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# POWER RELATIONS IN TRANSITION: THE CASE OF MURTER, CROATIA



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## Summary

Power has been a much researched phenomenon in scientific tourism research since the emergence of literature on host-guest relations. However, only recently have researchers more explicitly incorporated the importance of understanding the underlying concept and theorization of power. This has been accompanied by a shift towards post-structuralist perceptions, aiming to read between the lines of social and cultural relations to identify and make sense of relations of power inherent within socio-cultural processes. Following the line of thought of post-structuralist power-theorists like Foucault and Allen, in this thesis power is understood as a mediated effect, which can be influenced by certain attributes that individuals can have. Continuing in line with the existing power-in-tourism literature further exploratory research could gain insight into the human dimension; to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meaning people bring to them. There is a need to engage in the disentangling of relations of power in tourism in specific locations to come to a better understanding of its influences and, in turn, the influences of the context of the specific location on the movements or changes of these power relations. This thesis, therefore, specifically approaches the influences of power relations on local tourism development (and vice versa) in one specific destination: the community of Murter, Croatia.

The initial intention of my research was to analyze the relations between power and tourism development. Throughout the first phase of my field research, however, a third concept came to my attention. Croatia is considered a 'country in transition'. This process the country is undergoing appeared to have a strong influence on both power as well as tourism development and also on the power-tourism relation. From this moment on I have widened the lens of my research by approaching it as a triangular relation: power - tourism development - transition.

As came forth from a four dimensional shift in system and society in Croatia, I have approached the phenomenon of transition as a holistic process 1. from war to peace, 2. from a centrally planned to a free market economy, 3. from a single party system to a pluralist democracy, and additionally 4. a transition also provokes changes on a socio-cultural level. The process of transition in Croatia started in 1990 and continues till present day. It has infiltrated deeply into all facets of society. Transition, being a process, is something that happens over time and it is often something that does not progress linearly. Rather it brings forth a number of struggles that complicate or slow down development. In the process of transition, Croatia was in some ways reluctant in setting the ground for an open market economy and a democracy. As a consequence, a number of transition issues can be distinguished. In this research I have come to six 'transitional pains' that are of main influence on the relations of power in tourism development in Murter. These include: privatization process, corruption in politics, grey area in economy, independency struggles, discussions of land ownership rights and debates of gender issues. Their specific relations and influences have been explored through four sub-case studies in the focal community.

In conclusion to my research, I come to a dual influence of the transition on relations of power and with that also on tourism development: on the one hand the process of transition has strengthened traditional values and gender based patterns, but on the other hand it has also opened up new political, economic and cultural processes. The disentangled interplay between traditionalization and modernization shows interesting debates that take place in every nation in the world, but the developments of the debates are to be found specific for each locality. Analyzing the interplay between tradition and modernity on a local level has provided detailed information on the specific debates of tourism development and therewith reveal the explicit change and reevaluation of relations of power. This research has revealed that specific aspects of history and existing structures, in combination with cultural values and norms of society, have a strong influence on the proceedings of the transition process and are consequentially also driving forces in the modernization-traditionalization debates.

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# 1. Introduction

As argued by Cheong and Miller (2000) 'there is power everywhere in tourism'. This has made relations of power an extremely interesting topic for scientific tourism research. The discussions around power in tourism have been a purpose for many studies since the emergence of literature on host-guest relations, however only recently have researchers more explicitly incorporated the importance of understanding the underlying concept and theorization of power. This has pushed forth a focus on social and cultural relations of power in tourism and with that shifted power-in-tourism research towards post-structuralist perceptions. Namely, the post-structuralist researcher is aiming to read between the lines of social and cultural relations to identify and make sense of relations of power inherent within social and cultural processes (Aitchinson 2003:33).

One of the most widely acknowledged power-theorists, Foucault (1980), approaches power as a relational influence that constitutes social relations, and which exist through the actions of people. Power can only be mutated through relations (Allen 2003:2). In this thesis power is understood as a mediated effect, which can be influenced by certain attributes that individuals can have (Ibid.). Relations of power can be distinguished on multiple levels among people or groups of people and between people and things.

Wearing (2002) reveals that there seems to be a growing recognition that 'power' is a central concept to tourism studies. To learn more about power relations we should continue in the line of conceptualizing power, but to take power-in-tourism research a step forward, to break new ground, we should to recognize creativity and diversity and adopt a multi-faceted approach to research (Westwood 2004:5-2). There is a continuously moving context in which structures of power thrive, but it is up to the agency to follow these or to decide to intervene, control or resist to opposed powers. To be able to disentangle relations of power and the meaning behind decisions of the agency to respond to these, they need to be considered in a specific authentic context. Following up on these thoughts there is a need to engage in the disentangling of relations of power in tourism in specific locations to come to a better understanding of its influences and, in turn, the influences of the context of the specific location on the movements or changes of these power relations. As stated by Denzin & Lincoln (1994: 3), 'qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meaning people bring to them'. This thesis, therefore, specifically approaches the influences of power relations on local tourism development (and vice versa) in one specific destination: the community of Murter, Croatia.

