a specific language such as English, German or French. In Jamaica the professional guides’ work mainly consists of leading the standardized tours offered by the tour operator. During the excursion the guide is in charge, ensuring
the smooth running of the programme and guarding against any time schedules being exceeded (Bras 2000: 88). The guides employed by a tour operator are clearly distinguishable by their uniforms, provided with the tour operator’s logo. During the tour they take care of all sorts of practical matters, along with providing the tourists with information about the country, its inhabitants and the places that are visited.

The second group distinguished by Bras are the site-related guides. These are always to be found in the direct vicinity of a tourist site. As a rule they live near the site and spend a large part of the day waiting for prospective customers. In order to control the competition among these guides, a rotation schedule is often in operation, giving all guides the opportunity to perform their guiding activities (Bras 2000: 95). Their incomes are subject to strong fluctuations and they are dependent upon the number of tourists available and on their ability to make proper arrangements with tourists.

The third and the fourth category of guides are the odd-jobbers and the network specialists. Odd-jobbers, also referred to as beach boys, are not associated with any tour operators and they do not work for any particular organization. They are not full-time guides, but engage in all sorts of tourist-related activities. Guiding is combined with working as a waiter, driver, souvenir seller or with being unemployed (Bras 2000: 99). The odd-jobbers mainly focus on one specific group of tourists: the low-budget, individual young traveller. In Jamaica the term rent-a-rasta is commonly applied to this group. The rent-a-rastas specifically focus on female tourists who travel on their own or in a small group. They are especially interested in developing an intimate relationship with the female tourist. According to Bras this group call themselves guides because it has proved to be a successful way of establishing contacts with tourists (Bras 2000: 102).

The network specialists owe their name to the lasting contacts and relations they have built up through their long-term experience. Their networks range from the tourism sector at home as well as abroad. Through foreign tour operators or former customers, who spread the word about their services, a network is formed on which these guides rely for work. While the excursions they offer are different from those offered by the regular tour operators, these excursions in their own way are standardized too. Although these guides acclaim that they distinguish themselves from the official tourist guides because they adapt the programme to the tourists’ wishes, thus offering tailor-made tours.

These different types of guides have to compete for the attention of the tourists. The groups of guides described above are broad categories of different types of guides. Nevertheless the boundaries between these types are not always clear. One guide may play different roles, depending on the situation. Roessingh and Duijnoven (2004) point out that small entrepreneurs, in the tourism industry in particular, are constantly shifting between various roles and identities in order to respond to the situation and to cope with the day-to-day problems of generating income.

In the next paragraphs, two different excursions will be described to provide an illustration of the different types of guides that work side by side in Jamaica.
first excursion can be characterized as a standardized tour, aimed at large groups of (mass) tourists, while the second excursion seems to be more spontaneous and aimed at smaller groups of tourists. These two different stories are indicative of the apparent dichotomy in the structure of the Jamaican tourism industry; mass tourism on the one hand and small-scale tourism on the other hand. Nevertheless, these excursions are all aimed at selling a certain experience to the tourists: ‘a taste of the real Jamaica’. The question is what the differences are between these two experiences and how the tourist guides adapt themselves to the wishes and desires of their guests.

Walking the Dunn’s Riverfalls

This paragraph deals with the daily life of Patrick. Patrick works as a tourist guide for a Jamaican tour operator called Jamaican Tours. Patrick can be characterized as a professional guide (Bras 2000). As a rule the tourist guides in Jamaica are not employed by the tour operator, but associated with one of the island’s tour operators on a freelance basis. The main job of this type of tourist guide is accompanying groups of tourists on one of the excursions offered by the tour operator. Besides the tourist guide, during every excursion there is a driver employed as well. The tourist guide provides information about the country, the Jamaican population and the sights that are visited. Furthermore, the tourist guide ensures the smooth running of the excursion. Minor and major problems or unforeseen circumstances are taken care of by the tourist guide – to the best of his ability. The guide watches the time schedule and communicates with the driver, the people in charge of the sights and the hotel and restaurant owners.

The various tour operators offer a wide range of excursions. For example there is a visit to the Appleton Rum factory, a boat trip on the Black River with its rare crocodiles, an excursion to the Blue Lagoon, bamboo-rafting tours, a visit to a banana plantation or one of the island’s numerous waterfalls. Excursions lasting more than one day are also available. During these five-to-seven-days’ excursions a combination of the abovementioned sights are visited and the group is accommodated in upmarket tourist hotels.

As mentioned earlier, this chapter focuses on Patrick. He is an unmarried, 36-year-old Jamaican with a five-year-old daughter. For a number of years, Patrick studied German at Kingston University. Due to his knowledge of German he managed to find a job in the tourism industry as a professional guide. Patrick is known for his kindness to tourists and his sense of humour. Patrick dresses impeccably at all times. He usually wears a white polo shirt with the Jamaican Tours logo, dark trousers and with his short haircut he seems a real gentleman.

One of Patrick’s favourite excursions is a trip to Dunn’s river falls, situated along the northern shores near Ocho Rios. This is also one of the island’s most popular spots, because many travel books refer to this place as a major attraction (e.g. Baker 2003). This is the place Patrick is heading for together with his group of 12 tourists. In the bus Patrick tells his clients that it is going to be a fantastic day. The main attraction is going for a river walk. This is a walk through the river and as it is clearly shown, is not as adventurous as it may sound. It is an upstream walk of about 300
metres, through the water, up the waterfall. The brochure contains a charming picture of foaming water cascading down the limestone rocks. Once the group has reached the beautiful spot it becomes clear that this location is visited by large numbers of tourists. There are many tourist facilities and the excursions seem to be highly standardized.

After Patrick has paid for the group’s admission tickets at the entrance, and the members of his group have rented a pair of water shoes and a safe to put clothes and valuables in, the Jamaican Tours group is ready for the beginning of the river walk. Patrick now hands over his group to one of the river guides. The river guide, to be recognized by his black T-shirt with the word “river guide” written on it in big letters, introduces himself as Owen. This is the time for Patrick to relax on a bench in the shade while his group lines up for the walk. Next the group walks down along the waterfall on a paved path to the point where the waterfall reaches the beach. This walk lasts about 5 minutes.

At the meeting point at the bottom of the waterfall Patrick’s group is joined by a few other groups of tourists in order to experience this adventure together. A large group of cruise ship tourists has just started the river walk. These cruise ship passengers are a major source of income to Jamaica and most certainly to the Dunns Riverfalls. Owen, the river guide explains that it may take a while before the cruise ship group is ready, so a bit of patience is called for: “Relax man, this is Jamaica”!, says Owen. To get the group into the mood he starts cracking a few jokes from his standard repertoire. As soon as the last tourists of the cruise ship group have taken their first steps upstream, it is time to follow them. Owen is even prepared to collect everyone’s camera and hangs them around his neck. Owen leads the group, stumbling under the weight of the cameras.

The tourists follow him in one long line. The water comes up to their knees and the surface is practically flat. As soon as they reach the foot of the waterfall Owen shouts, “Ya mon! Picture moment” and next, against the backdrop of the waterfall, all tourists are photographed individually, each with their own camera, as Owen removes one camera after another from around his neck. Understandably, finding out which camera belongs to which tourist takes more than just a few minutes. After this photo session Owen points out that from here the group is supposed to walk hand in hand. It is obvious what he means; the group of cruise ship tourists is still visible, going up against the waterfall along the worn-away steps (or were they cut out for the purpose?). Step by step the tourists fight the waterfall. Meanwhile the group is filmed by one of the river guides with the camera of one of the tourists.

Although the walk is not much longer than some three hundred metres, it takes almost an hour before the group arrives at the highest point. Here highly priced T-shirts saying ‘I climbed the Dunn’s river falls’ can be bought. When the group of Jamaican Tours tourists has returned to the top of the falls safe and sound, Patrick rejoins the group. While his group is admiring the waterfall one more time from the top, Patrick discretely indicates to one of his tourists that the river guide might have earned himself a tip. Finally, Patrick and his group climb into the bus again, on their way to the next attraction: perhaps the (hand-fed) crocodiles in the Black River.
The excursion described above, presents a picture of the work of professional guides employed by the tourist organizations. It shows that the guides in this example have a relationship of mutual dependence. Patrick controls the space in which the tourists are able to move around during the day. It is his responsibility to provide the tourists with a satisfying experience. In this sense he can be characterized as the gatekeeper of the excursion. Nevertheless when the group arrives at the waterfalls he hands over his responsibility to Owen. This means that Patrick needs to be able to trust Owen to take over. Owen is responsible for the experience the tourists have of this particular attraction. He forms an essential part of the over-all feeling the tourists have of the excursion and the island at the end of the day.

This kind of attraction is organized through professional companies, who hire guides like Patrick and Owen on a freelance basis. If the tourists are not satisfied with the excursion, it is likely that the tour operator will hire other guides to handle this excursion, leaving Patrick and Owen without work. The structure of this segment in the Jamaican tourism industry makes it virtually impossible for the individual guides to go around the official organizations and attract tourists on their own account. Only official tour operators have access to the attraction. This is different for the group of guides portrayed in the next paragraph. This group of tourist guides work more individually and pretend to offer the tourist an authentic experience, as opposed to the standard tours offered by the formal tour operators. “Ya mon! I’ll show you the real Jamaica!”

Climbing the Blue Mountains
In the previous paragraph it became clear that the professional tourist guides are more or less organized through the tour operators that hire them. They are independent but are hired by the tour operator on a freelance basis, depending on the demand. The group of tourist guides described in this paragraph are also local self-employed people. However, they have an entirely different way of approaching the tourists. They are not associated with any tourist agency or office and there is hardly any form of organization among them. They rather find employment by approaching tourists in the street or around a tourist site. This is done for example by hanging around a hotel or waiting at the immediate entrance to an attraction. Another common strategy is meeting tourists who are on their way to a site at a very early stage. Once the contact has been made, negotiations about the programme and the price are started right away, so that the agreements have already been made once they get near the entrance of the site.

The tourist attractions have been fairly evenly distributed across the island. They are usually surrounded by a few snack bars, cafes and souvenir stalls. A taxi rank with a couple of taxis often forms part of the scene, as do the various tourist guides offering their services. As soon as a tourist approaches an attraction such as a cave or a lagoon, they will invariably be approached by people, mostly men, offering to be their guide. In order to persuade the tourist or to gain their interest they promise a unique experience, something that no one else will see or do. What they say for example is: “I can take you to a very beautiful spot, not far from here, which no one knows.”
An example of such a guide is Kenil. Kenil is a Rasta boy of around nineteen who grew up in the Blue Mountains. Kenil operates high up in the Blue Mountain range, in the east of Jamaica, north east of Kingston. Kenil's father grows coffee and when he is not working as a tourist guide Kenil helps his father at the plantation. The main tour offered by Kenil is a hike from his village to the highest summit of the Blue Mountains, The Blue Mountain Peak (7401 ft). By his own account he specializes in “The sunrise tour”, especially for tourists who are prepared to get up in the middle of the night to experience a sunrise at the highest point of Jamaica.

Many of Kenil’s customers are guests of the wildflower lodge, a modest guesthouse at some 400 metres from his father’s coffee farm high in the Blue Mountains. If tourists indicate that they want to go up the Blue Mountain Peak, the lodge owner introduces them to boys such as Kenil. To tourists an encounter with Kenil is an authentic experience. For a number of years now Kenil has been trying to live according to the Rastafari doctrine. He wears his hair in thick, long dreadlocks. His clothes are torn and full of holes. The soles of his laceless shoes come off at the toes. He wears a thick woollen rasta hat and always carries a homemade water pipe. The tourists generally find his appearance exciting. His image is part of the attraction.

Regardless of whether the tourists are experienced hikers or not, Kenil's time of departure is always at around 02:00 a.m. Before departure, the tourists drink a last cup of Blue Mountain coffee, served by the owner of the lodge, and Kenil lights up his first marihuana cigarette. As soon as they start the hike, Kenil takes off at great speed. His slow and relaxed pace of the previous day has disappeared completely. While the tourists are saving their breath, Kenil unceasingly chants religious texts: “Rastafari, Jah Love, Rastafari!” Occasionally the tourists pause for a sip of water. Kenil does not care for water, but it gives him the opportunity to relight his marihuana cigarette. When the tourists decide to inquire about the remaining distance, Kenil replies to them in a familiar Jamaican way: “Soon, soon” says Kenil, “it’s just a good little jump”.

After a couple of hours, the group finally reaches the highest summit of Jamaica. Fantastic! It is now around 6:00, about thirty minutes to sunrise. The tourists take shelter in a sort of mountain cabin, for even in Jamaica temperatures at this height are low. They eat the sandwiches they were given at the lodge while waiting for the sun to rise.

After a magnificent sunrise the group starts the descent. Meanwhile the sun starts to break through the morning haze. Now that it is light, the time has come for Kenil to take a better look at his customers and the objects they carry with them. The zip-off trousers, walking boots and photo cameras have his undivided attention, and he cannot help making a few comments: “that’s an old camera man, ya mon, you should give it to poor people”, obviously including himself among the likely candidates. The tourists carefully continue their way down the mountain, ignoring Kenil’s remarks and concentrating on the road.

Without slowing down and still smoking his marihuana cigarette, Kenil proudly explains that he cultivates his own ganja (marihuana) up here in the mountains.
He offers the tourists to show them his plants and all of a sudden the tourists find themselves standing among the man-sized ganja plants. Of course Kenil offers the tourists to buy some of his ganja, but no one accepts and the group continues their way down. By the time the Wildflower lodge comes into sight again Kenil attempts to collect some extra money for the excursion, but without much luck. He does not really persist; apparently the price he negotiated with the tourists was not so bad in the first place. Once they have returned to their lodges the tourists go to bed, tired but satisfied.

What can be concluded from this case is that Kenil works in a more opportunistic way than the guides from the first case. His business is based on ad-hoc contact with tourists he meets through informal channels (i.e. the lodge). While the tourists in the first case buy the excursion based on the trust they have in the official tour operator that organizes standard excursions, Kenil personally needs to convince his clients that he has something to offer. With his appearance and the suggestion that what he offers is unique and authentic, he is able to attract tourists. Once he has booked the tourists on his excursion he does not really have to worry about the actual excursion because the tourists do not really know what they can expect. The uncertainty and adventurous nature of the tour is part of the attraction. It may in fact be just as standardized as the Dunn’s Waterfall tour, yet this is rather irrelevant in this perspective; it is the ‘feeling of authenticity’ that counts (Cohen 2002).

Jamaican Tourist Attractions: Tourist Guides in Different Settings
In the cases described above, three different types of guide have been discussed; Patrick a professional tour guide, Owen a professional river guide, and Kenil an independent guide, or odd-jobber. The cases demonstrate that the ways in which these guides attract their customers varies greatly. The guides from the first case are not involved in attracting the tourists. They are merely hired by the company on a freelance basis, dependent on the number of tickets sold. Selling the excursions is the job of the representatives employed by the large tour operators. These representatives visit the tourists in their hotels or resorts for the purpose of supplying them with information about the country, while at the same time trying to sell as many excursions as possible to them. The formal character of these organizations creates feelings of trust among the tourists. They know upfront what they are buying because the company is clear about the program of the excursion and the prices. Since the guides are paid per excursion, they are therefore dependent upon the performances of the tour operators’ representatives for an uninterrupted flow of work.

This is different for Kenil, a local offering his services as a guide to the tourists. He is someone responding to seemingly spontaneous encounters with tourists and at that very same moment transforming himself from a coffee plantation employee into a specialized guide leading tourists through inhospitable mountain territory. In order to be able to make a living as a tourist guide Kenil has to try and find his customers himself. This is entirely done in the informal circuit; through a lodge owner, a friend or in the streets.
As has already been described in the case, he tries to respond to the tourists’ expectations or wishes. In doing so he tries to arouse their interest by promising them a unique experience. This is not enough however. Being associated with an official organization, like Patrick and Owen are, provides them with a certain legitimacy, which is particularly appreciated by the western tourists. Because Kenil is not in any way affiliated with an organization, it is essential for him to gain the tourist’s confidence in other ways. His image and the promise of an adventurous and authentic experience appeal to those tourists looking for something other than the standardized tours offered by the official companies. As Cohen mentions, in the more peripheral areas of a country’s tourism industry the attractions are not as clearly defined as in the central areas. The uncertain and almost mysterious promise of these attractions can be very fascinating for those tourists looking for more than the standard tours (Cohen 1985: 25).

The choice of tourists to go on either one of the excursions described depends for a large part on their type of holiday. Tourists on an all-inclusive holiday tend to look for rather safe and standardized excursions offered through legitimate tour operators, while tourists that travel on a more independent basis are usually drawn to the authentic and adventurous character of peripheral attractions like the one Kenil offers. The (infra)structure of the tourism industry has a great influence on the supply of customers for all attractions and guides. This is reflected in the behaviour of the guides. Patrick is mainly dependent upon the luxury (all-inclusive) resorts, since this is where most of his customers are staying during their holidays. Consequently he will focus on the needs and demands of the resort tourist. He takes groups of tourists from the resort to an attraction, provides them with tourist information and takes care of all sorts of practical matters aimed at the comfort of the resort tourist. With his best suit Patrick looks like a gentleman. Apart from the fact that he has a good command of English he also speaks a European language, namely German. He is very fluent and, most important of all, makes a quiet and very reliable impression. Incidentally Patrick may have his reasons for wanting to give that impression. In unfamiliar surroundings a tourist guide dressed in a western manner and having a proper command of English or German might give a feeling of safety and of recognition. His role is to be a trustworthy and a charismatic group leader.