Power relations are intangible and often even completely invisible. Consequentially, attempting to research these in a specific location may be challenging. For this kind of research it is generally acknowledged that using a less structured approach will evoke the emotions associated with the topic (Moutinho 1989, Ryan 1995). This way the researcher allows the phenomenon of power relations to speak through its agencies in exploring the surrounding context. Therefore, I have chosen for an inductive approach to the field research in Murter by 'letting the data do the talking'. My approach therefore has been to have an open mind, without too many pre-structured perspectives. I did come forth with some general a priori concepts, which formed guiding principles throughout my research. These concepts include power, structures and agency.

In the field I have pursued research in two phases. The first phase involved a broad scanning and exploration of the community and its surroundings. During this more empirical analysis I allowed the data to come to me and specify my further research. As the research for this thesis evolved during this first phase, it became clear that there is a phenomenon which is of main influence on both tourism development and relations of power in Croatia: transition. I further explored this concept in the field, but also through scientific literature. Continuously, in the second phase my research became more specific and I chose four in-

depth sub-case studies to illuminate the specific relations of power within some of the central issues. These sub-cases include: the development of the municipality of Murter, the privatization of marina Hramina, the landownership issues along a road between two beaches, and the resistance of an individual woman.

This research will show that the specific characteristics of a transition country have a strong influence on the reevaluation and reshaping of power relations in tourism development within a specific locality. The four sub-case studies in this research will exemplify how modernity and tradition interact. Continuously, the cases will represent how transition processes and the 6 identified transitional 'pains' (privatization process, grey economy, political corruption, independency issues, land ownership and gender relations) are played out at the local level in the community of Murter. I will aim to take power-in-tourism research one step further towards exploring social-cultural notions, by exposing the complexity of multiple realities within a specific location and revealing entangled capacities of individuals and collectives.

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## 2. Scientific Notions of Power

'There is power everywhere in tourism' (Cheong and Miller 2000). Consequently, the phenomenon of power has pervaded tourism research for numerous years, mostly from a political and economic perspective. An emerging camp of post-structural social scientists is increasingly approaching power as a critical topic of analysis in tourism development studies. In spite of this, power remains a highly contested concept; intangible, multi-faceted and exceptionally difficult to grasp. Paragraph 2.1 analyzes how the concept of power has been approached within science in general. Secondly, paragraph 2.2 recognizes the conceptualization and employment of power relations in tourism studies. Looking at the existing literature on power in tourism development I shall distinguish that there is a recent development towards the general theoretical argumentation and conceptual use of power theories. To continue with this line of thought, I will take the opportunity to engage the concept of power in a particular case study.

### 2.1 Power in Scientific Research

Extensive scientific debate has shown that power is a fundamentally contested idea. As argued by Coles and Church (2007:32), there exists no commonly accepted hegemonic position among scientists on what power is and how it can be defined. The word itself is often used in several contexts, ranging from 'authority' and 'strength' to 'ability' and 'right'. As an intangible concept, the phenomenon of power remains rather abstract and difficult to grasp. Several scientists have made an effort to unravel the phenomenon from a number of disciplines. Although there is no universal definition, there are common themes running through most of these works. Depending on the background of the researcher, the time of writing and the angle of analysis, in general, two main camps of thought can be distinguished: their approaches can be considered either structural or post-structural.

#### 2.1.1 Structural Approach

The first camp is regarded the 'structural' viewpoint. Traditional structuralist theory emphasizes the importance of societal structure and constraint (Aitchison 2003:19). It seeks for explanations of phenomena in the general structures of modern society. According to this view, power is nothing more than 'a kind of generalized capacity to act' (Hindess 1996:1). In this sense power is simply a quantitative phenomenon; a situation where the structures of society always impose the power. Many academics have followed this structuralist camp of thought, suggesting that the essential meaning of power can be reduced to the underlying concept of power as a capacity (Marx 1844, Lukes 1974, Weber 1978, Mann 1986). From this point of view, power is seen as something which can be held or possessed, almost making it a tangible asset. The sense that power is out there, ready to be taken, hang on to, or flaunted, is deeply integrated into our value system (Allen 2003: 4). As Allen (2003: 15) evaluated: "it seems entirely reasonable to suggest that someone somewhere must have it".

One of the first and most influential theorists that has build on this structuralist idea was Karl Marx. Marxist theory explains social and cultural relations as products of the dominant economic relations within society (Aitchison 2003:18). Marx sees the phenomenon of industrial capitalism as the representation of the domination of elite producers profiting from their working class laborers by maintaining lower cost of labor than the actual value of that labor (Ibid.). His theory approaches the 'dispositional quality' of power, in a way that "an institution can have the capacity to influence or control the actions of others" (Allen 2003:16). The capitalist industries of Marx possessed the capacity to profit from the work of their employees. The capacity to hold power is not restricted to institutions, but can also be exercised among individuals and social groups, by deciding upon the inclusion or exclusion of others (Allen 2003:18). Hindess (in Allen 2003:19), however, has argued that this conception of power as a capacity is merely attractive, because "it appears to promise an easy means of identifying who has power and who has not".

In his work on power as a new social analysis, Russel (1938) adds the dynamic of the individual. He defined power as “the production of intended effects”. His view, following the quantitative conception of power as a capacity, stretches out towards the capability of people to influence the intentions of a certain action. This influence is dependent on their individual character. He claims that ‘every desire brings about a wish for the ability to gratify it, and therefore some form of love of power’ (1938:274). In this sense, the ones who want power are also the ones most likely to get it, because they develop the wish to get it. From this perspective, people and institutions have the ability to achieve power by wanting it strongly enough; by intending to accomplish it. This way, Russel makes the structural point of view a bit more flexible, but he still maintains in the position that power is in certain people’s hands.

Lukes elaborated on these traditional views by arguing for a ‘three-dimensional approach’ (1974:9-11). In the first dimension he agrees with Marx, by claiming that the ruling ideas of society and politics are those of a ruling elite. A second dimension, in Lukes’ point of view, adds that the interests of particular individuals or groups may be excluded, for instance through manipulation. This goes along the same line of thought that Russel started by proclaiming power as something intentional and influential. Lukes’ third dimension further argues that there may also be instances in which victims of power make no attempt to defend their interests, because they simply fail to recognize that their interests are at risk. With this, he initiates the first thoughts towards people having agency, because he attributes them to have knowledge (or rather: to not have knowledge) of their interests being at risk. However, this attribution remains rather static, since Lukes approaches knowledge merely as a capacity that people have, not their ‘ability’ to act upon it. In his point of view, people have knowledge of the structuring rules and properties that surround them, or they do not have this knowledge and simply follow the structures passively.

Although Lukes distinguishes between these three dimensions of power, his underlying structuralist concept of power remains ‘power as simple quantitative capacity’ (Hindess 1996:9). As clarified by Wearing & McDonald (2002), in the structuralist explanation power remains being regarded as a source that can be acquired and possessed and which continuously can be utilized to reach specific accomplishments. In Giddens’ viewpoint too much power is attributed to structures (rules and resources) and, although Lukes made a start in this direction, too little power is attributed to the capacity of individuals (Buizer 2008:18).

### 2.1.2 Post-Structural Approach

The second camp of thought that can be distinguished, is the ‘post-structural’ perspective. According to Aitchinson (2003:33), post-structuralism ‘seeks to reveal the power relations upon which the construction, legitimation and reproduction of modernist society depends’. It aims to read between the lines of social and cultural relations and to identify and make sense of relations of power inherent within social and cultural processes (Ibid.:19). This stream of thought considers power in a more complex sense. Power involves not only capacity, but in addition also a ‘right to act’ (Hindess 1996:1). Post-structural scientists are aware of and acknowledge the structure of society (rules and resources), however they are also aware of the socio-cultural notions beyond this structure. They believe individuals are not merely passive receivers, but actively participate in the structuring of power relations for instance through resistance or non-resistance. Individuals have an ‘agency’, referring to the ability of people to act (Buizer 2008: 19) and influence. The post-structuralist scientist aims to look beyond the society’s structure by giving a voice to the agency to explore their consciousness of self and their awareness of power. Power should not be merely considered something that moves, but it should be accepted as an effect that is mediated (Allen 2003: 37).

Foucault, one of the most widely acknowledged post-structural theorists on power, approaches power as a relational influence that constitutes social relations, and which exist through the actions of people. Power is not a possession, but a mediated effect, which can be influenced by certain attributes that individuals can have, like knowledge, land, legitimacy,

money, etc.. Following this idea of Foucault, power is in constant movement; circulating, changing and re-evaluating relations between people (Foucault 1980:98). Allen (2003:2) confirms this view by defining power as a relational effect of social interaction. He claims that power is not a 'thing' that can be clearly identified, but rather "a medium which is brought into being through the mobilization of collective or individual resources" (Ibid.: 38). In addition, Wearing and McDonald (2002) emphasize that power in itself is not a structure nor a certain force. It can only be mutated through relations.

Hence, power is something exercised rather than something held (Allen 2003: 4). In this sense, power is "a complex strategic situation" (Wearing & McDonald 2002), an entanglement of influences, coming from everywhere and everyone. Power is an effect that is produced in and through the interaction of groups or individuals. As Allen puts it: "power is produced through social networks" (Allen 2003: 39). Additionally, several scientists (Bourdieu and Parsons in Allen 2003: 41) add that power can only be mobilized through recognition and legitimization of others. In other words, power can only be exercised when others respond to this, in example by choosing to follow, adapt or resist. This response, however, can happen consciously, but also subconsciously. As Buizer (2008: 19) explains, even if actors may not be conscious of existing structures, "they function within those structures and automatically reproduce them by taking them into account when they act".