When it comes to getting clients, in practice Owen is less dependent upon the resorts than Patrick is. Due to their favourable location in respect of the island’s main cruise ship terminal, the Dunn’s river falls form part of the cruise ship tourists’ day trip programme. Besides the tourists from the resorts, the passengers of the luxury vessels are a main source of clientele for Owen. Personal contacts are of a rather superficial nature due to the fact that his ‘tour’ of the river falls only takes an hour. However, Owen is in the position to play an entirely different role. He can appeal to the image of the tough river guide who leads his customers to magnificent waterfall vistas along slippery and difficult paths. He wears a black T-shirt with the words “river guide” printed on it. This gives him a professional and trustworthy appearance.
When it comes to the situation of Kenil, his position within the tourism industry is rather different. Due to the fact that the Jamaican tourist infrastructure focuses almost entirely on all-inclusive and cruise ship tourism, Kenil is dependent upon the tourists who, in addition to sun-sea-sand have made a deliberate choice to see more of the island and go to some lengths to achieve that objective. To Kenil every individual customer counts, and word of mouth advertising is essential to him. The unfavourable location of his domain in comparison to some of the other tourist highlights put Kenil into a position in which he is faced with an unpredictable supply of customers. He appeals to the search for an authentic and off-the-beaten-track experience that some tourists are looking for. Instead of presenting himself as a well-dressed gentleman Kenil attracts the tourists’ attention by presenting himself as a rastaman. He is forced to approach the tourists that accompany him on the trip to the Mountains in a much more personal manner. This he is aware of and for that reason he promises the tourists something special, something no one else will experience. As indicated before, the actual authenticity of such peripheral excursions or attractions is hardly relevant. Often these attractions are based on a ‘staged-authenticity’ (Cohen 1985; MacCannell 1976), aimed at the perception and experience of authenticity the tourists demand.

As far as the competition among the different guides is concerned it seems that, although Patrick and Owen may in a certain way be connected on account of the fact that they are both employed within the same domain of tourist arena, i.e. mass tourism, their work as a guide is not mutually exchangeable. Patrick’s work involves being a group supervisor. One of Patrick’s colleagues once described it as follows: “our main task is to prevent tourists from complaining”. The scene of Patrick’s operations ranges from the place where he picks up the tourists to the location of the sights he visits with them. On the way to the attraction a standard routine is observed. As a rule dinner is consumed at one of the restaurants with which the tour operator has made arrangements and the stops for the photo shots too are usually the same.

River guide Owen’s task is to ensure maximum enjoyment of the attraction. These specialized guides have specific qualifications on the basis of which they were hired by the tourist organization. As is the case with the tourist guides employed by the tour operators, their day-to-day duties involve acting as a representative for their organization, which provides them with a regular job. Cohen (1985) recognizes that the level of job demarcation is determined by the extent to which attractions are standardized. The more tourism in an area is developed into standardized mass tourism, the more specialized jobs there are. The case of Jamaica as presented in this chapter provides a good example. A professional guide, like Patrick, is employed by a tour operator and his duties have been clearly defined. Part of the excursion is outsourced to others, for example the bus driver and Owen (the river guide). As a result they are not really in competition with each other. In fact, their jobs complement each other and therefore there is a mutual dependence between them; neither one of them can exist without the other. They need to work together in a way that satisfies their customers and therefore a strong basis of trust among them is required.
Kenil on the other hand experiences much fiercer competition, not so much from the various groups of tourist guides as such, but rather from the mass tourism industry in general. He is dependent on his network for the supply of tourists (the lodge owner) and needs to convince the tourists that he has something special to offer. As Bras puts it: “with the images they display and the experiences they promise, the guides try to persuade the customer that a visit to several attractions under their guidance is an offer they cannot refuse” (1997: 49). However, he is not as dependent on tourism as Patrick and Owen for whom guiding is their official profession. Kenil operates on a more opportunistic basis and guiding is just one of his many activities. In the end guiding is not Kenil’s job. If Kenil should perform poorly he would not be dismissed. Kenil might be put in the category referred to as ‘marginal natives’ by Cohen: “Locals who are thoroughly familiar with the environment, but who have at least a smattering of a foreign language and a basic notion of the tourists’ culture and needs” (Cohen 1985: 18). He makes use of his knowledge and skills to sell a certain experience that many tourists are looking for.

Conclusion
It has become clear in this chapter that there are different types of guides that are active in the tourism industry in Jamaica. According to the typologies offered by different academics, these guides can be characterized as either professional, site-related, odd-jobbers, or network specialists (Bras 2000). However, the separations between these categories are not always clearly demarcated. In fact, as we have seen in the cases presented in this chapter, all of the guides are in a way network specialist, for they operate in the complex tourism arena where they are dependent on others for employment, customers, or other services. Of course some guides are more dependent on their network than others. Kenil, for example is almost entirely dependent on the customers of the Wildflower lodge and it is therefore crucial that he maintains a good contact with the owner of the lodge. Yet when looking at the different categories of guides he may be closest to an odd-jobber, although he has many characteristics of a site-related guide as well.

Both Patrick and Owen are professional guides because they are employed by an official tour operator and guiding is their formal profession. Their jobs are clearly defined and highly standardized. Nevertheless, Owen can be characterized as a site-related guide as well. In other words, the categories of guides are merely an indication of the different nature of guides. “A tourist guide can have a variety of roles and perform a whole range of activities. These depend on his personal background, his licensed or unlicensed status, his guests, the opportunities that he finds on his way and the area where he works” (Bras 1997: 50). Thus, the differences between the three guides in this chapter are closely linked with the area where they work and the tourists they work with.

The Jamaican tourism arena can be broadly divided into two separate domains. In the first place the mass tourism domain, mainly consisting of the all-inclusive resorts and the cruise-ship industry, and secondly, the small-scale tourism domain, comprising the small lodges and hotels throughout the rest of the country. The
tourist activities in the mass tourism domain are highly standardized and require professional guides. The tourists that are attracted by this type of tourism usually seek merely comfort and pleasure, with a little local taste. They demand safe and comfortable excursions through legitimate organizations. On the other hand, in the small-scale, peripheral domain of the tourism arena, the attractions are less clearly defined and organized. The guides that work here are usually unlicensed and they appeal to the tourists’ search for an authentic and unique experience. The guides present themselves as local experts of the area and promise to take them where no one else will take them.

Paradoxically, the tours offered by guides like Kenil are often very standardized as well. From the description it becomes clear that it is not the first time Kenil has led a group of tourists up the mountains by dark. It is the setting and performance of Kenil that makes the experience special for the tourists. So, the two different attractions are both standardized; it is the entourage that is different. The attractions are social constructions, mediated by the stage of development an area is in. This determines the types of tourists that will be attracted as well as the types of guides that are required.

A research on mutual image building between European tour leaders and Jamaican guides, conducted by Pieter Masmeijer, provided the material for this chapter. In spring 2000, Pieter went to Negril, Jamaica to study the images between the European tour leaders of two European travel agencies (mainly operating in the Netherlands, Belgium and Germany) and Jamaican guides working for a Jamaican agency. He focused on the way these mutual images affected the cross-cultural cooperation between them. His methods included the conduction of semi-structured interviews with all tour leaders and the tour guides of the three organizations at their houses, the office, on the beach, during excursions, in a restaurant, in the airport or at his own house. Observations of the locations and the respondent’s behaviour added to the data. Furthermore, he travelled to different parts of Jamaica, participating in several excursions. These methods allowed him to study the different types of guides; both the European guides and the Jamaican guides. During the excursion he was able to learn a lot about the guides and their strategies as well as about the culture and history of the country.
PART IV
Suriname

Tourists dancing with locals, Galibi (Photo: Lizzy Beekman)
10 The Tourism Industry of Suriname – An Introduction

Gwendolyn de Boer

Introduction

The Republic of Suriname is probably one of the least explored countries in the Caribbean. Its contribution to the global tourism industry has been marginal until now (Texel 2005). Surprisingly, Suriname was one of the first countries in the Americas to develop nature tourism in the early 1970s, when the country became famous for its bird watching tourism (Inter-American Development Bank 2005). The untouched rainforest and the tremendous diversity of cultures living in the interior offered, and still offer, a lot of opportunities for eco-tourism. However, the political unrest in the 1980s disturbed the tourism activities, and despite the early start, today the tourism industry in Suriname is far behind the other tourism destinations in the region. Regardless of the increasing attention for eco-tourism in the international tourism market and the rich potential of the country, Suriname has not capitalized on this as yet (TCT 2001). Due to its colonial history most tourists come from the Netherlands, often visiting relatives and friends. It is striking that more and more Surinamers say, “a real tourist does not have family in Suriname” (De Boer 2003: 8). Until recently, few people were aware of the possibilities of the tourism industry. However, it seems as if this is starting to change.

In this chapter an overview of the development of tourism in Suriname will be presented, along with some important aspects of the history of the Republic of Suriname. It serves as an introduction to two specific case studies from Suriname. The first case describes the role of tour operators and tour guides who take tourists on excursions to explore the natural and cultural beauty of the interior of Suriname. The second case focuses on one of these destinations, the nature reserve Galibi with its traditional villages of Christiaankondre and Langamankondre located at the northeast of Suriname, along the Marowijne River at the Atlantic coast. The Galibi nature reserve is known for being one of the most important nesting grounds of the sea turtle in the Atlantic region. Due to the arrival of tourists to the area, the two villages are changing. This case clearly describes the changes from the viewpoint of the community. Both studies clearly reveal that the tourism industry in Suriname is still in its infancy, especially in comparison to countries like Jamaica or the Dominican Republic. The overview presented in this chapter provides the necessary contextual information to facilitate the reading of these two cases.
Suriname

Suriname is located on the northeast coast of South America, just above the equator. The Republic of Suriname, between French Guyana and Guyana, borders the Atlantic Ocean to the north and Brazil to the south. Together with the Guyana’s, a part of Venezuela and the northwest of Brazil, it forms the Guyana Shield. Suriname has a surface of 163,270 sq. km and 386 km of coastline (CIA factbook 2005d).

Despite its geographic location in South America, Suriname is generally considered a Caribbean country. Suriname became a member of CARICOM in 1995 (Central Bank of Suriname 2005) and participates in the Association of Caribbean States. After a short period of English rule between 1799-1802, Suriname became a Dutch colony for almost 300 years. Independence was gained in 1975 (Van Bodegraven 2003). Despite its Caribbean outlook, Suriname does not possess any of the famous Caribbean white beaches and clear blue waters. The Atlantic Coastline of Suriname is also called the “Wild Coast” because of its inaccessible swamps and muddy water (Helman 1982). Ecologically speaking, the country indeed is part of South America, for it is mostly covered by tropical rainforest. The area is often referred to as one of the least eroded in the world and with a rich diversity of flora and fauna. The climate is tropical and the humidity is high.

The Republic of Suriname has a fairly small population of 438,144 people, mostly living along the coast (est. July 2005, CIA factbook 2005d). The ethnic background of the inhabitants is diverse. The indigenous represent a small part of the population. Suriname is a former slave colony that imported slaves during the 17th century to expand the plantations. After the abolition of slavery, indentured workers from Indonesia, India, China, Portugal and Lebanon were brought in to keep up the labour force. As a result, it is a very multi-ethnic and multicultural country. The majority of the population is East Indian (or Hindustani) (37%), followed by the Creole, a mixed African/European descent (31%), Indonesian (15%), and Maroons (10%) (CIA factbook 2005d). The natives make up only 3% of the population (The Nation 2003). Dutch is the official language, but Sranang Tongo (Creole language) is often used in everyday situations and the different ethnic groups also speak their own language (Van Bodegraven 2003). Paramaribo is the name of the main district and the capital; it is the economical and administrative centre, and home to half of the population. It is also the main entry for tourists into the country and the starting point for tours into the inlands.

Tourism Development in Suriname

Nowadays the contribution of tourism to the economy of Suriname is far less significant than in other Caribbean countries (Texel 2005). Apart from the previously mentioned political disturbance in the 1980s, there are several reasons why the Suriname tourism industry has remained relatively small up until now. In the first place it is rather expensive to fly to Suriname with only two companies (Surinaamse Luchtmachtaatschappij SLM and KLM, the Royal Dutch
Airlines) together holding a monopoly, although there are plans to open up the market in the near future (Waterkant Suriname 2004). Beside that, in order to enter the country one needs a visa, which used to be rather difficult to obtain due to the lengthy procedures. In the third place, the infrastructure generally is in bad shape, especially in the inlands, where there is the lack of a reliable communication system. The coast consists mainly of mud and there are no sandy beaches, and the level of tourism services is relatively low (Snijders 2003). Furthermore, the industry lacks relevant legislation, there is no financial support for new entrepreneurs, no adequate training, and no widespread consciousness about the opportunities that tourism could offer. These facts combined with the image of political unrest in the past and poor (tourism) marketing keep many tourists away. Despite the fact that the Suriname tourism industry currently lags behind other countries in the region, Suriname was one of the first in the region to develop nature tourism in the past. In fact, the Republic of Suriname has a long tradition of nature protection in combination with tourism, which dates as far back as the middle of the twentieth century (Suriname Conservation Foundation 2001).

In the 1950s an association of the private sector, called Vereniging Surinaams Bedrijfseven (VSB) initiated the development of the Suriname tourism industry because it was regarded to be of great importance for the development of the national economy. In 1953, as a result of these initiatives, Suriname joined the Caribbean Tourist Association (CTA), the precedent of the Caribbean Tourism Organization (CTO). Furthermore, in 1954 the Stichting ter Bevordering van het Toerisme was created. This association was led by a special commission at the Ministry of Economics and its goal was the stimulation of the Suriname tourism industry (De Rooy 1990). The association executed many initiatives, among which the development of several tourist accommodations in the inlands of Suriname. To supervise and exploit these accommodations a corporation called the Maatschappij voor Exploitatie van Toeristenverblijven in Suriname (METS) was established in 1962 (METS 2005). Central to the tourism development in Suriname has been the conservation of the natural beauty of the country. For this purpose, STINASU (The Foundation for Nature Conservation in Suriname) was founded in 1969 (STINASU 2005). Apart from this corporation the association also developed a special educational center to train people for jobs in the tourism industry.

In 1981, after the military coup of 1980, the Stichting ter Bevordering van het Toerisme the METS were integrated into the department of tourism of the Ministry of Economic Affairs (TCT 2005a). Until then the number of international visitors in Suriname had increased from a mere 3.000 in 1955 to almost 60.000 in 1980 (De Rooy 1990). However, most of the initiatives from the association were not particularly successful because of a lack of support from the government and a lack of authority. The association was financially dependent on support from the government. The private sector was reluctant to invest because they argued that it was the task of the government to stimulate the development of the industry. Despite the marginal attention from the government, tourist arrivals to Suriname
did grow and in 1979 the Surinam Hotel and Tourism Association (SHATA) was founded. Nevertheless, the industry remained relatively small and there was not a lot of interest in the development of a strong tourism industry.

As mentioned above, the military coup of 1980 led to the cancellation of the association and, with that, an interruption of the tourism development. This marked the start of a period of national war, during which all tourist activities were stopped. It was not until 1996, when the political situation was stabilized, that tourism regained some of its attention. The war left the country with a strong deficit in foreign currency. Tourism was now seen as a suitable means for obtaining foreign currencies and income, as well as in generating employment. A special unit for tourism was established within the Ministry of Transport, Communication and Tourism (TCT) and the former association for the stimulation of tourism was renewed as the Stichting Toerisme Suriname (STS). STS is a tourism foundation established in 1996 under the Ministry of TCT, to facilitate collaboration between the government and the private sector. STS is responsible for marketing activities, the data collection with regard to tourism statistics and with the implementation of the tourism policy designed by the Ministry (TCT 2005b). Also the former METS was re-established in 1996 (in 1992 the corporation’s name was already changed to Movement for Eco-Tourism in Suriname) and it currently is the largest tour operator in Suriname (METS 2005). Furthermore, Suriname’s membership in the Caribbean Tourism Organization was continued and Suriname participated in a regional program for the development of sustainable tourism.

In 1996 the STS initiated the Tourism Development Programme. This program aimed at developing a sustainable tourism sector to increase the contribution of this sector to the national economy. The development of this programme, with a duration of two years, was requested by the government. The program was financially supported by the European Union (Carl Bro Intelligent Solutions 1999). Two years after its initiation the programme received a positive evaluation. The project brought about an increased enthusiasm for the development of the tourism sector both at the public and the private level. Private investors and entrepreneurs increasingly put their faith in the sector because they saw the potential contribution of tourism on the national economy. The main interest for most entrepreneurs after the war was to make some money. But now they started to become interested in the development of the industry as a whole. Several associations emerged across different lines of business, among which the Suriname Hotel Association (SHA), the Suriname Food and Beverage Association (SUFOBAS), the Suriname Association of Tour Operators (VESTOR) and the Suriname Tour guides Association (STASS). Through these organizations, the dialogue between the private and public sector was improved. In addition, the Tourism Development Programme stimulated training programs from employees on different levels of the industry, and the government had developed a more open attitude with regard to tourism (Carl Bro Intelligent Solutions 1999). Unfortunately, most of the budget for the programme had not been used. And the changes neither led to a healthy climate for investments yet, nor to a more flexible
policy when it came to visa and registration regulations (Carl Bro Intelligent Solutions 1999). These issues, among other things, have led to the request for a continuation of the Tourism Development Programme, which was approved by the European Union. The government was prepared to continue its support towards the further growth and development of the Suriname tourism industry. For instance it discarded the requirement to change a certain amount of foreign currency upon arrival in Suriname. However, further organization of the public and the private sector was necessary to continue the various initiatives.

The second phase of the programme officially started in 2002 after lengthy consultation with the various actors in the tourism industry of Suriname. The Ministry of Transport, Communication and Tourism and the Suriname Tourism Foundation are involved in the implementation of the second phase of the Tourism Development Program, which is co-financed by the European Union and the Government of Suriname and executed by the Danish Consulting Company Carl Bro. The programme is scheduled to be concluded in 2005 (SIDS 2004; TCT 2004). The second phase of the program again aims at institutional strengthening, but also at the development of training programs and the support of small and medium entrepreneurs in tourism. This phase of the development programme works towards the development of a sustainable tourism industry with a focus on the environment and the cultural heritage of Suriname (Stichting Toerisme Suriname 2002). The program consists of three different strategies. In the first place, attention was paid to institutional strengthening, which would take form in the implementation of a special Tourism Law, along with the installation of national regulations and authorities. A second goal of the programme is the development of new tourism products, which can lead to an increase in the average spending of tourists. An important aspect of the programme is the collaboration between ‘community based’ organizations, the NGO’s, STS, Stinasu (Stichting Natuurbehoud Suriname, the Foundation for Nature Conservation Suriname) and the private sector. The third strategy of the programme is Human Resource Development, which aims at national qualification and recognition for everybody working in tourism.

The execution of the programme, however, has had some initial problems. It revealed that old conflicts of interests between tourism organizations from the public and private sector were still unsolved. The private sector initially did not agree with the allocation of the budget. Early 2002 the Ministry of TCT in cooperation with STS, KKF (the Chamber of Commerce) and TOURS (the Tourism Union of the Republic of Suriname) organized the workshop ‘Towards Sustainable Public-Private Partnership in Tourism’, which aimed at creating a platform for future collaboration between public and private actors. At the workshop the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the different parties was signed, which was necessary before the second programme could really start (Stichting Toerisme Suriname 2002).

Despite the negative image of the STS among the Suriname private sector, and the many complaints about their activities, the STS was able to create cooperation with the private sector. Preceding the initiation of the second phase
of the Tourism Development Programme, the Tourism Union of the Republic of Suriname (TOURS) was founded in 2001 (Suriname Portal 2005). The members of TOURS are the different branch associations (SHA, SUFOBAS, VESTOR, STASS) consisting of owners of hotels, guesthouses, restaurants, bars, arts and craft shops, tour operators, taxi drivers and other tourism related organizations, who did agree with the achievements of STS this far. By signing the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) at the initiation of the second phase of the programme (ITDP) and by participating in the Project Steering Committee of the programme, TOURS gained an important position in the tourism industry. Today, TOURS also participates on the Board of STS, since one of the complaints from the private sector was a lack of representation in the official tourism boards.

Important issues in the current development of tourism in Suriname are marketing, promotion and creating awareness. Next to the ITDP, two other projects have been developed: The Small Tourism Enterprises Project (STEP) tries to improve the competitiveness of small accommodations, and, secondly, a campaign for tourism awareness, to make the local population familiar with tourism by acquiring knowledge of its own role in the sector and by making the economic contribution of tourism visible through better information services (De Ware Tijd 2003).

As was mentioned, one of the central aspects of ITDP is the marketing of the Suriname tourism industry. Since the start of the ITDP in 2002, Suriname has experienced a significant growth of almost 40% of its tourism industry. In 2004, Suriname has received almost 140.000 international tourists. Also the occupancy rates and the number of tourist businesses that have been registered increased by almost 40% (Enser 2005). Only a small number of the visitors arrive from South America or the Caribbean (mainly from Brazil and French Guyana). The majority of the tourists come to Suriname to visit family and friends, others travel for business, and only for a small group of visitors is tourism the main reason for coming or at least a combination of tourism with work and family.

It is recognized that Suriname still has to find its place in the international tourism market (Texel 2005). With countries like the Guianas, Brazil, Venezuela and Costa Rica offering the rainforest and jungle and with destinations like the Dominican Republic and Belize using both (nature) adventure as well as the beach, Suriname is looking for a unique selling point. Several projects contribute to the development of innovating and competitive products. These projects focus for example on the rivers (river cruises) and nature parks like Brownsberg and Galibi. River resorts (Overbridge and White Beach for instance) are built next to the Suriname River, endowed with artificial white beaches, palm trees and traditional Indian style huts. The cultural heritage is increasingly being used, such as the visual memories of the period of slavery. Old plantation residences in Suriname are converted into small, local resort hotels, for example the Raleigh valley and the Central Nature Reserve (CSNR) (Tuinfort 2005). In 2003 the plantation Frederiksdorp was renovated and it now serves as tourist accommodation, combining history with modern comfort. The resort is built on the historical coffee and cacao plantation of Frederiksdorp, along the
Commewijne River. These and other projects use the natural and cultural assets of Suriname and focus on developing a tourism industry that is beneficial to the local community (Tuinfort 2005). The next two chapters focus on the cooperation between local entrepreneurs, the government, and other tourism organizations, with respect to the development of the Suriname Tourism industry.
11 Tour Operators in Suriname - Small Players, Great Influences

Margot van den Berg van Saparoea and Myrte Berendse

Introduction

In Suriname we don't have people with knowledge about tourism, nobody in Suriname has studied tourism, tourism promotion or how the whole mechanism works. No. We run tours, we operate hotels, and we own a café, a bar or a terrace. We are all average people who love the country (...) and doesn't everybody know the way to Cola Kreek? Why study for that? That's the way they think, people from the highest levels to the lowest levels think like that, everybody.

This fragment, from a conversation with one of the pioneers in the tourism industry of Suriname, gives an insight into how local entrepreneurs look at the tourism sector in Suriname. In this chapter the focus is on local tour operators in Suriname. They vary greatly when it comes to their opinions and ideas about tourism, their personal capacities and their motives to start working in tourism in the first place. Small independent entrepreneurs who, often in their very own way, make a living out of tourism characterize the tourism industry of Suriname. Even though the government tried to stimulate tourism development in the 1960s, since that time, it has not been very active when it comes to regulating the tourism sector. Tourism in Suriname is still by far a national matter. In contrast to many other tourism destinations in the Caribbean (see for example the chapters on Jamaica and the Dominican Republic) there are virtually no international tour operators. All tourism developments are local, small-scale initiatives (De Boer 2003).

According to Dahles the involvement of small, private entrepreneurs is typical of developing countries where tourism has not yet entered the government's agenda of development. In these countries "small-scale tourism prospers" and "entrepreneurial initiatives are largely left to the private sector" (Dahles 1999: 6). Go (1997) argues that these small (often self employed) entrepreneurs should try to capitalize on the cultural and social resources of their community and offer the tourists innovative and differentiated products. In most developing countries the small entrepreneurs are inventive in adapting themselves to the tastes of the tourist, they learn fast about the likes and dislikes of their customers. The level of product innovation as a strategy to differentiate and compete with other enterprises however is usually rather low. The small entrepreneurs show a lack
of innovation because they want to avoid risks as much as possible and therefore they are inclined to copy the successful products from other entrepreneurs (Dahles 1999: 11-12). Dahles (1999) and Go (1997) both recognize that it is important to know how small entrepreneurs, who generally lack the knowledge to anticipate trends or who are short on financial resources to develop innovative quality tourist products, operate in the tourism sector. The contribution of small entrepreneurs to the development of tourism projects in developing countries might be an important aspect in developing a sustainable tourism industry.

With (still) a lack of foreign companies to control the tourism sector in Suriname, the development of tourism products in Suriname largely depends on the initiatives of the individual, local tourism entrepreneur. In Suriname it appears that despite the relatively small market there are quite a lot of tour operators. The competition is fierce. The tourism products offered vary from one-day tours to the nature reserves or old plantation residences, to multi-day tours on the rivers to villages and mountains in the inlands. Even though the various operators differ with respect to the price and the quality of the products offered to tourists, in general the tours show a lot of resemblance (De Boer 2003). This chapter deals with the characteristics of these small-scale entrepreneurs in a rising tourism market. Governments in developing countries often favour large-scale investments by international companies, while little attention is paid to the participation of small entrepreneurs in developing the tourism industry. However, the growing attention to sustainable development has fostered attention on local entrepreneurial participation as a prerequisite for advanced sustainability in tourism (Dahles and Keune 2002). In order to encourage local entrepreneurial development in developing tourism industries such as Suriname, it is important to understand how local entrepreneurs operate within this sector. Therefore this chapter focuses on the strategies used by local businesses to become successful and on the relationship or cooperation between the local tour operators in Suriname.

From Pioneers to Small-Scale Entrepreneurs: the Rise of Tour Operators in Suriname

When in the 1960s small-scale tourism activities were getting started, ‘the’ tourist had not discovered Suriname yet. The people visiting Suriname at that time (and even the majority of Suriname’s current ‘tourist’ arrivals) were primarily visiting friends and relatives or they were businessmen who were also interested in doing some sightseeing. Tourism pioneers recognized this interest and used their social network to bring people to the inlands.

The first tours would visit Brownsberg, Raleighvallen en Galibi, all nature reserves of Stinasu (Stichting Natuurbehoud Suriname; the Foundation for Nature Conservation Suriname). With the foundation of these areas as a nature reserve in 1969, Stinasu decided to build some guesthouses to accommodate for the visitors. While the emphasis was on the exploitation of the accommodation, a few people started to organize tours to these areas. Several of the pioneers from that moment are still active in tourism. Even though some progression has been made since these early years, the tourism sector in Suriname is still in an early stage of development.
Local entrepreneurs view tourism as something they have no control over; it is either there or not. Except for a few larger businesses, most of them are not actively involved in the process of attracting tourists to their country. Their role starts as soon as tourists decide to come to Suriname. Once again; they either come or they do not come. Upon arrival, tourists generally have to search for someone who might be able to organize their trips to the interior. The difference in promotion between the tour companies is remarkable. A few operators use professional looking full-colour brochures, others promote their company through ads in the newspaper, the Internet or with manually copied flyers that can be found in hotels, at the money exchange or eating-houses. As a tourist you actively have to look for tour companies, who often have their offices just outside the tourist centre. At times these are difficult to find due to incorrect and out of date information or a lack of clear signposting.

Most of the local tour operators in Suriname are independent small-scale companies, which could be characterized as small entrepreneurs, or ‘micro enterprises’ as they are called in Suriname. The term ‘small-scale’ is seen as relative to the country and the industry involved (Dahles 1999), and in the cultural context of Suriname, small-scale enterprises in tourism can generally be considered organizations consisting of eight people or less (De Boer 2003: 11). The government of Suriname describes a tour operator as an organization that professionally puts together travel packages, that are offered directly or through a third party to incoming and local tourists (Staatsblad van de Republiek Suriname 1992). Several services are combined in these packages, for example transport, entertainment, accommodation, sights or meals.

As has been mentioned by Dahles (1999) most studies of entrepreneurs attribute a central role to social networks in their daily practices. Based on Upadhya and Rutten (1997) and Verschoor (1992), she argues that the activities of small entrepreneurs should be recognized as both economic and social transactions, as well as strategic actions by reasoning actors. To understand the strategies of the tourism entrepreneurs in Suriname, their motives to start working in tourism will be described in detail, partly by letting the tour operators speak for themselves.

The reasons to start working in tourism vary greatly amongst the different entrepreneurs. Various entrepreneurs ended up in tourism because of the explicit and frequently received requests for specific tours by people in their surroundings. The expressed interest made some people more aware of the richness of their own cultural background and this stimulated them to start organizing tours. They used their social network to conduct tours to places they were familiar with. For example:

I used to work as a manager at a woodcarving and furniture company, where I often met customers who were interested in trips to the inlands. At that time the civil war prevented people from going far into the inlands. Santigron is not far from the city and I regularly visited my family there. I started bringing friends, people from the embassy or businesspeople with
me, who wanted a day out of town. It started to grow and we needed to print flyers that could be left at hotels. That's how we started to organize cultural trips to Santigron.

This entrepreneur started working as a tour operator because of the demand from others. He grew up in the area where he is conducting his tours. As becomes clear from the fragment, this entrepreneur originally did not work in tourism. Due to the expressed interest in his woodcarving and in the area where he comes from, he started organizing tourist activities. This tour operator originates from Santigron and studied in the Netherlands for a while. During this time he became aware of his (cultural) background and he thought of a way to use the history of slavery in a positive way. The emphasis in his tours is on the utterances of the maroon culture. Initially, his tours went to Santigron, the place where he was born and where tourists can get a first glimpse of the cultural diversity in Suriname. Yet due to improvements in the road network and the arrival of car rent companies, nowadays, tourists can come to Santigron on their own. The end of the civil war and the increasing offer in tours to ‘distant’ inland areas, were reasons for him to expand his activities to other areas. This way he does not depend exclusively on the Santigron-tour anymore but, just like many other tour operators, he now has several other options for tourists to choose from.

Nevertheless, not all tour operators choose to offer multiple destinations; some consciously select one area as their speciality. A tour operator, who is specializes in tours to the area around the Marowijne, explains how he started his business:

Actually it was the idea of my older brother. We Bush Creoles have this thing that in case something happens in our family, if somebody dies, then we always have to return for ceremonial events. We live in the city, but all our events take place in the inland. When my grandmother passed away, we had to go back for ceremonial activities and we took some friends with us. They really liked it!! We are born there. I am born there. But I went to Paramaribo with my parents, went to school here and studied here. And you don't have a clue of what is going on in the inland. You go abroad and you start travelling. But then there comes a point when you come back and think: hey this [Suriname – the inlands] is beautiful! Why don't we do anything with what we have out there? Let's try to interest people to go to the inland! I think that a few months later there was this tour guide training. So two brothers of mine went to the training. After that we took a notary with us who gave us sort of a plan of how we should actually do it. It was more a matter of trying this and that. I never did any training myself. I just gained experience and watched how they did it and that's how I took over. That's how it actually started.

This tour operator also originates from the area where he conducts tours. Not the demands of others, but rather the growing consciousness of his own cultural background made him start his business. He wants to use tourism as a
mechanism to promote the maroon culture and to make people aware that they
indeed have something special. This tour operator would like to see the local
population really proud of their culture and he wants the cultural heritage to stay
alive as much as possible. He is not interested in offering tours to other areas
and competing with other businesses: “We say that we are eastern-Suriname
specialists and we just keep it that way”.

As becomes clear, several tour operators use their personal background and
social networks in the area where they grew up. Initially they would take people
along when visiting their own family. Later on they started to organize trips to
these places as part of their business. One tour operator explains how useful it is
to have social contacts in the field:

It is certainly an advantage when you know the people, you know the
language, and you know what is going on culturally, you know the
traditional things. You can assess the situation better and that’s what
distinguishes me from other tour operators. For example, since I am born
at the Raleighvallen, they know you over there; there is a warm feeling, a
connection. They ask me to bring more people every time I come back.
The same with the Marowijne ...

Despite the advantages of originating in the area where they are operating, there
might also be some disadvantages. The same tour operator describes the way he
carefully has to manoeuvre between his role as a (former) community member
and that of businessman who earns money by driving tourists around. He
illustrates how people do not want to see his business grow too fast. In general
most people are willing to help in many ways; however conducting business is
viewed by some as acting ‘superior’. His success might lead to jealousy amongst
people living in the villages, who know him as a ‘modest guy’, as one of them. Not
everybody likes to see him as an entrepreneur.

Most accounts of the tour operators show intensive use of social networks to
run their businesses. Until now the focus in this chapter has been on the social
relationships between tour operators and people living in the inlands, where
social background and knowledge of the area often functioned as a motive to start
operating in tourism. In the next part attention shifts to the special relationships
between the different tour operators.

Relationships Amongst Tour Operators: Competition or Cooperation?
The last few years have shown a visible growth in the annual tourist arrivals
in Suriname (Carl Bro Intelligent Solutions 2004), which led to an enormous
expansion on the supply side of tourism products. The number of locations was
augmented and improvements in the infrastructure made tourist sites become
more accessible. Also the number of tour operators and guides increased
(Stichting Toerisme Suriname 2003). Nevertheless appropriate legislation for the
tourism sector that could set rules or regulations for protected areas, fails to appear
and local entrepreneurs have a free hand. In the early 1960s the government
tried to stimulate tourism by establishing a tourism council. However, it never played an active role in regulating or controlling further developments in the tourism sector. As a result the number of non-registered tour operators and guides sharply increased. Not only tourists find it difficult to distinguish between licensed and unlicensed businesses. For entrepreneurs there is little difference between official and unofficial tour operators either, except for the fact that those who are registered with the Chamber of Commerce and STS (Stichting Toerisme Suriname – a tourism foundation established under the Ministry of Transport, Communication and Tourism) have a license, pay taxes and are members of the Suriname Association of Tour Operators (VESTOR). Dahles (1997: 27) also points to the fact that it is difficult to identify “what and who constitutes the informal economy [and that] it is often the lack of an official license that classifies the activity”. Although the uncontrolled growth of unlicensed businesses makes some people very angry (“It ruins the ones with a license”), others do not feel threatened by the explosion of these operations as long as it remains clear to the tourists. As one tour operator comments:

Then it’s up to the tourist to go with such a tour operator or not. A certification or something like that might offer transparency for customers as well as better protection. But more is required. Sometimes it’s actually great fun to set off with an unofficial company, as you see more and other things than what might be seen with an average registered company. You pay less and get more.