Following the line of thought of Foucault (1977:27), these actions and decisions can be related to the knowledge an individual or group has acquired of reality. There is a direct link between knowledge and power, since power relations cannot exist without the establishment of knowledge, and knowledge automatically constitutes relations of power in return (Ibid.). Although, supposedly, subconscious actions are comparatively established on the basis of certain knowledge (or: ignorance, naïveté), it is in that case rather the lack of (self) knowledge that constraints people from certain responses, like resistance. This does not mean that people may not subconsciously resist to power relations; it merely explains that people may not be conscious of their own actions and of the impact of their decisions.

Buizer (2008: 18-19) explains this, using the structuration theory of Giddens. She states that Giddens recognizes that there is a duality of structure and agency, meaning that "there is a reciprocal relationship between actors and structures in which actors are neither powerless subjects of structure, nor powerful enough to change structure according to their wishes" (Ibid.: 19). Actors (individuals or groups) and structures have a dual interplay, which is influenced by enabling and constraining factors from both sides. People have an ability to act, but this can happen consciously and subconsciously, because individuals and groups can be aware or unaware of constraining factors in their structural context. Structures, on the other hand, are not static resources, rather they are constantly changed and reproduced by agency of people (Ibid. 19).

Much of the literature on power research is focused on how power is constituted and who it can be attributed to. Foucault argues that we should not analyze who has the power and who is marginalized, rather he suggests that we must disentangle the patterns that constitute the relationships (1978:99). With this statement, he guides the focus of scientific research of power relations towards critical accounts of the dual interplay between structure and people, and search beyond the structures for agency. Methodologically this would imply that studies have to be performed within a certain context or location, where structures are compared with responding agency of people that move within those structures and discover how they are mutually influential. Although Lukes initially approached power only as a capacity, mainly through domination, he has recently recognized the more complex entanglement in the concept. In addition to Foucault's ideas, he argues that the meaning of the word 'power' depends on the context of its application (Lukes 2005:61). In every case the context can be different, depending on social and cultural notions. This argument approaches the power of agency to the extent of being (sub)conscious of their position and the (un)awareness of their power to influence the situation. As explained by Wearing and McDonald (2002), Foucault

(1980) insisted that research should be context-bound, thereby allowing for specific rationalities to be unveiled. Therefore, this thesis will zoom in on a specific location and analyze the context, before going further in depth on some specific case studies that will highlight the agency's action towards relations of power and, in addition, push forth their (un)awareness or (sub)consciousness underlying these actions.

## **2.2 Power in Tourism Research**

In recent years an increasing amount of attention is given to debates on tourism and power. The body of literature concerning relations of power in the tourism industry is heterogeneous and has attempted to capture the essence of power from various angles. The history of scientific analysis of power-related issues can be traced back in structural accounts of tourism development, although power was not explicitly discussed as such. Rather, structuralist tourism researchers have given extensive accounts of certain impacts forms of power have had on tourism development. A clear example of such a study approached the relations between the 'powerless hosts' of a destinations and the 'powerful guests' that visit these). Originally, scientific interest in power relations within tourism tended to concentrate on the more political and economic perspectives of the concept of power (Hannam 2002). Power relations initiated by socio-cultural notions were included to a lesser extent. Only recently have scientists acknowledged the importance of power as a phenomenon of influence in tourism development and they have openly incorporated power theories as the basis of their research (Cheong & Miller 2000, Coles & Church 2007).

The structural viewpoint approaches power relations as imposed by the structures of modern-day society. It has been only a very recent development that tourism studies has acknowledged the need to conceptually integrate power theories with a post-structural approach. The first accounts of this may have come from Aitchison (2001) in her questioning of issues of the knowledge in reflexivity of research. She argues that the importance should be placed on subjective accounts and individual interpretations of texts as socially constructed materials encoded by their authors. Tribe (2005) continued in this post-structural line of thought concerning the power and influence of scientific knowledge, by questioning the present account of tourism knowledge. Ateljevic (2005), additionally, observed that there has been a critical turn in tourism studies, towards a more post-structuralist and critical approach to research.

Exploring the account of scientific tourism-power research, I have distinguished at least 9 different approaches that researchers over the years have taken to the discussion. These do not form a complete overview of the total account of tourism-power viewpoints, because it is not in the capacity of this paragraph to analyze and discuss the complete history. With this unfinished account I intend to portray the diversity that exists in relations of power that inform and are informed by tourism occurrences, which have been recognized by scientific research. I will shortly elaborate on each of these.