Whereas a structured tourism sector might offer better protection for tourists, licensed businesses do not necessarily offer better services than the ones without. For example some of the legal tour operators have been rather passive or even have not been actively involved in tourism for longer periods of time, while several illegal tour operators carry out tours on a regular basis and have established a good reputation in the industry.

Despite the growth in (illegal) tour operators it is not difficult to get an overall view of the actors in the sector. Suriname is a rather small society and the entrepreneurs all know one another. They keep a close watch on each other and despite making frantic efforts to join forces they hardly ever work together. A tour operator describes the internal competition as follows:

Everybody views each other as competitors. We stopped acting like that a long time ago; we now work with everyone. However you see that they are all competitors, they work first of all to survive themselves. And nobody tells them here that it’s not the way you work in tourism, that you have to work together.

This tour operator purchases all his tours at other tour companies. He functions as an intermediary between the tourist and the tour company and in this case there is no real competition, which eases the cooperation. As a teenager, when he
was guiding for several companies, he always had ideas on how to do better. After studying at the art academy in the Netherlands he returned to Suriname:

The tourism industry went very bad. After the civil war everything was standing still. I then built a boat and started with the first river cruises in Suriname. That has been the start of our company.

Except for a few, all tour operators are located in Paramaribo. New tour operators who are just entering the market, often start with tours to the already ‘existing’ areas. The result is not an expansion in tourism products but rather more competition. An unlicensed tour operator, who has been active in tourism for about two years, explains:

I just offer the standard things, that everybody offers (...) What I do is to think of some variations to the places that we go to, to be a bit more competitive. Look. I already came with one new product, which is west-Suriname, Apoera, Blanch Marie, which already existed, but way to expensive. The only thing I did is ... I changed the accommodations. I changed some features and now I can offer this tour as well, but a little cheaper. Other people can develop new things that I will then purchase. Why would you re-invent the wheel? We are busy with some other new products, but then you see that you always have trouble getting started. And the moment it gets off the ground, everybody purchases it.

Like this tour operator, most tour operators offer the standard trips and as soon as someone introduces a new destination, other tour operators choose to copy the formula. Currently there is some cooperation between the different tour operators. Some of them purchase each other’s tours and the tour operator who eventually carries out the tour pays a commission. However, this does not always work out as expected. A number of people were encouraged to start their own business because they thought it would be better than the rest or because they were frustrated that (according to themselves) “Surinamese can’t collaborate”. The lack of partnerships in Suriname sometimes leads to frustration and provides some entrepreneurs with a reason to start their own company.

I did not intend to start my own tour company, since I’d rather act as an intermediary. But in the Netherlands they felt the need to have an agent, as it were. Initially I was not going to conduct tours. But then I experienced myself that tour operators in Suriname (in general) can’t work together. They either give you a hard time or they start doing things that are very unbeneﬁcial.

He illustrates how people sometimes steal each other’s tourists. Certain companies attempt to approach tourists directly by offering them the same tour behind the back of the tour operator (with whom they made initial agreements)
and this way they avoid having to pay a commission. This account illustrates the frustration amongst entrepreneurs that results from a lack of cooperation in the sector. He is not the only one complaining about a lack of mutual support. What the stories of the tour operators make clear is that all entrepreneurs have different backgrounds and different motives. Volker and Sorée (2002) show with their case study of competing entrepreneurs in a small town in Belize, that tensions and conflicts may arise due to the strategic use of economic, social and cultural capital of the players in the field. Understanding the different positions of the entrepreneurs in the tourism industry of Suriname and the different strategies they use in operating their business might shed some light on the problems in joining forces and building partnerships.

**Strategies of Tourism Entrepreneurs**

With the growth of tourism in Suriname the opportunities for employment in this sector are increasing. As long as the government is not actively intervening and as long as international companies have not entered this market yet, the tourism industry in Suriname largely consists of small-scale entrepreneurs. Entering a new industry is not without risk for the people involved. Only if they are able to establish a stable business from which they derive a steady income, the entrepreneurial risk has been reduced (Dahles 1999). However the risk-avoiding strategies found by several researchers in the field of entrepreneurship, seem to contribute to “only marginal profit, a lack of innovation [and] no sustainability of the business” (Dahles 1997: 25). Although in general entrepreneurs are often defined as people who innovate and take risks in their attempts to run a profitable enterprise (Dahles 1999), the stories of the Surinamese tourism entrepreneurs show a continuous replication of the same products rather than real innovation. New tour operators entering the tourism market offer the same tours as other companies. Besides the fact that innovation requires knowledge of the tourism industry or creativity to come up with something new, introducing new products often involves overcoming problems as well. And with everybody copying each other’s success formulas, the innovator is unlikely to reap the benefits. As one of the entrepreneurs said: “why re-invent the wheel?” In this light innovation not only provides little advantage, it also leads to greater ambiguity, as the outcome is uncertain and it appears that there is more to lose than to gain. Therefore imitation is often found as a frequently used strategy to reduce risk by small enterprises (Dahles 1999). Some small-scale investments are made, but many operators run tours with minimal investment. Newcomers initially take some risks, but when the enterprise acquires certain stability, the need to take risks also declines.

When innovation fails to occur, it becomes difficult to keep a business at a previously obtained level. And because of the marginal profits, innovations are even less appealing. In research on small entrepreneurs several risk-avoiding strategies are mentioned, such as “working long hours, diversifying their operations, seeking supplementary income, producing or trading in small quantities, imitating the product and services of others, assuming many business
costs themselves, sharing profits among family members instead of reinvesting them, and being reluctant to grow” (Dahles 1999: 11). Most of these strategies are also visible amongst the small-scale tour operators in Suriname. Some tour operators search for other sources of income to make a living. Now and then people return to their old job or they shift between working as an employee in someone else’s company and working as a self-employed tour operator. Although some larger businesses employ several people and operate out of an office, most tour companies in Suriname are family-owned and several family members help running the business. The average entrepreneur works from his own house, with his sister doing the cooking for the guests, his wife running the office and the entrepreneur himself coming along with the tourists as a tour guide. The company car is also used for private matters and many entrepreneurs say that they are working twenty-four hours a day. As mentioned before, the competition amongst tour operators is fierce. Not only does this prevent entrepreneurs from innovating new products, but they are also reluctant to organize themselves (Dahles 1999). In the presence of international companies, Go (1997) argues that the cooperation between small-scale and large-scale enterprises gives rise to new opportunities for small entrepreneurship. But also when international companies are absent, small entrepreneurs could benefit from cooperating, establishing partnerships or creating networks of relationships. While many tour operators in Suriname seem to criticize the lack of cooperation amongst themselves and while they emphasize the strong competition, they all depend to a large extent on social networks for operating their business. In fact, many studies of small entrepreneurs indicate that social networks play a key role in their actions (e.g. Dahles 1997; Dahles & Bras 1999; Dahles & Keune 2002).

In order to understand the role of social networks and their functioning in the context of small tourism entrepreneurship, Dahles (1997; 1999) builds on the insights of Bourdieu (1977) and Boissevain (1974). Where Boissevain (1974) identifies different types of entrepreneurs (patrons and brokers) based on a distinction between two types of resources (first and second order resources) that are strategically used by actors to compete and interact with each other, Bourdieu (1977) focuses on the different forms of capital available to people in pursuit of their goals. Combined, both theories offer a useful frame of reference for the elaboration of the ways tourism entrepreneurs in Suriname structure the field of tourism. In terms of Boissevain (1974), entrepreneurs who directly control assets such as land, material goods like money or tools, jobs or knowledge (so called first-order resources) are identified as patrons. Brokers on the other hand predominantly maintain contacts, either directly with patrons (the ones who control first-order resources) or indirectly through people who can give them access to the owners of resources. Brokers can be seen as intermediaries who, from a central position in the field, organize communication and relations between people (Volker and Sorée 2002). According to Bourdieu (1977) the capital that people use to position themselves in relation to others, should not be defined only in economical terms. Besides economic capital, which refers to the exchange of commodities, other forms of capital (cultural, social and symbolic
capital) should be included. Cultural capital consists of someone's background, social class or education, social capital comprises the ability to use one's social networks or group relations and symbolic capital concerns a person's social status. Where social capital is always symbolic, economic and cultural capital only act as symbolic in so far as they lead to prestige (Dahles 1999). When applying both theories to the daily practice of tourism in Suriname, Boissevain's patron-broker distinction can be used to map the power and dependency relationships between entrepreneurs in the tourism sector, while the different forms of capital as identified by Bourdieu can help to analyse movements within these networks, based on the struggle for and accumulation of capital.

Typical for all tour operators in Suriname is their use of social networks. All tour operators are able to conduct their tours as a result of the connections with people living in the inlands; relationships that have been established through the years. Sometimes these relationships are a direct result of someone's descent, since several tour operators originate from the inlands themselves. Speaking in terms of Bourdieu, all tour operators possess social capital, but those born in the inlands might control more of these 'social' resources than the ones who are not. Though coming from the inlands may add to specialized knowledge of the local way of life, all operators have substantial knowledge of the country, the nature sites, and cultural habits, enabling them to offer tours to tourists. As Crick (1992: 138) remarks: “while tourists have economic resources to spend, they possess very little ‘cultural capital’ in the sense of knowledge of the local language, price levels, or local customs”. Locals on the contrary are “rich in cultural capital, especially in a practical understanding of how to meet the needs of the many tourists” (Crick 1992: 138). Locals can capitalize on their familiarity with the country and the tourists' lack of knowledge. Or in the words of Van den Berghe (1994: 126): “Tourists are rich and privileged compared to most natives, but relatively ignorant or naïve about local conditions, prices, and so on”. This gives both locals and tourists an advantage over the other. Since most tourism businesses in Suriname are owned and operated by locals, they all have considerable cultural capital, though those people from the inlands might possess more cultural capital than those who grew up in the city. As mentioned before, most entrepreneurs have made little investments due to lack of economic capital. With regard to the financial position of entrepreneurs, a tour operator describes the different levels as follows:

Some of them stand out because of their financial backbone. But then there is a large gap. There is Stinasu, but apart from that most of them are one-men businesses with a brother or a son who is helping out. That's all there is in this sector. There are almost no large investors. And the small ones are all at the same level: a small office, a little van and a phone, nothing more than that. And they operate from their own house. Here and there some people try to set up an office, but mostly it's offices at home.
Those who have their own office, transport, money, and employees could be seen as patrons, since they directly control what Boissevain identifies as first order resources. Brokers, the ‘network specialists’ or ‘intermediaries’ then control second order resources, such as access to information and people. In Suriname these positions are difficult to separate. As the examples of the tour operators show, all small entrepreneurs lack economic capital and mostly thrive on social and cultural capital. Brokerage is essential for most of them. However, some of them have built their own guesthouses or accommodation in the inlands, which would be considered first order resources. Permission from the local communities to build these is usually granted to those who come from these places and who grew up in the same communities that they now bring their tourists to. Therefore they directly have more power over these first order resources than those people who don't possess social and cultural capital within these communities and could be considered patrons.

At first sight brokers appear to represent the informal segment while patrons stand for the formal or legal tourism sector. But as has been suggested before, the distinction between formal and informal does not really apply to the situation in Suriname. This can be seen in other developing tourism industries as well: “They [small-scale entrepreneurs] participate in both economies” (Dahles 1999: 12). At first sight it seems that “depending on the kind of resources, some (the patrons who rely predominantly on private property) operate more in the formal sector, others (the brokers who rely predominantly on personal networks) participate more in the informal sector” (Dahles 1999: 12). However, in the absence of any enforced legislation or regulation to control the developments in the tourism sector, the division between formal and informal or licensed and unlicensed is hardly applicable. All tours in the inlands consist of ‘informal activities’, even when operated by an official tour company, which says more about having a license than about the way business gets done. However, there is a difference in continuity between tour operators. In general brokers represent the more flexible tour operators. Most of the time those tour operators without a location in the inlands, are only active when there are tourists around. They recruit people to go on a trip with them to places where even the ‘formal’ tour operators do not go. One tour operator describes this as follows:

It is more ‘hossel toerisme’ [hustle tourism], that’s in fact a Surinamese word. You have people who are just sitting at home and who suddenly decide to bring tourists to the inlands. They hand out their cell phone number; the people book a tour and are then taken to the inlands. Such a person could work for 3 months and then he starts with something else. It's more a matter of: “I have some people, I’ll take them”, you know. According to Surinamese standard that’s what a tour operator does. At this moment a lot of people think they can make money in this field. Quite a lot of ‘living room tour operators’ exist. There is a difference in approach, but there also is a lot of mimicry. But then, a tour operator is first of all considered to be someone who gathers people and takes them to the inlands.
Brokers in this case are not depending much on patrons, but can better be seen as ‘survivors’. They do not attempt to obtain control of first order resources, neither do they act as intermediaries between tourists and patrons. Since most people seem to do everything themselves (finding tourists and operating tours), the distinction in Suriname seems more a matter of ‘long term’ or continuous versus ‘short term’ or flexible involvement in the tourism sector. Compared to the tour operators with a set location, the ones without are more flexible. However, the freedom to do whatever they want might eventually result in a lack of professionalism in the services available to tourists.

Conclusion
In the absence of large, international companies and with little government interference, the tourism industry in Suriname is still the playground of local tourism entrepreneurs. Compared to destinations such as the Dominican Republic and Jamaica, the tourism sector in Suriname is almost of a pre-tourism-era. Where local entrepreneurs in the aforementioned countries often struggle to survive in a world dominated by international tour operators, the small-scale tourism entrepreneurs in Suriname have free play. It could be argued that this provides Suriname with the opportunity to develop a more sustainable or innovative form of tourism (if learning from examples such as mentioned before). However, the lack of (governmental) organization leaves the development of this sector to the initiatives of individual entrepreneurs. As the stories in this chapter made clear, so far this has not led to a stable tourism industry. The tourism entrepreneurs in Suriname differ not only with respect to their motives to start working in tourism, their personal background and their position as formal or informal (licensed or unlicensed) businesses, but they also possess different forms of capital and strategically make use of different resources to pursue their goals, goals that seem to vary as well. The most remarkable distinction seems to be between those entrepreneurs looking for long term or continuous involvement versus those interested in short term contributions or a more flexible approach. The lack of cooperation and innovation and the many examples of entrepreneurs imitating or copying each other’s products, seems to indicate that most tour operators have a short-term vision rather than long-term. Government involvement and collective initiatives between public and private actors could attribute to the structural development of this sector. Nevertheless only time will tell how the Surinamese tourism industry will evolve.
This chapter is based on research conducted by Margot van den Berg van Saparoea (February – June 2004) and Gwendolyn de Boer (from March to July 2002). While the research of Margot focused on the role of tour operators and tour guides with regard to image building and the concept of authenticity, Gwendolyn was interested in small-scale tour operators and sustainable (eco) tourism. Both researchers were based in Paramaribo from where they made contacts with (sometimes the same) tour operators and which formed the starting point of several excursions. Gwendolyn managed to work as an independent researcher at Stichting Toerisme Suriname (STS), which gave her the opportunity to gather information through participant observation in the daily practice of the organization, to contact several key persons in the industry, and to visit tourism-related meetings. Besides, she conducted interviews with tour operators, whom she visited in their own offices or during excursions. Margot, after receiving an email address from someone sitting next to her in a Dutch train (who overheard her conversation with a friend about her plans to study tourism in Suriname) found a working place at a medium-sized hotel in the tourist centre of Paramaribo. She interviewed tour operators and tour guides and spoke to key informants from the Ministry and STS, but also to people from the Tourist Information Centre, the Integrated Tourism Development Program or the Tourism Union. Furthermore, participating in tours (ranging from one-day to several days), gave her the opportunity to observe tour operators’ and tour guides’ activities in the field.

All quotes in this chapter that were originally in Dutch or any other language were translated to English by the author.
Tourism Development in Galibi, Suriname

Lizzy Beekman

Introduction

Tourism is one of the fastest growing industries, with an expected worldwide turnover of over 6000 billion dollars in 2005 (Texel 2005). Because tourism is such an emergent industry, it has a growing need for relatively new territories that are still ‘unspoiled’ and to be ‘discovered’ by tourists. Suriname is one of the countries where the biggest part of the territory is still unspoiled, and therefore the country especially stimulates tourism to its nature reserves. This means that the interactions between the local population and the tourists are increasing, particularly because many indigenous communities are located in or nearby such territories. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that every human being has the right to travel in their homeland and abroad. For the West, this is taken for granted, but for many indigenous communities this frequently leads to violation of their rights (Vergeten Volken 2001). Frequently, without permission or participation of such communities, these territories are being developed into tourist attractions, which often leads to a disturbance of local life. Furthermore, the income that is generated with these activities usually does not stay within the community, but goes to international tour operators (e.g. Lea 1988; Nash 1996).

In the literature on tourism in developing countries, the negative effects of tourism are frequently being emphasized. For example, some state that traditional cultures are deliberately being conserved to attract tourists, with the consequence that culture becomes a product that can be bought and sold (e.g. Cohen 1988; MacDonald 1997; McCannell 1999; Medina 2003). According to Greenwood (1978) this commercialization of culture destroys the real meaning for its users. Others claim that the authenticity and identity of a traditional culture is being lost due to the demonstration effect; local inhabitants have the tendency to imitate the ‘wealthy and civilized’ tourists (e.g. Burns 2000). Consequences of this demonstration effect are changes in assumptions, language, attitude, clothes, diet, and an increasing demand for Western products. However, Burns (2000) assumes that nowadays it is unrealistic to separate the tourism impact from the impact of modernisation. Tourism is part of a wider set of phenomena that increases global interactions and exchange.

Nevertheless, tourism is not only perceived to be negative for indigenous people. There is increasing attention for positive aspects of the industry as well. There are more and more initiatives coming from indigenous communities themselves. In some communities, tourism is introduced as a means of earning
an extra income. With this money they try to protect their habitat and their traditional culture. This kind of tourism, which operates in harmony with the local environment, community and culture, so that these become the permanent beneficiaries and not victims of tourism development, is often referred to as sustainable tourism (WTO 2004). According to Grünewald (2002), tourism can actually contribute to the survival of traditional and indigenous cultures. Thanks to the tourist demand for ‘authentic’ indigenous souvenirs, the value attributed to this culture will increase. Besides, exposing traditions in a tourist context does not necessarily mean that the meaning will disappear (Grünewald 2002). In studies on the impact of tourism on the local culture, culture is very often approached as something static that is destroyed by tourist influences and therefore needs to be protected. However, culture is not static; it cannot be preserved. Rather, culture develops through time. Some traditional meanings will be forgotten or altered, while new meanings will be added as well. From this perspective, culture is seen as a dynamic system of norms, assumptions and traditions that are being shared by a community, an organization, an ethnic group or a nation. The dynamic character of culture expresses itself in cultural change. Old traditions disappear and new ones arise due to conflicts with members of the same culture, the interaction with strangers and the confrontation with reality (Tennekes 1995). Furthermore it is not just tourism that influences these local cultures. As was mentioned before, tourism is but part of a wider system of global cultural exchanges.

This chapter focuses on the impact of tourism on local communities and cultural changes through the exploration of tourism development in Galibi, Suriname. Galibi consists of two indigenous communities that have become a popular tourism destination in Suriname. The two villages, Langamankondre and Christiaankondre, are home to 800 people (roughly 125 families), all descendents of the Carib Indians or Kaliña, as they call themselves. They have lived in splendid isolation for hundreds of years, until recently. Galibi is becoming more and more integrated in the society of Suriname. As a result, western products have become part of daily life now: clothes, kitchenware, engines, radios, TV’s and refrigerators. The economy of Galibi is self-sufficient and the population lives off the products of their land with a diet consisting mainly of fish, cashew, fruits, coconuts, mangos, watermelon and cassava. Their main source of income is fishery, followed by the tourist industry and trade (Beekman 2005: 2). What the villages look like and what tourists can expect to see when they visit Galibi will be described in the next paragraph. After that, the development of tourism in the area will be discussed. How did it start and how is it organized nowadays? In the third paragraph the cultural changes in the community will be described from the point of view of the local inhabitants. In the last paragraph some concluding remarks will be made with regard to the tourism industry and the culture of Galibi.

The Tourism Destination Galibi
Galibi is the name for two indigenous villages on the eastern coast of Suriname that borders French Guyana. The location of the two villages is relatively isolated because it is only accessible by boat. The area is a popular tourism destination
for two main reasons. In the first place, every year from February until August, a population of protected sea turtles nests on the beaches of Galibi. In 1969, it became clear that the number of different species of sea turtles was diminishing. The government saw the local people as the main cause of the decline in turtles, because the turtle eggs were part of the local diet. Furthermore, they were also considered a delicacy by other cultures. As a result, a part of the community’s territory, including the main beaches where the sea turtles nest, was declared as a nature reserve: the Galibi Nature Reserve. The villages are located just outside this reserve. For tourists it is possible to spend the night in the villages or in the nature reserve. The reserve is managed by the ‘Foundation of Nature Conservation in Suriname’ (Stinasu). This organization has four mandates with regard to the reserve: the coordination of scientific research; education and awareness; the stimulation of community development and sustainable tourism. Despite the fact that Stinasu is a partner of the villages, the organizations in fact, also became a competitor of the villages through these mandates. This rather ambiguous relationship will be further discussed in the third paragraph. The second reason for the destination to be popular is the traditional indigenous culture, which is appealing to many western tourists. Both elements are being used in the promotion of the tourism destination by the different tour operators active in the villages.

A trip to Galibi generally starts early in the morning in Paramaribo. Galibi has six different tour operators varying in prices and services. Depending on the kind of tour operator, tourists are transferred to Albina by public or private bus. If tourists book a trip in the lower class, usually they have to take care of their own transport up to Albina, for example by taking the public bus together with the local inhabitants of Suriname. To get an idea of what a tour to Galibi is like, a description of such a tour will be provided below.

The 140 kilometre-ride from Paramaribo to Albina usually takes about three hours. It takes so long because of the many snack and sanitary stops along the way, but also because the road is in very bad condition. During the civil war (1986-1992), the East-West connection, as this road is called, was destroyed and has not been fixed yet. The bus arrives in Albina around 1.00 pm. Albina is the capital of the district Marowijne and situated along the wide Marowijne River. Across the river, French Guyana and the city St. Laurent are visible. The city has a rather bad image as becomes clear from the newspaper article, published in De Ware Tijd (a national newspaper):

It is holiday time, but most of the people will avoid Albina, because of the ongoing negative news reports about criminality and pollution. Furthermore, tourists that enter Suriname from French Guyana are shocked when they arrive in Albina. Aggressive bus drivers, who want to fill their bus with passengers, the garbage all over the beach and a dangerous and chaotic traffic situation makes the place unattractive to tourists (Den Boer 2004).
For this reason, tour operators from Galibi try to transfer their guests as fast as possible. After a short stop in Albina the guide directs his tourists to a yellow boat. Every boat has a different colour and they all have different sizes and outboard engines.

From Albina, it is a 90-minute boat ride downstream to Galibi. Depending on low and high tide, tourists are likely to get soaking wet, because of spurting water. After a short time, the sight of the city of Albina disappears. The boat ‘rides’, as the Carib say, along a couple of indigenous villages first, but soon tropical forest is all there is to see at the riverbanks. From here, it takes about an hour to the get a first glimpse of Galibi. The villages are located along the riverside and take up around three kilometres of the shore. The settlement consists of clearly demarcated properties. Each property starts at the waterside and ends in the forest. Mango, cherry, and palm trees constitute natural boundaries between the properties and at the same time provide enough shadow. Besides, the trees also produce consumable fruits. The houses all have their own distinctive look. Most of the houses are built with natural products from the forest. These houses have a roof of pina (palm) leaves, a sandy floor and a construction of trunks. Some of them only have a wall at the east side of the house in order to protect it from the wind. When the tourists approach the villages more closely, they can see that a growing number of houses are built with more modern products like concrete and zinc roofs. The guide explains that the local inhabitants experience those changes as a positive development. Products like these are considered to be a symbol of status. But also very important, working with modern products is more efficient for them. A roof of zinc simply lasts longer than a roof of pina leaves.

During the boat ride, the guide already informs his tourists about some aspects of the Galibi community; their way of living, their habits and their culture. For example, for the past couple of years, the village administration fears that if things continue as they are, the traditional culture will disappear. Contact with the Western world and the economic development affect old traditions as well as their traditional language. Carving, weaving, singing, dancing, and ceremonies continue to be threatened. As a result, several cultural associations have been founded in both villages, which try to pass on the history, traditions and culture to the younger generation. At official ceremonies or other social activities they sing and dance in authentic clothing, but mainly for the local inhabitants however. When tourists come they can, in return for an admission fee, witness a staged cultural show.

Furthermore, the guide explains to the group that spirits play an important role in the community. Besides the Roman Catholic belief the Kaliña have their own traditional religion. The Shaman (piai) is the medicine man of traditional health and maintains contact with spirits. For the Carib, everything has a spirit, which plays an essential role in daily life. Therefore it is very important that tourists respect these traditions and obey to the rules of the community.

At around 3 p.m. the boat arrives in Christiaankondre. The village looks quiet and peaceful; some people are resting in their hammocks, a small group of children is playing in the water, and a couple of men are fishing at the waterside.
Nobody really pays attention to the group of tourists. It seems as if they are used to the fact that groups of tourists come and visit Galibi regularly. At 5 p.m. after a snack and a short rest, the tour around the village starts. At this time most of the inhabitants are home from fishing or working on their land. The local guide, who is a nephew of the owner of a guesthouse, shows the tourists around: the captain's house (the captain or ‘Kapitein’ is the traditional leader of the village), the bakery, the community radio station, the supermarket, and the visitor centre are a standard part of the tour. Since most of the attractions are located in Christiaankondre, nearly all tours go around this village and only sometimes the tours also visit the primary school in Langamankondre.

All tours end in the visitors centre, managed by the women’s organization. Here, cultural artefacts are displayed. It is possible for tourists to buy some souvenirs and to learn about the indigenous culture. The guide shows the group examples of plaiting, weaving, woodcarving, pottery and the production of jewellery. A long time ago, these products were used for their own purposes, but nowadays a big part of it is replaced by more western products. Yet, the indigenous products are still made for tourists. By doing this, an extra income is earned and at the same time production skills are being conserved. The members of the Women’s Organization make the souvenirs. Each woman brings her wares to the visitors centre, where a tag is attached stating her name and the price. When an item is sold, the information is noted in a ledger. At the end of the month, each woman collects the earnings of her products, minus 10%, which is meant for the Women’s organization itself. This commercial activity does not only contribute to the conservation of the culture, it also contributes to the position of women in the society of Galibi. As the guide explains, an increasing number of women have become more and more independent.

At about 11.00 p.m. the next activity starts: sea turtle watching! In order to do this, the group has to take a little boat ‘ride’ to the nearby beaches in the nature reserve. The trip takes about half an hour. After arriving at the nature reserve, the guide shows the group where the nesting turtles are. Before the animal can be approached, the guide firsts checks the turtle. When the sea turtle is in the initial phase of the nesting process, she is extremely cautious. Only when she actually nests, are the tourists allowed to come nearby the animal. It then takes about 60-90 minutes before she returns to the waterside again. After this mysterious and impressive experience the group returns to the village again. Everybody is exhausted, tired of all the different impressions this day. The next morning, after breakfast, the group leaves Galibi to return to Paramaribo.

The Development of Tourism in Galibi
Even though some tourists already visited Galibi in 1966 (Kloos 1971), the structural development of tourism started only thirty years later. Nowadays, six tour operators are located in the village and together they received no less than 4000 guests in 2003 (Beekman 2005: 22). High season is from February until August, the months when the sea turtles nest. Outside this period, life in Galibi is quiet and people are more focused on other activities like fishery, trade and
maintenance. In September the ‘Galibi Beach Festival’ takes place, an annual event that lasts for three-days. In 1992, this festival was started as a way to attract visitors to Galibi outside the ‘turtle season’ (Hooghiemster 2004).

Even though Galibi does not have an official tourism policy, it has some unwritten rules to which tour operators, tourists and local inhabitants have to obey. For example, it is not allowed to take any photographs without the permission of inhabitants, it is not allowed to take fruit from the trees (every tree has an owner) and women that are menstruating are not allowed to come nearby the waterside or water wells. According to the Carib belief, the smell of menstruation awakes the evil spirit of the water that can make people ill. These rules are meant for tourists, but there are also some rules that are applicable to the local inhabitants. For instance, all inhabitants are obliged to keep their own section of the waterside clean in order to make the beach attractive to tourists.

The six tour operators, of which four are located in Christiaankondre and two in Langamankondre, all offer tours as well as accommodation. Mirisji Tours is the most professional tour operator in Galibi and their guesthouse is located in Christiaankondre near the waterside. The family that runs this organization is seen as the original founder of tourism in Galibi. They developed their tourism activities because the children frequently brought friends home from school or other acquaintances visited their house. In 1991 they asked the captain for permission to start up a guesthouse, but he did not agree. At that time the number of nesting sea turtles had already decreased dramatically and according to the locals the interference of ‘the whites’ was the main cause of this. If there was going to be a guesthouse in Galibi, it would attract even more white people, without knowledge of the laws of nature and as a consequence they would destroy the area. A year later, when a new captain was appointed, the family finally got permission, albeit against the will of many inhabitants. This new captain was mainly focused on the development of the village and in his opinion tourism could help Galibi to reach a higher standard of living. In the next fragment a man tells what happened after tourism began to grow in Galibi.

After a few years, the beach - where the guesthouse was located - was washed away, it became all mud! The coconut palms were fading away, everything… And now I realize: the captain was right, something is happening, because outsiders visit our place and they don't have any knowledge about the laws of nature like we do. They [the owner of the guesthouse] made an effort to recover it: fill it up with sand, introduce the rule for women: women that have the maan-disease [Moon-disease, or menstruation] are not allowed to come nearby the waterside. Now it is recovered a little bit, but the people from here were against it. They didn't allow whites on their territories. That guide had a lot of problems at that time: “go away, don't walk here with whites!”

In 2003, Mirisji Tours received about 3000 guests and in 2004, this tour operator also received a Spanish tourism price for community management. The second
tour operator is Galibi Tours Specialist. This organization also offers complete
tours like Mirisji. It includes transport by bus and boat, all dinners, and the
excursions in the villages, to the sea turtles and St. Laurent. Their guesthouse
is located in Langamankondre and was founded in 2000. In 2004, this operator
received about 550 guests. Both these guesthouses (Mirisji and Galibi Tours
Specialist) have beds with mosquito nets, running water, a normal shower and
toilet for their guests. In short, things that most local inhabitants do not have. The
majority of their guests book their trip at an external tour operator in Paramaribo
to which both guesthouses pay a 20% commission.

A group of smaller guesthouses in Galibi was founded in 1998 with the help of
the Small Grants Project of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP).
In 1994 the protection of sea turtles received wide international attention as a
consequence of the World Environment Conference in Rio. For the UNDP this
was also the main reason to approach the village. This organization believed
that the consumption and trade of turtle eggs by the locals was the main threat
for those animals and in order to protect them, the UNDP offered the village
opportunities in tourism as an alternative source of income. The locals were
told that the protection of the sea turtles would be a benefit for the village, since
tourists are interested to see those animals and are willing to pay for this. By
ways of giving tourists a place to sleep or transporting and guiding them, the
natives could earn an alternative income. However, from the locals' point of
view the consumption of eggs was not considered to be a threat; after all they
used to do this for hundreds of years. In contrast, the local inhabitants believed
that the interference of outsiders caused the turtles to die. For this reason, many
inhabitants were still opposing tourism, but in the end, the promise of economic
benefit turned them around. After many and laborious negotiations, in 1998 three
new guesthouses were established with the help of the UNDP: Mondowa, the
only accommodation that is managed by a woman; Shirityo, the accommodation
of the district secretary of Galibi; and Ramco Tours, located in Langamankondre.
In contrast to the other guesthouses described above, these accommodations are
located on the property of the families and are relatively traditional and primitive:
guests sleep in hammocks and often arrive in Galibi by their own means. These
tour operators work independently; they receive their guests from friends and
relatives or mouth-to-mouth advertisement. The total number of guests these
accommodations receive varies from 60 to 200 guests annually.

The last tour operator in Galibi is called Gambier Tours. This guesthouse is the
smallest in the village. Since the owner has his own boat and bus (he transfers
passengers between Albina and Paramaribo), he has the opportunity to offer
complete tours. The number of tourists on a tour never exceeds four people, who
spend the night in his own house. In the literature, this type of tourism is usually
referred to as ‘home stay’ (e.g. Suansri 2003: 4). It stimulates the interaction
between guest and host and except for a hammock and a mosquito net, it also
requires little investment.

Apart from the previous mentioned tour operators, tours and accommodation
are also provided by Stinasu, the organization that manages and controls the
nature reserve. Thus this organization is a competitor while at the same time also a partner of the Galibi community. The relationship between Stinasu and Galibi has been very bad for a long time. Until 1998 Stinasu mainly had a dominant role in the decision-making process about the protection of the sea turtles. The locals’ main objection against the nature reserve was that they considered this territory as their common property based on history: “the indigenous people received this land from their ancestors. The present generation is allowed to use everything on this territory, if they manage the natural resources in such a way that future generations still can benefit from it as well” (Reichart 1992:29). In 1998, a new managing director was appointed at Stinasu and he had a different approach. For the first time, the organization realized that the protection of the sea turtles would be impossible without the support of the village.

The two sides agreed to negotiate, which resulted in the sustainable tourism venture. It marked a new direction in the cooperation with the indigenous community. Stinasu gave them the opportunity to state their wishes and stipulations for the venture. Because the nature reserve is within their traditional hunting grounds, it was stipulated that the Carib could still hunt and gather like they always have, with the exception of turtle eggs. Other agreements between the two stated that all employees in the reserve should be inhabitants of the villages, all tourists that overnight in the reserve should make a visit to the villages, and Stinasu would train guides and help renovate a building, which became the visitors centre (that now is managed by the Women’s organization). Furthermore, the two villages became partly responsible for the boat transport of tourists from Albina to the nature reserve. The generated income is meant for the villages. Stinasu and the villages also decided to introduce a tourist tax; for every tourist who visits the nature reserve or the villages the equivalent of €0.55 is put into an account, of which 25% is meant for Stinasu and 75% for the villages. Finally, the villages were also stimulated to exploit their own guesthouses independently from Stinasu. In return for all of this, the inhabitants of the villages are obliged to support the protection of the sea turtles. In order to coordinate these activities, the villages have created their own foundation, named Stidunal (Foundation for Sustainable Nature Conservation Alusiaka). To make sure the cooperation succeeds, an evaluation commission meets annually. The members of this commission are both Carib and Stinasu employees. This venture has contributed a great deal to the tourism industry of Galibi; it took care of extra promotion and a higher number of visitors. It stimulated the awareness of sustainable tourism among the local inhabitants and consequently contributed to a broader acceptance of tourism in the village.