1. One of the most extensively discussed topics in tourism research focuses on relations between hosts and guests. Smith (1977) published a bundle of case studies on host-guest relations from an anthropological perspective to gain greater understanding of the nature of tourism and its effects on the structure of society. This first book mainly approached the cases from a structuralist point of view. The book was revised in 1989, in which several writers assessed their pieces on the relative importance of tourism for modernization, and concluded that tourism is not the main element of culture change in most societies (1989: preface). Although most researchers kept approaching host-guest relations mostly from a structural viewpoint, some co-writers started to open up to a more post-structural way of writing, by not only accepting the modern-day structure, but also attempting to look beyond it. For instance, a case study on the impacts of colonialism on tourism (Chrystal 1989:139) reviewed the influences of structures of modern society on the structures of the 'Eskimo' way of life, while another analyzed tourism as a form of imperialism (Nash 1989:37) and explored the tourist as the agent of contact between

cultures and the cause of changes. In an article by Swain (1989:83) on gender roles in indigenous tourism, she has shown how tourism can bring social changes in the structure of gender role division. These examples show how research carefully shifted from accepting structures as they are, to exploring how structures can be influenced and challenged, so to bring about social changes. Development studies have taken this shift a little bit further by exploring forms of local resistance to certain structures of power. In his book on 'Empowerment for Sustainable Tourism Development', Sofield (2003) has revealed how local residents have their own ways to influence the structure of their tourism industry and maximize the benefits they derive from it. This book enhances a post-structural view towards awareness of the empowerment of hosting communities and the influence of choice in gaining this power. In this line of thought, Ateljevic & Doorne (2005) also wrote an article on the process of authentication and how local entrepreneurs in China negotiated their tourism development. They have shown how it is in the power of local entrepreneurs to construct an image of 'exotic Otherness', which reflects the pre-conceptions and demands of identity-obsessed backpacker travelers.

2. Another perspective in the tourism-power debate is taken from the intensity of state control. Several researchers have investigated state levels of power, control and ownership in tourism. Through policy and planning studies they gained structural insight in tourism policy and its entanglement with policies of other (governmental) departments. Some researchers further explored these issues through revealing awareness of individual influence on state structures (e.g. Hall, 1994; Reed 1997). State power and government influence have been the subject of numerous studies, mainly from a structural point of view. In certain case studies it is shown how the government has given rise to the development of a flourishing tourism industry. The Philippines, for instance, developed as a flourishing tourism destination at the time of Marcos (Seekings 1993), because the president saw tourism as a potential to gain political power and appearance by the tourism multiplier effect and the increase in foreign exchange earnings and attraction of foreign capital. This study has accepted the governmental structure which imposes a top-down influence on the position of the tourism industry in general and on local people in specific.
3. Analyses of the roles of specific actors within the tourism supply chain form a common scientific approach to researching relations of power in tourism. There are accounts of the relations between suppliers, for example Lumsdon and Shift (1999) who analyzed the relation between South-American tour operators and foreign tour operators. They confirm the role of the receiving tour operator within the distribution chain, but conclude that in terms of stimulating tourism development there is a need for more research into the relationships between government and the wide range of organisations involved in the process. More recently a research by Van der Duim and Caalders (2008) approached the functioning of the tourism chain more broadly, through applying the actor network theory in search for links to empower the poor in Costa Rica. They discovered minimal links between local tour operators and the tourism supply chain. In conclusion they argue that the work of scientific researchers should be better translated towards tour operators and tourism-related organizations.
4. From a broader perspective, power relations between the so-called 'Western' societies and the Second and Third World have also been extensively analyzed. On the one hand, there is an account of the power of attraction that stimulates tourism to developing countries. Western tourists, feeling they have lost their identity, are often in search for the 'primitive', 'pre-urban', 'uncivilised' other, to strengthen the western tourist's notion of Self (Desmond in Selwyn 1996). On the other hand, there is research that exposes the influence of global patterns on the relation of power between western tourists and the developing countries, revealing a critical, but also a post-structural awareness of the influences of individuals, groups and societies on international, cross-cultural relations (e.g. Mowforth and Munt 2003, Bianchi in Coles & Church 2007: 5).
5. Power relations in tourism studies have not only been related to people, but to objects as well. In 2003, a post-structural study by Ateljevic and Doorne has approached the 'diversity of cultural meanings' articulated through tourism commodities, by following the

'journey of Chinese tie-dyed goods'. Each of the involved actors brings forth their own identity and transfer meanings to the commodity. Their narratives merge together into a larger entanglement of socio-cultural relations (Ateljevic and Doorne 2003). The researchers have used a post-structural approach, revealing not only socio-cultural relations between the individuals involved in the commodity's life, but also the particular role of tourism goods in cultural communication.