The Kaliña’s Perception of Tourism

Although tourism originally started within the village, a substantial part was directed by external parties like the UNDP and Stinasu. The development of tourism and its impact on the community is experienced in different ways by the local inhabitants. For many inhabitants tourism was not a desirable development at all; the interference of outsiders, which was considered a threat to nature,
and the invasion of privacy were frequently heard objections. At the same time, tourism has been very beneficial in an economic sense. In this paragraph, threats, cultural changes and also positive contributions of tourism according to the locals will be discussed. In general, it can be said that individuals who are actively involved in tourism have a more positive attitude toward tourism than inhabitants that are not involved.

First of all, many inhabitants believe that tourism has made a positive contribution to the position of the women in Galibi. As described above, some years ago, a group of women started the Women's organization that now coordinates the visitors centre. Nowadays, this organization is mainly focused on tourism and a substantial number of the women in Galibi are members. By exposing and selling their handicrafts in the visitors centre, many women earn an extra income. This has changed their position not only in a financial sense, but also in a cultural sense; interactions between men and women and interactions with strangers have become more casual and loose. Besides, the women now have more influence on the daily life. For example, each village administration also consists of two females. The next quotation from a member of the village administration tells the following about this:

... the gender process in the world also took place in Galibi. In the past, women did not have anything to say actually. She was only a listener, the men decided what happened. That women are active in trade, like they are now [on the market and in tourism], it was a taboo. She wasn't allowed to go to the market, to attend meetings or parties and contacts with other men were forbidden. The women actually didn't leave their property. But that has been changed since tourism started in Galibi. Nowadays, the women of Galibi are strong, it is a positive development. Actually, I don't see it as a loss of culture, we made hard things soft. (...) Women's way of life definitely has been influenced. In the past, when tourists came here, there was nothing to sell. That has been stimulated; women went into the forest, looking for seeds and stones to make jewellery. In the meanwhile it has been coordinated by the Women's organization and it has become very popular. They see that it's profitable and extra income has made them more independent. Also because of contact with tourists, they feel freer to communicate and they have learned new languages. Nevertheless, many of them are still shy to communicate with strangers.

As this inhabitant correctly states, it is hard to say if tourism is the main cause of this change, since the emancipation process took place all over the world, but tourism definitely accelerated the process. Besides the strengthening of the women's position, this production and trade by the women also contributes to the conservation of the indigenous handicraft. According to many inhabitants, tourism made a positive contribution to the preservation of culture. A member of the Women's organization explains this in the following words:
Tourism can be a danger to us, because what will our village look like in 10 years? On the other side, I think it’s positive, we have to develop, go into the Western world, otherwise we stay ignorant. But besides developing, we have to conserve our culture, it cannot get lost. Still, at the same time, tourism is responsible for the re-flourish of our culture. Tourists come and take a look at our culture, so the people from here have become more conscious about the uniqueness of our culture. That is also why so many cultural associations started to teach the younger generation about our traditions and culture.

This inhabitant claims that if tourism is accepted in the village, it is inevitable that some parts of culture get lost, because of adapting to Western criteria. At the same time, tourism makes a contribution to the conservation of some traditions of that same culture. The contribution to the development of the village and conservation of the indigenous culture are the main arguments of many natives in welcoming tourism and stimulating it in the future.

But not everyone is convinced of the positive contribution of tourism to the villages. Some natives see this economic activity as a threat to their culture. For example, that menstruating tourists come nearby the waterside to watch the sea turtles are seen as a danger to all inhabitants, even to inhabitants that have a positive attitude towards tourism. Spirits play a prominent role in the daily life in Galibi and receiving tourists that are not familiar with the laws of nature, is considered a serious threat. In the next quotation a female who is not involved in the tourism industry explains the following:

We believe in the *Watra Mama* [spirit of the water]. When somebody is menstruating and she goes nearby a water well, maybe that well is clean and the next day the water has become troubled. People say: she makes the spirits awake. It is some sort of disease, it hurts terribly. You get it from people that do not obey the rules, who do not believe in spirits like tourists. I think it's a shame. We always say in meetings: “they [menstruating tourists] are not allowed to go nearby the waterside.” But it happens, it is not possible to check, you can't see it! And that is dangerous for our culture, it changes our culture. But it's not only tourists, also the younger people from here, some of them don't believe in it anymore. Well, I know it's true, I had it once. I was cleaning fish at the waterside and all of a sudden... somebody took my barrow and wanted to hit me with it! It nearly killed me! And that same night, I woke up and all of a sudden I saw a pretty girl. The next day my mother told me: “it was the *Watra Mama*, it tried to hit you with the barrow and followed you home.”

At the start of a trip to Galibi, the local guides always inform tourists about this issue. However, the main reason for these tourists to visit Galibi, is watching the sea turtles, which is nearby the waterside. Tour operators are aware of this and as a consequence they are not strict in applying this village rule. They want their
guests to enjoy themselves so they will return in the future or tell friends and relatives to make a visit to Galibi as well. Most inhabitants consider this a threat, but even worse for them is the fact that their own younger generation tends to behave in the same manner. They copy the behaviour of tourists, because they see that nothing happens. According to the inhabitants, the culture is changing due to this behaviour. The copying of tourists’ behaviour is frequently associated with the impact of tourism on local cultures (Burns 2000). In the next fragment, a fisherman explains the pitfalls of tourism and the negative consequences of such a demonstration effect.

The Western culture, including tourism, brought money in our system. It’s not in our culture, money. That’s why life in Galibi has become rough. But in the past, you just give, take a fish, you ask a couple of men to help you for example to build a house, the next time you help somebody else..., but now, everything is money, you have to pay for salary, food, drinks, everything. This drives the younger generations crazy as well. They don’t know what to do; they earn money and go to Paramaribo to do crazy things. Tourist frequently give a wrong example for our youth, they drink alcohol, for them it is a holiday, but not for our youth. We also disapprove when tourists walk around half naked, fool around in public, especially partners from the same sex, these are terrible sins we don’t want our children to see!

This inhabitant relates the impacts from tourism to the influences of the Western world. In his opinion Galibi is developing according to Western criteria, which he believes is a pity, since his own culture slowly is pushed aside by the dominant Western culture. A minority of the villages shares this opinion and as a consequence they focus on their own indigenous culture. This group keeps themselves aloof from tourism. They are mostly people from the older generation, most of them work as a fisherman, they hardly speak any Dutch, and have minimal interaction with tourists. In the next fragment, the same fisherman continues his story by explaining why his culture is so important to him.

We are focused on Western civilization; I can’t talk about the flourishing of our culture anymore. Once you have tasted the Western culture, you are addicted and your own culture slowly disappears. Because of education many younger people leave the village and at the same time their culture is left behind. They experience Western life as better and once they return to the village they don’t speak our language anymore, they forget about traditions. Everything from the West is easier. But for how long can you live in a Western system? Now, but also tomorrow? It is getting more and more expensive, while our culture is more flexible. If you have to live off manja’s [fruit], it’s there for an eternity. If you have to make a living of pottery, the ingredients are always there for eternity. But a refrigerator for example, it brakes down and then you have to buy a new one. It makes you more dependent on money!
Thus, it becomes clear that there are people who are not happy with the tourism development, including some elders of the community who see it as an invasion of privacy and a threat to the indigenous culture. The guides know who is bothered by the tourists and try to stay away from their territory. The cultural shows they occasionally put on for tourists are considered rehearsals for ceremonies. In a sense tourism has spurred them on to preserve traditions that are in danger of being lost. The locals’ goal for the future is to obtain the rights and title to their traditional land and keep preserving their language and culture. However in general, tourism in Galibi has been relatively successful. The majority of the inhabitants are still optimistic about tourism, since the financial contribution is more important to them than the experienced cultural changes. Of course tourism causes a lot of economic, social and cultural changes, but most important is that local inhabitants have control over those changes and they decide what is going to happen with tourism in future.

Conclusion
The protected sea turtles that nest at the beaches of Galibi and the indigenous culture have become a popular attraction for tourists that visit Suriname. This chapter dealt with the impact this has on the host community in a cultural sense. The nature of the cultural changes has been elaborated from the perspective of the local inhabitants. Overall, the development of tourism in Galibi was unique for two reasons. First of all because tourism was initiated by the villages itself. Secondly, the development was accelerated by external organizations like Stinasu and the UNDP. With the interference of these organizations, tourism in Galibi was directly linked to the protection of the sea turtles, which is why tours to Galibi are sold under the name ‘sustainable tourism’. The most important reason why tourism was finally tolerated in the villages is the assumed economic contribution to the development of Galibi. Despite the fact that many inhabitants benefit from tourism, just a few families actually make a living of it. For most, this income is only an additional income next to their regular income.

With regard to the culture, tourism in Galibi has had some negative and positive impacts on the community. Some believe that tourism is responsible for the re-flourishing, as well as the conservation of their indigenous culture. Due to the arrival of tourists several cultural associations were founded, the production of souvenirs was stimulated and the inhabitants became more aware of the uniqueness of their indigenous culture. Besides, tourism changed the position of women in the community; it has made them more independent. The Kaliña, including men, experience this as a positive cultural change. However, not everybody agrees that tourism has made things better. Some say that the danger of tourism is that the younger generation especially tries to copy the behaviour and lifestyle of western tourists. As a result, traditional values, habits, and ceremonies are being lost due to this so called demonstration effect. Tourism has reinforced the focus on development, which is, in Galibi, a synonym for aiming for a western lifestyle. A clear example of this effect is the decreasing number of people who
believe in spirits. Not everyone is convinced of the dangerous effects of the *Watra Mama* when a woman does not obey the rules.

It has become clear in this chapter that the opinions about tourism development in Galibi and the subsequent cultural changes differ from person to person. This divide is also visible in the literature on tourism. While many impact studies emphasize the negative effects of tourism, there are also numerous studies that try to show the positive effects. In Galibi tourism contributed to reaching a higher living standard and a stronger position of women. On the other hand, when it comes to the local culture, some traditions have been lost, others have changed. But at the same time the culture is also being conserved due to tourism. In addition it has been argued that tourism is a significant but not the only cause of cultural changes. As we have seen in the last paragraph, Galibi is focused on development. This means Galibi has entered the Western world, which is for (some of) the locals the ultimate and modern way of life. Even for the local inhabitants it is hard to say if tourism is responsible for certain changes. Overall, it can be said that tourism contributed to already existing change processes, as an accelerator. After all, culture is not static; it is dynamic and develops over time. Galibi is no different in this.

For a period of four months (during the first half of 2004), Lizzy Beekman lived in Galibi to conduct a case study on the indigenous communities of Christiaankondre and Langamankondre, their perceptions on how tourism changed daily lives and which strategies they used to deal with these social and cultural change. Through a Dutch foundation, she established contacts with Stinasu (Stichting Natuurbehoud Suriname) and the captains of the two villages, who introduced her in the community and to several key informants. Interviews with different people such as the captains, the head of the cultural organization, the tour operators and other key informants, men and women, young and old, involved in tourism and not involved in tourism, but also the more informal chats with people she got to know in the village, provided her with information on the Kaliña culture, the structure of the villages and the villages’ rules as well as on the history and development of tourism in the villages. In addition, she spoke with people from the UNDP (United Nations Development Program), STS, Stinasu and COICA (Coordinadora de las Organizaciones Indígenas de la Cuenca Amazónicas). Besides interviews, Lizzy was able to participate in the daily life of the communities, most of all through the family she lived with, assisting in the household and with one of the family members’ cleaning job at a tour operator. Furthermore she visited social activities and helped out at the local school and at the local foundation Oemari, where she translated at meetings. Besides, her contacts with the local tour guides enabled her to take part in their tours to see the sea turtles. Documents such as the local newspaper and secondary data such as reports from the Galibi nature reserve added to these data.

All quotes in this chapter that were originally in Dutch or any other language were translated to English by the author.
PART V

Methodology
13 SHIFTING IDENTITIES: DOING RESEARCH IN THE FIELD OF TOURISM

Carel Roessingh and Hanneke Duijnhoven

Introduction
The case studies presented in this book are the results of ethnographic research, conducted between 2000 and 2004. Because the cases are aimed at understanding the reality of specific groups of people (the entrepreneurs, guides, local employees, etcetera) within their everyday settings, several qualitative research methods were used to obtain information about the tourism industries of Belize, the Dominican Republic, Jamaica and Suriname. These methods included (participant) observation, in-depth interviews, informal conversations, and literature and document studies, among others. Each of the separate case studies has an intrinsic as well as an instrumental focus (Stake 2003). This means that the case is used to provide an insight into this particular subject (the specific subject of each case), as well as to facilitate the understanding of a more general issue (the tourism industry as a whole). The purpose of these studies is to gain an understanding of the situation within its context, rather than generalization beyond (Stake 2003). Ethnographic methods have, until recently, been underexposed in tourism research.

Studies in the field of tourism are traditionally dominated by business-oriented approaches. It was not until the 1960s that the first anthropological and sociological studies were conducted (Crick 1989). Even after that it seemed that the tourism arena was not very appealing to anthropologists and other social scientists, in view of the few accounts in the literature. However in the last few decades there seem to be an increasing number of sociological, anthropological, and social psychological approaches to tourism (Hollinshead 2004; Jamal and Hollinshead 2001). Rather than looking for systematic patterns and focusing on statistical data, these studies aim to understand the social world in its own context. They no longer focus exclusively on the economic impact of the tourism industry but aim to include the cultural and social impacts as well. This is important, because the fragmented nature of the tourism arena calls for a multidisciplinary approach to understand its complexity. There are few phenomena in the tourism field that have clear definitions. For example, there is no universal agreement as to what ‘a tourist’ is. Even when it comes to quantitative data, there are so many differences among scholars that comparison and generalization is often difficult (Crick 1989). This chapter aims to explore some methodological and practical issues related to anthropological tourism research and to reflect upon the role of the researcher. It does not intend to provide an exhaustive overview.
of methodological debates or offer clear guidelines. It merely aims to discuss a number of issues that tourism researchers are confronted with while conducting fieldwork. Furthermore it offers a glimpse of the way the cases that are presented in this book have come about.

With the rise of anthropological accounts in the field of tourism research the role of the researcher is increasingly becoming a point of discussion among scholars (e.g. Bruner 1995; Crick 1995; Phillimore and Goodson 2004). Recognizing the subjectivity of the researcher and the importance of the context in social science research is the first step in understanding the dynamics of researcher-object relations (Denzin and Lincoln 2003). It will be argued here that within the field of tourism these issues are especially important since the nature of the field requires a careful deliberation on the part of the researcher when in the field. More than in other settings, the choices a researcher makes whilst conducting the research are influencing the research, as will be discussed here.

As both Bruner (1995) and Crick (1995) have pointed out, researchers in tourism have to take into account the specific tourism context of the field. When anthropologists travels to a place to conduct fieldwork, especially in developing countries, they are likely to be identified as tourists by both locals and other tourists. And in a sense they are tourists, even though they will be reluctant to admit this; both tourists and anthropologists travel to unknown places to find a certain experience. However in the case of tourism research this can lead to rather confusing situations. The researcher becomes part of the subject of the research and, to a further extent than in any other situation he is integrated in the field. Crick argues that there is a certain overlap in identities between anthropologists and tourists in the field. Both travel to (exotic) places to have a certain experience and then go home and tell about it. Anywhere an anthropologist might go to gather data he/she is likely to encounter tourists (Crick 1995). Bruner describes the difficulties he encountered while doing research on tourists. He found that he was sometimes acting the same as any other tourist, while at other times observing and studying the behaviour of the tourists from the outside. In the end he felt as if he was studying himself (Bruner 1995: 231). Thus, for researchers in the tourism industry the boundaries between observation, participation and participant observation are not always clear, because the difference between a researcher and a tourist is often very marginal.

Furthermore, Roessingh and Duijnhoven (2004) have argued that the nature of the tourism arena makes it difficult for the researcher to witness the ‘backstage behavior’ (Goffman 1959) of the actors in the field, for they are being identified as tourists and therefore the actors will treat them as such, thus displaying their ‘frontstage behavior’ (Roessingh and Duijnhoven 2004). As Van den Berghe puts it: “When I am studying tourism as an anthropologist, I may look like a tourist - that is, I may blend in quite well as a participant observer - but I am not really a tourist, because I have an ulterior motive beyond simply being there for its own sake” (Van den Berghe 1994: 5). The identification with the label ‘tourist’ seems to have negative connotations. Most people do not feel comfortable with the label; they rather see themselves as ‘travelers’ or ‘adventurers’. Thus it can be said that
there is a difference between the categorization by the researcher himself and by others (Van den Berghe 1994). In that sense Crick wonders, “in what ways is the anthropologist studying tourism like or unlike the tourists being studied?” (Crick 1995: 205). In other words, what makes someone a tourist? The label given to them by themselves, or that given by others?