6. In line with the analysis of power relations through objects, there is also an emerging literature studying the influences of technological and communication advancements for tourism development and the inherent power for the ones who possess and make use of these new technologies. Buhalis and Zogge (2007) examined the changes the internet has brought to the operations of the tourism industry and how the competitive (power) position of each of the key players has been reshaped. Mason, Speidel and Milne (2003) wrote an article about a community informatics project, where an innovative ICT technology was used to generate authentic community websites. Their project resulted in a community owned and regionally developed tourism product.
7. A post-structural research of MacCannell (2002) explored the non-economic relations of tourism: the experience. He reveals the power relations behind the tourist experience, which is mainly focused on the 'ego' to give the tourists a sense of control. Lengkeek (2001) describes tourism experiences as counter-structures, contrasting our daily experiences. Leisure and tourism experiences help us to get away from what we perceive as normality and bring us to an "out-there-ness" (Ibid.).
8. Power relations have also been explored from the influence of marketing and public relations. Promotion and branding have been proven strong tools towards the convincement of tourists to choose for a certain destination. Selwyn (1996), for instance, argued that the tourism industry is fuelled by values and symbolic objects, which should enchant people and with that attract them to go somewhere. In line with this thought, Thurlow and Jaworski (in Coles & Church 2007: 4) have revealed the power of language of in-flight magazines for the promotion of 'global lifestyles'.
9. An important influence on post-structural studies of power relations in tourism is stimulated by post-structural feminism, which draws our attention to the way in which cultural relations serve to shape gender relations (Aitchison 2003:30). Aitchison (2000), for instance, revealed a post-structural view of power in leisure management by analyzing cultural representations and combining this with structural analyses of gender-power relations. Within feminist studies, emphasis has been placed on an embodied perspective of power relations, influenced by aspects of e.g. age, class, gender and race. Although in recent years this has been an emerging research perspective, Ateljevic & Corak (2006) have argued that critical issues of gender, ethnicity and family relations as sources of power structures and dominant ideologies in South-Eastern Europe remain to be fully explored.

Although power relations in tourism have been studied intentionally (with the purpose of studying relations of power) since the emergence of literature on host-guest relations, tourism development research has only recently focused more explicitly on the underlying concept of power (Hannam 2002). This has been accompanied by a shift from political and economic perspectives of power, towards the focus on social and cultural relations of power in tourism (Mowforth & Munt 2003). In line with this shift, the ideas of post-structural social theorists became introduced into tourism studies (Coles & Church 2007). Conceptually, Coles and Church (2007:2) have argued that there is a need to strengthen the connection between power in tourism research and the underlying conceptualizations and theorizations of power behind such research. Tourism researchers often refrain from explaining methodological implications of the conceptualization of power in their research. However, power has been proven a highly contestable concept with a plurality of power theories behind it and, therefore, its use should be underpinned by methodological specifications. Hollinshead (1999) discovered that power theories of Foucault had been neglected in tourism studies and has begun to redress this gap in the field of knowledge by applying Foucault's thoughts concerning surveillance and 'the eye-of-power' to the institutions, organizations

and agencies of tourism and travel. Also Cheong and Miller (2000) have found relevance in Foucault's theorization of power, concluding that tourists should also themselves be seen as the targets of specific relations of power. Although power is seemingly everywhere, Foucault also emphasized that every site of power is simultaneously also a site of resistance. Processes of tourism development are therefore increasingly subject to forms of resistance (Hannam 2002).

Inappropriately, power and tourism are often 'mentioned in the same breath' in tourism research (Coles & Church 2007:2). As a consequence, many aspects of tourism research are pervaded by discussions and analyses of empowerment and disempowerment, without theoretical underpinning of the conceptualization of power as a contested phenomenon. Issues of authority, control, influence, and manipulation are among some of the approaches scientific researchers have taken to disentangle relationships of power within tourism. However, power relations in the tourism industry may be much more dynamic than these analyses of individual and institutional power have shown. It entails a much more complex entanglement of multidimensional relationships and the influence of knowledge and awareness remains often overlooked. Coles & Church have stated that the relationship between tourism and power is a more fluid and reflexive one (2007:3), meaning that discourses of tourism are not solely evoked by power structures. Power does play an important role in the construction of tourism, though, because it underlies many relations among actors and between actors and locations involved in tourism. Nevertheless, the post-structural view has taken research one step further by looking beyond the structures and exploring social-cultural notions and the awareness of these. Therefore, tourism development studies now seek a 'multi-sensory' perspective (Crouch, 2000); a viewpoint in which they are aware of the multi-dimensionality of the power-tourism relation as well as the conscious and unconscious influences of agency.

Cheong and Miller (2000) have asked for a conceptual change in the way power in tourism is analyzed. Following Foucault's thoughts in approaching power as a relational capacity, it can be found among people and groups of people, as well as between people and objects. It evokes complex entanglements of multidimensional relationships. Recent literature on tourism has recognized the complexity of these relations and the importance of gaining understanding about the influence of power within the tourism industry and an emerging number of researchers have argued that constructs of power should be placed central in critical tourism research (Mowforth & Munt 2003:44, Coles & Church 2007:2).

Concisely, power relations have recently been incorporated into tourism studies on a general, theoretical, conceptual level. This has resulted in an emerging stream of theoretical arguments about power in tourism development. It should always be taken into account, though, that the existing power theories used by scientific researchers might be imperfect and have fallacies. However, the use of power concepts in tourism studies has remained mainly on a conceptual level. Therefore, to me the next question would be: how do you empirically engage these power theories? They have not yet been translated into a specific case study, connecting the conceptualizations with actual empirical information. Therefore, it will be the underlying aim of my research to take a look at one specific area with a particular group of people, reveal their real-world relations of power of influence in tourism development and reconnect these to my theoretical power framework.