The ambiguous character of the anthropologist’s position in the tourism field further complicates the already complicated task of studying the dynamics of complex social settings. How do researchers handle these complexities? When do they act as ‘regular tourists’? In which situations are they inclined to open up about the research they are conducting? How do anthropologists in the field of tourism go about shifting between different roles and what are the consequences for their own identity and the research data? These and other questions will be addressed here.

This chapter will continue with a general discussion of a number of these issues. Using examples from the case studies presented in this book, it explores the complexities that researchers are confronted with when preparing for, conducting, and analyzing their research. The examples are taken from the experiences of our contributors, who have all conducted fieldwork on tourism in the Caribbean. Following the empirical examples, the chapter will end with a conclusion regarding the dynamic relations between the field, the research, and the identity of the researcher.

**The Researcher in the Field of Tourism**

It has become clear from the above that the distinction between a researcher and a tourist is rather ambiguous. Especially when western researchers conduct their research in third-world destinations, they are almost naturally perceived as tourists themselves. In addition, they often participate in tourist-activities, along with ‘regular’ tourists, whilst observing the situation and interactions. It is regarded as a useful way to get to know the area. Bras, who conducted research on local tourist guides in Lombok, Indonesia puts it like this: “Taking on the tourist role was an ideal way to visit the most important sites on the island, and to become acquainted with the alternative routes across Lombok” (Bras 2000: 12).

Participant observation is one of the most important methods for anthropological research and it “is peculiarly well suited to a study of tourism” (Van den Berghe 1994: 29) because it is relatively easy to blend in, unlike in many other research settings. Van den Berghe even suggests that with the study of tourism he might have: “discovered anthropological Nirvana, by becoming one with my subject, the anthropologist cum tourist. In the end, what is anthropology but the ultimate form of ethnic tourism, the endless quest for self-understanding through the exotic other?” (Van den Berghe 1994: 32). Crick (1995) takes this argument even further, suggesting that, despite the fact that most anthropologists resent being displayed as tourists because they see themselves as more knowledgeable or even superior to mere tourists, in fact there is little difference between the two:
Tourists are essentially strangers temporarily residing in other cultures; they are normally more affluent than those among whom they stay; they have quite circumscribed interests in the other, interests which are formed in advance and which derive from their own culture; they are awkward and essentially marginal while in the field, and communicate less than effectively; they use their economic resources to obtain the experiences and relationships they value; not 'belonging' in a fundamental sense, they are free to leave at any time; on returning home they re-establish their more permanent identity and relate their experiences, enhancing their status with every telling. All these traits, it is contended, characterize anthropologists (Crick 1995: 212).

Thus, by nature, the anthropologist conducting fieldwork will be looked upon as and act similar to the tourists. This can have advantages in the process of data collection. Taking on the tourist role legitimizes interactions with actors in the field and provides the researcher with the possibility to move around freely in the field (Bras 2000). Nevertheless this easy access remains rather superficial, which is characteristic for most interactions within the tourism arena.

To gain a more profound understanding of the field and the relationships between different actors, further access is necessary. In order to gain this access, Bras found that she had to take on a number of different roles besides that of a ‘normal’ tourist or researcher and that she had to use different strategies (2000: 17). As a consequence the shifting between these roles and strategies raised questions and discussions among other actors in the field. Initially she was seen as just a tourist, but after a while locals were wondering about her activities. They did not quite know how to categorize her. At certain moments, this ambiguity caused difficulties for her research. “Precisely the identity of being a long-term tourist, which allowed me to come into contact with the local guides while at work, bothered me on other occasions in which invitations for office meetings or seminars did not reach me because those meetings were considered to hold no interest for me” (Bras 2000: 18). This problem became less of an issue as the research evolved because more actors became aware of the ‘real’ purpose of her stay. However, this led to another dilemma: tourists now often approached her with questions about the area and local culture and tourist attractions. They saw her as a kind of tourist guide who they were dependent on for their holiday experiences, and (following Bruner 1995) thereby transforming her into the subject (tour guides) of her own research. “My presence created a changed situation which I tried to neutralize by not giving more than an occasional translation, passing on the questions to the guide and slipping back in my ‘learning’ role” (Bras 2000: 19).

Apart from the choices between different roles and (research) strategies, a researcher has other decisions to make while conducting fieldwork. An important issue is the location from where to conduct the research. The geographical location and the kind of accommodation where the researcher lives can be a significant factor in the course of the research. There is a difference between
living in the middle of a tourist area, for example in a hotel, or to living in a more
remote area, with or among locals. It depends on the kind of contacts or data
needed as to which kind of accommodation is most suitable. In the case of Bras
(2000), her research focused on the guiding scene of Lombok, Indonesia. She
needed to build a network of contacts among all levels of the scene. She writes the
following about her choice of location.

Choosing Mataram (only half an hour from Senggigi by public transport)
helped me to keep a professional distance from Senggigi which, because
of its specific character, would have allowed me to get acquainted with only
some categories of cultural brokers. This distance also allowed me room
to move around freely in the tourist areas; as a tourist who participates in
tours and excursions and mingles in the nightlife. Quite apart from this
Mataram was the best location to meet local tourist guides in their own
environment (Bras 2000: 13).

Thus the distance to the tourist area helped her to maintain her ‘tourist identity’,
while also providing her with contacts among locals. Furthermore she chose to
live with a family, so she could practice and improve her Indonesian language
skills. She found that “In the course of the research my proficiency in the
language helped me to establish better relations with my informants” (Bras 2000:
14). Naturally, for researchers it is indispensable to speak the local language or
dialect, or at least another language that locals can communicate in, because it is
necessary to be able to interact with locals in a language that each is comfortable
with.

It has become clear from the above that, as a researcher in the tourism
arena, one is confronted with a number of choices and issues that need careful
deliberation and reflection at all times before, during, and after the research. The
next part of the chapter focuses on some of these issues in more detail.

The Front- and Backstage Dilemma
In this example a researcher, studying the position of small tourism
entrepreneurs in the Dominican Republic, was travelling from one Dominican
town to another in a local bus, a gua-gua. This mode of public transportation
is used only occasionally by tourists, who are attracted by the low prices. Most
tourists however, rather use a taxi because the over-crowded, old buses may seem
very uncomfortable and even unsafe according to their (western) standards. Most
of these buses are without proper seats and windows, and it happens often that
people are hanging on the sides of the bus due to lack of room inside.

When the researcher got on the gua-gua the bus was already very crowded,
nevertheless she was able to obtain a seat in the back of the vehicle. Although
there were about 15 seats, at one point during the ride there were more than 25
people on board. The researcher was sitting quietly in the back, in between a
young woman with a baby on her lap and an older woman. During the trip the
people around her were complaining about the prices that had gone up and the fact that they had to pay a double fare due to the holiday-season. Particularly, the old lady next to her seemed very angry and frustrated. When the gua-gua stopped at the front gate of a luxury tourist resort to let in four tourists (a family with 2 small children), a few locals offered their space and seats to the tourists and hung out of the gua-gua, while the vehicle continued its way. This further angered the lady and some other locals in the back. The woman was going on and on about how the tourists were spoiling everything for the locals these days, causing prices to rise and taking their places on the local buses. Why don’t they take a taxi, they have money enough. She looked very angry at the tourists and also at the researcher (who figured that the woman, naturally thought of her as a tourist as well). The tourist family in the front of the gua-gua could not hear the lady but the researcher, for she was sitting next to her, was within hearing-range. The lady clearly did not expect her to be able to understand a word of what she was saying, let alone that she was in fact not a (regular) tourist but an anthropologist taking note of her every word and gesture. This fragment is based on the research of Hanneke Duijnoven (2004)

Due to her appearance, the researcher in the example is identified by the local woman as just another tourist. The region is a popular tourism destination and tourists are present in most public spaces. The woman in the example obviously felt threatened by the presence of the tourists; they had invaded a place that was supposed to be for locals only, according to her. This symbolizes the enormous influence the tourism industry has on the daily life of the locals. Not only are the many tourists in the area changing her daily life, they had trespassed into the backstage area where she thought she was ‘safe’ from tourists and where she should be able behave as usual and live her ‘regular’ life. Furthermore, due to the fact that in general the tourists that come to Puerto Plata do not speak or understand Spanish, she thought none of the tourists that were present could understand what she was saying, thus she felt free to express her true feelings.

The aforementioned situation is an example of the coinciding of what Goffman (1959) calls frontstage and backstage areas. Ideally the frontstage is where the performers (in this case the locals) act in a way they want the audience (the tourists) to think is their ‘normal behaviour’, while in the backstage they can express their ‘true feelings’ because the audience is absent (Goffman 1959). In the case of tourism these backstage regions are places where the hosts can freely utter their frustrations. These regions include the local residential areas, backyards, local restaurants and other public places where tourists are not often seen. It has to be noted, however, that it lies in the nature of tourists to try to enter into these back regions to get a taste of the ‘authentic’ local life (Boissevain 1996: 8), thereby transforming the backstage into the frontstage. This is also the case in the abovementioned example. The woman in the gua-gua thinks she is in the backstage area, while in fact the researcher is able to observe her backstage behaviour and transforming, so to speak, the backstage into a frontstage area. As a researcher it is necessary to understand the language of the locals, while
these locals see the researcher as a tourist and therefore assume that they cannot overhear or understand what they are saying. In situations like this, researchers are able to observe and understand the ‘real’ opinions of the informants. In this example, the anthropologist was able to employ a tourist role to gather valuable data that would have been extremely difficult to obtain without this easy disguise. This ‘tourist-disguise’ can be useful, but it can raise some ethical questions as well, as will become clear in the next example.

The Undercover Tourist: The Researcher with a Hidden Agenda
While in the field researchers often have to decide quickly which role to take on. In some occasions they will pretend to be a ‘regular tourist’, in other situations they might display more about their actual purposes. Usually this depends on whom they are interacting with and what kind of data they are looking for. The researcher in the next example was studying the work strategies and behaviour of local tourist guides in Jamaica. In order to obtain first-hand data he deliberately took on the role of a tourist looking for an adventurous excursion.

The researcher actively displayed himself as a tourist to make sure that the local guide would approach him for an excursion in the mountains. The guide used his standard methods to convince his tourists to participate in his excursion: he tells them that it will be a unique experience. The researcher pretended to be ‘just another tourist’ while in fact he was asking all kinds of questions with an ulterior motive. During the excursion he observed every move of the guide and asked him about his life and work. The guide had no idea that his behaviour was closely studied and documented. Besides the guide, the researcher also had to conceal his true identity from the other tourists. For the duration of the excursion, he was constantly trying to act as one of the group. Even though he had more knowledge on the Jamaican tourism industry than most of them, he had to pretend that he knew nothing. Because the group was very small and the excursion lasted for several hours he had to think carefully about his answers. He had to have a consistent story to tell about his ‘vacation to Jamaica’. He could not permit any mistakes because he was dependent on the group and the guide for a safe return from the mountains.

This fragment is based on the research of Pieter Masmeijer (2001).

The researcher in the example of the bus was seen as a tourist by others and she adopted this role in a passive way. She used it to obtain information but she did not actively try to maintain this identity. In contrast, the researcher in this example had to play a well thought-out role to obtain the necessary data for his research. He deliberately concealed his identity as a researcher. The question is if this is ethically acceptable. There have been substantial debates among scholars about the issue of covert research (see for example Flick 2002; Hammersley and Atkinson 1995; O’Reilly 2005). How far can a researcher go in ‘misleading’ the respondents about his intentions? To what extent can a researcher use private data of his respondent without their knowledge. There have been numerous
attempts to solve these dilemmas by developing ‘codes of conduct’ for sociologists or anthropologists (e.g. American Anthropological Association 1998; International Sociological Association 2001), and to a certain extent there is an agreement on behaviour that is not acceptable, but the discussion remains alive.

In some situations it is not desirable or even possible to inform all research participants. Once this researcher made a choice to hide his true identity he could not go back. He had to play the part until the end of the excursion. Thus it is the important to think carefully about and reflect upon the effect a research can have on all participants involved (O’Reilly 2005). The researcher in the next fragment made the choice to (partly) reveal the purpose of her presence in the field. This had significant consequences as well because even more so than in the previous example, this choice is irreversible. After people know about the research, it is impossible to employ the tourist act. This can have benefits as well as disadvantages, as will become clear in the example.

In the Line of Fire

This example focuses on the position of a researcher within the local community of a relatively new tourism area in Suriname. The researcher was able to live within this community through contacts with locals that were involved in the tourism business; therefore she had to reveal her intentions to a certain extent. However, another part of the community consisted of people that had no interest in the tourism industry at all and they were not informed as to what her intentions were. The researcher found herself in the middle of a conflict between two groups within this community.

The researcher found that there is a clear distinction between people within the Galibi community that are involved with tourism, and those who are not involved. In general the people that are involved in the tourism industry have a positive view of the development of this industry. They see many benefits for the community. The people that are not involved, on the other hand, tend to have a more negative attitude towards tourism and tourists. They often feel as if the tourists have no respect for their traditions and way of life and they see the tourism industry as something that destroys their community. The researcher was able to conduct her research within this community through contacts with Stinasu (an official organization involved with tourism). These key-informants introduced her to the head of the town, who introduced her to the people of the town. However, her initial connection with Stinasu inflicted some suspicion among the locals, especially those that were not involved in tourism. During her stay, the conflicts between the ‘pro-tourism’ locals and ‘anti-tourism’ locals led to a number of disputes. Her position in the community, as a tourism researcher, made it difficult for her to interact with the locals that were against tourism development, and she found it hard to integrate in the community. Despite her attempts to convince the locals of her objective position as a researcher, the problems within the community invigorated the distant attitude of the locals towards her.

This fragment is based on the research of Lizzy Beekman (2005).
It follows from this example that a researcher needs to be conscious about the relations and dynamics among all actors in the field. Who provides the access to the field and what are their relations with other actors in the field? In this case, access was gained through contacts with people in the area’s tourism industry. The final word however was by the head of the town, the gatekeeper of this research field. The question is if such key-informants have the right to act as a gatekeeper and decide to give access to a researcher on behalf of the whole community, even when others might not agree or feel offended by the presence of this researcher? In this respect, Hammersley and Atkinson (1995) talk about ‘obstructive’ and ‘facilitating relationships’. In all ethnographic field research, the relationships with the gatekeepers and key-informants influence to a certain extent the research and the boundaries of access. “...the ethnographer will be channelled in line with existing networks of friendship and enmity, territory and equivalent ‘boundaries’” (Hammersley and Atkinson 1995: 75). The researcher in this example was torn between two groups of people in the community. To be able to live in the community she had to reveal her position as a researcher. She was associated with the tourism industry and thereby became a part of the group of people that favour the development of tourism. This consequently led to the fact that she was distrusted by another group of people. For all researchers conducting fieldwork, it is essential to pay attention to the local dynamics of power, interests and conflicts, since these can have serious implications for the position of the researcher and the research. What is more, such power relations can lead to researcher bias (Belsky 2004) or the researcher can become a sort of tool in existing (power) conflicts. Thus it is necessary to keep these relations in mind and to reflect upon them.

**Being One of Them**

As mentioned, the appearance of the researcher can be very influential on the research and access to the field. Besides appearance, ethnic, cultural, religious, or social aspects of the researcher can also play a significant role when it comes to conducting research. Like the researcher from the previous example, the researcher in the following example was also trying to build a relationship of trust with the actors in the field. In this case, her personal background played a significant role. It seemed as if the researcher was able to build relationships of trust with her respondents based on ethnic similarities.

*The research took place in Paramaribo, the capital of Suriname. The researcher conducted the research in cooperation with a national tourism association. This association is closely linked to the government and activities carried out from this organization are generally received with suspicion among locals. The researcher’s connection with this organization, combined with her Dutch nationality would initially lead to suspicious reactions from locals; they naturally thought she was working for the government, against them. However, when she would tell them that her family descends from the Carib Indians (who represent one of the ethnic groups in Suriname), their attitude usually changed immediately. In spite of*
her Dutch nationality, her ethnic background aroused feelings of solidarity: the common background convinced the locals that she could only have their interests at heart. She was able to build a broad and stable network of respondents and she managed to integrate to a certain extent with the local population due to her ethnicity. She was still looked upon as a tourist, and in that sense she remained an outsider at all times, but the ethnic similarities caused a mutual feeling of trust and loyalty, which helped her with her research.

This fragment is based on the research of Gwendolyn de Boer (2003).

The researcher in this example could use her ethnic identity to gain the trust of her informants. Initially they did not feel comfortable with her presence because she was associated with the government. Hammersley and Atkinson state that locals often initially view researchers suspiciously. They often think the researcher is some sort of spy, especially when it concerns locals who do not have any knowledge of social science research (Hammersley and Atkinson 1995: 80). In this case, because the researcher has a similar ethnic background, she was able to break the ice. The informants naturally expected her to be loyal to them and their community because of the commonality between them. Thus the researcher was able to strategically use her ethnic identity in order to approach her informants. This strategic usage of specific aspects of one's identity is often indicated in theories regarding identity and ethnicity (e.g. Baud et al. 1994; Cohen 2000; Jenkins 1997). Yet despite the ethnic bond between the researcher and the community she was not able to fully integrate in the community. Although she was ‘one of them’ in some respects, overall she remained an outsider. This is inherently part of conducting research. A researcher in the field always has a special position due to his or her role. Humberstone (2004) argues that it is essential for researchers to constantly think about the relationship between their own identity and the research (subjects). Through the different roles and usage of identity he or she is able to move around in the field and adapt his/her act to the specific situations, in order to gather the necessary data (Hammersley and Atkinson 1995: 99). The ambiguous and often confusing position of researchers naturally creates a certain distance from the other actors in the field. A researcher is neither a normal tourist nor a local. Researchers need to constantly reflect on their role and can never fully let their guard down, as will become clear in the next example.