In conclusion to this, there seems to be a need for more dynamics and empirical use of power theories towards disentangling relations of power in tourism development. It is therefore necessary to expand on the post-structural line of research and further explore the engagement of power theories empirically in a particular case study to expose the complexity of realities and reveal entangled capacities of individuals and collectives. We should be aware of their personal, social and cultural circumstances and we should incorporate if and how they make use of their influence, knowledge, skills, fears, and other capacities to resist or to follow pervading power structures.

### 2.3 A Post-Structural Framework of Power in Tourism Development

After the complexity of power relations has been recognized and tourism scientists have begun to strengthen the implementation of theoretical and conceptual arguments on power in tourism development, there remains a gap in the literature in the empirical field: how are relations of power translated in specific locations and how do these relations influence the development of local society? An advancement towards filling this gap can be found in approaching power relations through a particular case study to expose the complexity in realities and reveal capacities of individuals and collectives to follow or choose to resist to their surrounding power structures and continuously relate this back to the underlying power conceptualizations of the research.

The primary intention of this paper is to reveal the influence of power relations on tourism development in a specific case study area and connect this to the underlying power theories of my research framework. However, throughout the course of this research an additional concept was introduced that strongly affects the power play in the specific locality of this research. The fact that Croatia is a country in transition appeared to have a broad influence on the developments of local society. The case study area, the community of Murter, is undergoing a triangulation of causes and effects between tourism development, power relations and the process of transition. Each of these phenomena influences the others and this multidimensional relationship creates the interesting developments that I have analyzed here. Firstly, I have approached the relation between the phenomena in its general context, pushing forth the connections between power, transition and tourism, that can be found intertwined as a complex web of relations of influence. Secondly, I studied these connections and influences through four specific sub-case studies within the community of Murter, revealing the local realities of power relations and resistance.

A priori to this research, the literature provided me with some sensitizing concepts: *power*, *structures* and *agency*. These have formed a red line throughout my search for relations of acceptance and resistance. The concept of *transition* was added to these from the beginning of my fieldwork. These concepts have shaped the 'lens' through which I have entered my field research. This 'lens' through which I have approached my analysis has mainly been carried by the understanding of relational power, following the primary line of thought of Foucault and even more, the further specifications of Allen. In this research I have approached power as a relational influence that constitutes, and is constituted by social relations; it exists through the actions of people. These actions are attributed by certain resources people can draw from. Resources can be finances, knowledge, network, but also norms and values of society and rules and regulations of the governmental structure. However, I wish my research to be revealing beyond this general conception of power and approaches of power relations, by placing them in a particular context to illuminate contextual realities. This context is informed by the dual interplay between agency and structure. Furthermore, the transition process provided me with some general issues, or 'pains', the contemporary context is dealing with.

As a country in transition, Croatia has experienced a number of changes that constantly challenge and reevaluate the existing structures and relations of power. This process of transition has consequently influenced the structural relations among people and between people within the complex realities of local society and challenged the continuously evolving power balances. The effects of these changes in the context are mediated through existing literature and interpretations of inhabitants of the community under study. Chapter 4 will provide a general overview of this context that informs the community of Murter and will continuously discuss each of the indicated transitional issues from a broad perspective. In chapter 5 each of these issues of transition will be disentangled locally, through specific sub-case studies of the community of Murter. This way the translation of these issues within the local context and the specific reactions within this context will be uncovered, shining a light on the locally specific forms of acceptance and resistance and with this bring forth an understanding of their reevaluation of relations of power.

Six issues of transition have been brought forth that specifically influence tourism developments in the community of Murter. Some of these issues can be found to very distinctly inform tourism development in a specific way, and with that influence the reevaluation of power relations in tourism. Other issues pose a continuous influence on multiple or all levels of tourism development, and therefore always inform the relations of power in tourism development in one way or another. The overview in figure 1 on the next page shows how the transitional issues have been translated in the specific case studies. The issues that are numbered as 1 – 4 are each discussed in a particular case study. The issues of grey economy and political corruption (no. 5 and 6), however, are more or less intertwined in each of the cases.

*Framework 1: Schematic overview of the 6 transitional ‘pains’ and the situation of the 4 case studies.*



In summary of the above, the post-structural viewpoint informs the framework of this research, by firstly conceptualizing power as a relational capacity that exists in the actions of people. Then it approaches the theoretical and conceptual arguments on power in tourism development through a case study of a specific (community) context, revealing locality specific realities, and generating understanding and awareness of social and cultural notions of influence and the actual influence of the individual capacity to follow or resist to forms of power. In the end reconnecting the contextual outcomes to the initial power theory used. As a result this research will not only provide the critical evaluation and reevaluation of power relations in tourism development in the community of Murter, Croatia, but will additionally relate these specific outcomes back to the underlying power theory of the research and come forth with a discussion that results from the translation of Murter’s complex, multidimensional web of influences between power, transition and tourism development.