**Getting Too Close**

In the previous example it was argued that the ethnicity of the researcher can have an important influence for the research or access to the field. Especially when it comes to strong ethnic groups or communities it can be difficult for an anthropologist to enter the community and gain trust among the group members. He or she will always remain an outsider or tourist, as has been showed in the preceding fragments. However, in certain situations the researcher is more likely or able to get a glimpse of behaviour within the community that is different from the everyday frontstage behaviour. An example of a situation like that is described
The celebration of this ethnic holiday primarily serves as a means to increase or strengthen the feeling of community or ethnic identity among the Garinagu and to be acknowledged as an ethnic group by the government and the rest of the country. Beside that, nowadays the holiday has three strategic purposes from the perspective of the government of Belize that aims to make the country attractive for tourists. In the first place, these ethnic festivities are used to attract tourists. In the second place, local Garifuna entrepreneurs are able to sell ethnic merchandise to these tourists, thus it is used to increase their business opportunities. Finally, the holiday is displayed as a good opportunity for tourists to learn about the Garifuna culture and traditions. For the researcher the holiday was a good opportunity to interact on a different basis with members of this ethnic group. He had no problems gaining access to the festivities because, as it was stated, the manifestations are also open for tourists. However, because of his previous contacts among the Garinagu, the researcher was able to integrate more profoundly within the community during this celebration. The people were more open and informal due to the festive character of the day. The researcher interacted with the locals in a different, more informal and less sensible way. Initially, it seemed as if the distinction between him and the locals, partly due to alcohol consumption, became less clear. The relation between the researcher and the locals changed within the context of this festival. The problem was that during the festival these new roles seemed appropriate, but the next day, when the situation was supposed to be normal again, these new roles suddenly seemed very awkward. Some kind of (emotional) boundary had been crossed and from that moment the researcher had to fight to be able to restore and maintain his previous contacts among this group.

This fragment is based on the research of Carel Roessingh (2001).

A key event like the ethnic holiday in this fragment might appear to be a great opportunity for a researcher to see a different side of the community, however, there is a risk involved because people tend to behave differently during such special events. The boundaries between the outsider and the community might be different or even disappear for a moment. In the case of a tourist this might not be a problem because he or she will probably leave after the event. For him/her the relationship with this community has no special meaning. Yet, a researcher cannot afford to put his or her position within the community on the line because he runs the risk of losing his credibility, because he is dependent on contacts among the locals to be able to continue the research. Thus the researcher needs to be careful during this kind of situation not to become emotional or to cross a line because this might jeopardize the future of his/her research project. Furthermore, this can cause serious stress for the researcher him/herself. For example when feelings of friendship arise between the researcher and informants
the researcher might feel that he/she is exploiting the trust-relation in such a friendship (O’Reilly 2005: 79). Hammersley and Atkinson state that ethnographic research can be extremely stressful for a researcher. During the course of the fieldwork a researcher is likely to be confronted with all kinds of emotions and contradictory feelings, especially when it comes to his position among the research participants (Hammersley and Atkinson 1995). Thus, researchers need to find a balance between integrating in and keeping a distance from the local community in all situations, even when there are special circumstances. They must never surrender entirely to a situation and avoid feeling too comfortable (Hammersley and Atkinson 1995: 115).

In the preceding fragments a number of issues regarding the position and roles of researcher in the field of tourism have been elaborated. It became clear that researchers are able to, and sometimes they are even forced to, shift between different roles during the fieldwork. The ways in which these practices influence the research and, more important, the researcher will be discussed in the following conclusion.

**Doing Research in the Field of Tourism: a Conclusion**

Researchers conducting ethnographic research, like the researchers in this book, can employ a set of different methods in order to gather their data. These methods often include (but are not limited to) document study, interviewing and (participant) observation. It has been argued that the latter is the most important method if one wants to grasp the social reality under study. Participant observation allows the researcher to see what happens first-hand, while other methods only offer accounts of reality (Flick 2002). When it comes to observation, researchers can employ different types of practices, ranging from covert to overt and with different levels of participation.

The first example in this chapter can be classified as covert observation, with a low level of participation. The researcher did not reveal her identity, nor did she actively participate in the situation, she merely sat, listened and watched. The second researcher was also employing covert observation. However he did participate fully in the setting. He actively tried to hide his intentions and immersed himself in the activities of his participants. In the third fragment, the researcher was more open about her identity although for some of the locals her true intentions were not very clear. She lived among the locals and participated in the daily life. The researchers in the fourth and fifth example both became close to full integration in the field, and both were, to a certain extent, open about their position. Thus, these can be characterized as overt, participant observation. These different types of observation involve different choices and different behaviour. In other words, the researchers have to think carefully about their roles.

Adopting different roles according to the social setting is something that lies in the nature of human beings. It has been stated that our social reality is similar to a theatre and we are all actors, playing a part (Goffman 1959). The role we play in a certain situation depends on the people we interact with, the purpose
of the interaction, the context, among other things. These roles are often closely linked to aspects of our identities. According to the social identity theory (e.g. Jenkins 1996; Tajfel 1978), our behaviour in different situations depends on how we identify ourselves and are identified by others in that particular situation. Our membership of specific social groups defines who we are to others and to ourselves. Thus, identity, as a concept, is both situational and dynamic in a sense that it is “subject to modulation according to circumstances” (Cohen 2000: 3). Looking at the examples in this chapter, it becomes clear that researchers in the field of tourism have to strategically employ different roles, or emphasize certain aspects of their identity, through the adoption of their behaviour according to the situation. It is important for them to maintain a reflective position towards the role they adopt while in the field. This means that the researchers need to be conscious about their position at all times, throughout the entire research project (Hall 2004).

When it comes to the position of a researcher in the field, it seems that too often it is suggested that researchers are ‘just’ playing a certain role, that at the end of the day he/she goes home and leaves the costume and mask behind. We would like to argue here that it is much more complex. The activities related to the fieldwork are more than ‘just acting out a role’. Being a tourist is a role, but tourists do go home and leave this act behind. The researcher remains in the area much longer. It is not simply ‘a role’ anymore. During the fieldwork, researchers are regularly being confronted with themselves and are forced to reflect upon their activities and their identity. For example, the researcher that is observing without the locals being aware of it, may feel like an impostor; eavesdropping on the locals for data. On the other hand it is part of their job as a researcher. One of the most important issues is the question whether the methods are ethically acceptable (e.g. Flick 2002; O’Reilly 2005). Especially when it comes to covert observation there is a lot of discussion. Is it ethical for a researcher to study people without their knowledge and consent? The problem is that such activities are often the best way to obtain certain data so there seems to be no satisfying solution to these ethical dilemmas. However, the debate among scholars concerning the ethical aspect of ethnographic research has increased the level of awareness and reflexivity of the researcher about his or her own practices (O’Reilly 2005).

The personal background of the researcher can also be important during the research. As became clear from the examples, researchers are often limited by their appearance or they can strategically use their ethnicity to integrate with respondents. Researchers have to constantly think about which part of their identity they have to emphasize or hide, or about what they want and what is best for their research. Also it is important to consider the wellbeing of all research participants and to think about the effects of the research. Such choices often represent the position the researcher takes between different actors or groups, as was illustrated in the fragment of the researcher trying to integrate with both groups of a divided community. Furthermore, researchers have to be careful not to cross certain lines, as became clear from the example of the researcher getting carried away during a party. It is important to stay within the boundaries
of appropriate behaviour, because the choices made are often irreversible. For example, once it is clear that a researcher speaks the language, eavesdropping becomes difficult, and when one’s ethnic background is revealed a certain loyalty is expected.

In other words, being a researcher in tourism is about coping with different situations, and being flexible. It is important to possess a certain chameleon-like capacity and be able to strategically employ one’s identities and adapt to specific situations. The trick is to be able to shift between identities in a manner that is least conflicting for them and for the other parties involved. They have to reflect upon and balance their identities carefully. In contrast to quantitative research where the role and position of a researcher is usually clearly recognizable, the nature of qualitative research, and especially participant observation, enables the researcher to use the ‘shifting identities method’, and that is what makes fieldwork so exciting and challenging.
References


Belize Times (2002a). *See Belize This Summer* - 23 June 2002: Insert 2A.


180
Unpublished document.


Van Marrewijk, A. (1999). Internationalisation, cooperation and ethnicity in the


Index

adventure tourism 10, 17, 20, 42
all-inclusive resorts 57, 61, 62, 63, 66, 70, 71, 73, 82, 83, 87, 93
all-inclusive tourism 11, 53, 61, 71
authenticity 21, 25, 27, 33, 39, 43, 48, 49, 112, 114, 139
backstage 9, 33, 34, 78, 79, 80, 81, 102, 104, 158
Boissevain, J. 135, 136, 137, 162
Bourdieu, P. 135, 136
Brokers 135, 137, 138, 161
Caribbean Basin 9, 10, 14, 17, 88
cave tourism 17, 37, 139, 142
Cohen, E. 26, 39, 43, 61, 66, 80, 102, 106, 112, 113, 114
Commemoration 31, 32, 33
community development 94, 143
community-based tourism 58
competition 32, 63, 68, 76, 81, 82, 94, 103, 107, 114, 115, 128
competitive 20, 57, 63, 81, 95, 124, 133
coping strategies 78, 82
Crick, M. 62, 63, 66, 68, 75, 103, 106, 136, 157, 158
cruise tourism 10, 11, 22, 37, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47
cultural capital 12, 103, 134, 136, 137
cultural change 78, 82, 83, 142, 149, 152, 153
cultural conflicts 78, 79, 94, 99, 100, 101, 104
cultural synergy 96
cultural tourism 20, 23, 42, 45
Dahles, H. 45, 46, 74, 77, 78, 81, 127, 128, 129, 132, 134, 135
economic capital 135, 136, 137
economic development 19, 47, 93, 144
eco-tourism 17, 19, 20, 21, 46, 57, 89, 119
enclave 53, 56, 57, 62, 70, 79, 91
entrepreneurial 82, 127, 128, 134
ethnic background 25, 27, 30, 33, 40, 95, 120, 166, 170
ethnic group 18, 25, 26, 27, 28, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 40
ethnic identity 17, 27, 33, 34, 35, 78, 80, 166, 167
ethnic tourism 25, 27, 159
ethnicity 17, 25, 28, 29, 30, 35, 166, 169
ethnocentric 95, 96, 102, 103
ethnographic methods 157
ethnographic research 49, 157, 168, 169
frontstage 9, 32, 34, 78, 79, 80, 102, 104, 158, 162
gocentric 96, 102
Goffman, E. 33, 66, 78, 79, 81, 158, 162, 168
government 9, 10, 11, 12, 19, 20, 22, 23, 25, 27, 28
identification 82, 158
image 9, 10, 11, 17, 21, 25, 28, 29, 40, 44, 45, 48, 49
image building 17, 44, 49, 71, 116, 139
indigenous tourism 94
independent sector 75, 137
infrastructure 19, 41, 55, 56, 57, 114, 121, 131
innovation 45, 127, 128, 134, 138
intermediary 106, 132, 133
investment 54, 55, 74, 82, 83, 90, 93, 122, 128, 134, 136
investors 18, 19, 29, 33, 54, 55, 56, 74, 76, 83, 122
Jenkins, R. 166, 169
MacCannell, D. 27, 44, 78, 80, 102, 114
management strategies 12, 87, 95, 102, 104
mass tourism 10, 12, 17, 23, 34, 37, 42, 57, 58, 63, 70
McDisneyization 11, 63
McDonaldization 11, 63, 64, 65, 66, 68, 70
micro enterprises 129
multi-ethnic 11, 18, 29, 31, 34, 35, 120
multinational 12, 74, 75, 76, 77, 81, 82, 103
Nash, D. 93, 94, 141
nation state 11, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 34
national identity 19, 21, 22, 25, 28, 29, 30, 31
network specialists 106, 107, 115, 137
odd-jobber 106, 107, 112, 115
organizational culture 95
package 9, 53, 56, 57, 62, 64, 65, 76, 77, 90, 129
participant observation 139, 157, 158, 159, 168, 170
participation 82, 93, 128, 141, 158, 168
polycentric 95, 96, 102
professional guides 26, 106, 110, 116
promotion 19, 22, 68, 69, 77, 89, 124, 127, 129, 143, 148
qualitative research 13, 157, 170
resort-tourism 11
responsible tourism 21, 23, 49
Ritzer, G. 11, 63, 64, 65, 66
shifting identities 80, 82, 83, 157, 170
site-related guides 106, 107
small businesses 56, 74
small tourism entrepreneurs 35, 77, 82, 135, 161
social capital 136
social identity 169
social network 128, 129, 131, 135, 136
stakeholders 20, 45, 47, 48, 49
sun-sea-sand 10, 20, 21, 68, 69, 83, 87, 114
sustainable tourism 11, 37, 49, 58, 71, 93, 122, 123, 128, 142, 143
symbolic capital 136
tourism enterprises 56, 74, 77, 79, 82, 98, 124
tourism market 10, 17, 19, 44, 63, 119, 121, 124, 128, 134
tourism network 37, 76
tourism organization 9, 22, 31, 41, 53, 70, 71, 76, 94, 121, 122, 123
tourism policy 47, 48, 83, 90, 122, 146
tourist attraction 9, 11, 12, 19, 25, 31, 33, 34, 38, 42, 45, 89
tourist bubble 61
transnational 77
Van den Berghe, P. 25, 27, 44, 78, 80, 106, 136, 158, 159
Contributors

Lizzy Beekman (1979) received her bachelor at Haagsche Hogeschool and then studied organizational anthropology and received her Master of Art, *cum laude*, in Social Sciences at the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam. During her Master phase she conducted research on the social-cultural impact of tourism on an indigenous community in Surinam. She currently works as a personal assistant for a member of the Dutch parliament in The Hague.

Myrte Berendse (1978) studied organizational anthropology and received her Master of Art, *cum laude*, in Social Sciences at the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam. She has been involved in the tourism industry in Central and South America several times and during her Master phase she conducted research on the role of the government and tourism entrepreneurs in the development and representation of Belize as a tourism destination. She currently works as a junior lecturer and Ph.D. candidate at the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, Faculty of Social Studies, Department of Culture, Organization and Management.

Margot van den Berg van Saparoa (1979) studied Cultural and Social Development with specialisation in Tourism and Recreation at the Hogeschool van Utrecht (HvU) and Organizational Anthropology at the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam. She received her Master of Art in Social Sciences in 2005 and conducted research on Tour Operators in Suriname during her Master phase. She currently works in the sales and promotion business in a clothing company.

Gwendolyn de Boer (1975) studied organizational anthropology and received her Master of Art in Social Sciences at the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam. During her Master phase she conducted research on the way small tour operators contribute to the development of sustainable tourism in Suriname. She currently works for an international Facility Services organization where she is responsible for Quality Management and Product Development.

Karin Bras (1960) studied cultural anthropology and received her Ph.D. at the University of Tilburg in the Netherlands. Her Ph.D. research was on the role of local tourist guides in the social construction of tourist attractions on the island of Lombok, Indonesia. At the moment she works as a lecturer at the department of Tourism & Leisure Management of the InHolland University. Since 2005 she...
participates in the research group Leisure Management of the same university where she conducts research on cultural tourism in Amsterdam.

Hanneke Duijnhoven (1980) studied organizational anthropology and received her Master of Art in Social Sciences at the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam. During her Master phase she conducted research on the impact of tourism on small entrepreneurs in the Dominican Republic. She currently works as a junior lecturer and Ph.D. candidate at the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, Faculty of Social Sciences, Department of Culture, Organization and Management.

Pieter Masmeijer (1976) received his bachelor at InHolland University and then he studied organizational anthropology and received his Master of Art in Social Sciences at the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam. During his Master phase he conducted research on tourist guides and their entrepreneurial strategies in Jamaica. He currently works as a Business Consultant for Eiffel Consultancy, Division Trade and Industry, Product group Process.

Nathalie Pot (1978) studied organizational anthropology and received her Master of Art in Social Sciences at the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam. During her Master phase she conducted research on the image building within the tourism sector of the Dominican Republic. She currently works as Program Manager for an international company in Apeldoorn.

Carel Roessingh (1951) studied cultural anthropology and received his Ph.D. at the University of Utrecht. His Ph.D. research was on the Belizean Garifuna. His current research topics are religious entrepreneurs (the organizational activities of the Mennonites in Belize and Central America) and tourism development issues in the Caribbean basin. He works as a senior lecturer at the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, Faculty of Social Sciences, Department of Culture, Organization and Management.

Sofie Schrover (1979) studied organizational anthropology and received her Master of Art in Social Sciences at the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam. During her Master phase she conducted research on the concept of all-inclusive tourism and its sustainability in the Dominican Republic. She currently works at the Facilities & Services department of one of the world’s largests consumer goods companies in Rotterdam, where she is responsible for the coordination and organization of all facility services.

Ewout van der Meer (1974) received his bachelor at InHolland University and then he studied organizational anthropology and received his Master of Art in Social Sciences at the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam. During his Master phase he conducted research on the strategies international managers employ in Jamaica to deal with cross-cultural differences and the possible relationship with intercultural conflicts. He currently works as a Transformation Manager for ABN AMRO Bank N.V., Transaction Banking, Client Service.