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### **3. Methodology**

As concluded from the theoretical chapter, power relations in tourism should be further explored from the post-structural viewpoint, to reveal the importance of a locality specific background and continuously generate understanding and awareness of local social and cultural notions of influence and the actual influence of the individual capacity. Accordingly, the most appropriate way to research this is within the post-structural paradigm. This research will focus on a specific area of case study, namely the municipality of Murter, Sibenik-Knin County in Croatia. I will acknowledge the specifics and basic structures surrounding the local society, as well as their cultural patterns, to uncover the underlying circumstances that make the relation between power, tourism and transition specific for this locality. In addition, I will explore power-related knowledge and awareness of the local inhabitants of the community and their capacity to choose to follow or resist to specific forms and relations of power they are confronted with.

Throughout the work on this thesis, my research was constantly evolving. I have taken an open, inductive approach towards the research, by 'letting the data do the talking'. I preferred to let the phenomenon of power relations speak through its agencies in exploring the surrounding context. The literature study at the beginning of this research provided me with some general a priori concepts that have been the guiding principles throughout my research, namely power, structures and agency. These have shaped the 'lens' through which I have entered my field research. However, I wish my research to be revealing under the general concepts and approaches of power relations, by placing them in a particular context. To be able to gain as complete of an understanding of the specific context as possible, and to disentangle underlying structures of power, it was necessary to be open towards any information that came on my path. The general aim of this study was to undertake exploratory research in the area of power relations in tourism development, taking a post-structural perspective towards a specific destination.

In this paper, I aim to explore the influence of power relations in tourism development in the coastal municipality of Murter in Croatia and, continuously, the awareness and capacity of the agency towards this. Herewith, I will disentangle the power relations that underlie the patterns and structures of the local society and reveal the position of the individual and the collective within this context. Eventually these results will be related back to the underlying theory of power as a relational capacity that exists through the actions of people.

#### **3.1 Research Approach**

##### 3.1.1 Background to the Research

This thesis research took place parallel to a sustainable (tourism) development project and another thesis research. These have brought mostly opportunities, but perhaps also constraints to my analysis. The project 'Sustainable Coastal Development of the Sibenik-Knin Area' is aimed towards the improvement and increase in sustainable development of the coastal area and islands of Sibenik-Knin county, and of the municipality of Murter-Kornati in specific. It started about 6 months in advance of my research and continues for a few years after. One of the main components of this project was the creation of a stakeholder platform, with the aim of working towards a regional vision 2030. This was the main element of the project in which I participated throughout my field research. The stakeholders of the project have formed an important source of information for this research, mainly through participatory observation, since most of the meetings proceeded in Croatian, but also informal conversations and official interviews.

A contact centre for the project is located on the island in the municipality of Murter-Kornati, and the co-workers of this centre have provided an important source of information to this research. Their assistance has brought a valuable perspective into my research since

they are familiar with the local structure and social and cultural customs, but are also aware of the circumstances and the positions of individuals behind it. Next to that, they have provided contacts, arranged interviews and interpreted when needed. Their interpretation helped me to overcome one of the barriers that constrained my research: language. Although many interviewees spoke English on conversational level, there are still people on the island that do not speak English. As English is considered a world language and has great importance for the tourism industry, many tourists speak English either as their first or second language and therefore this has become a valid communication tool in many tourism destinations. However, it should be kept in mind that language can be a tool to construct power. Not all people in tourism destinations may have the opportunity to learn to speak English. In this sense, it could be that the ones with power are the ones that can speak English. I do not have the right information to say whether this is the case in Croatia, but with the help of interpreters I have also been able to interview non-English speaking community members.

Parallel to my thesis, another thesis research was conducted in the same area by a close friend, with whom I have cooperated several times throughout our master study program. Since we had worked together before, we knew each others strengths and weaknesses and were able to support one another in these fields. My friend's research was aimed towards revealing political and ecological relations surrounding the development of the Kornati National Park area, which is also the largest tourist attraction for Murter (Zellmer 2008). Although researching different (but related) topics, we decided to join forces and pursue our information gathering and interviewing together. Advantageously, this has brought me to data and people I perhaps may have overlooked or disregarded on my own. In this respect, it helped me to continuously remain open minded and with that maintain close to my inductive approach. Furthermore, being able to talk about the local context and discuss the data we gathered, I was able to reflect my own perceptions and interpretations, as well as gaining a deeper understanding of the revealing context. However, a researcher will always influence the study, by affecting and being affected by the interviewees and a fellow researcher, and by retaining control over the interpretation of the results. Therefore, I recognise not only my own influence, but in addition the influence of my fellow researcher in that respect.

### 3.1.2 Research Aim

From a post-structural position, I acknowledge there is a continuously moving context in which structures of power thrive, but it is up to the agency to follow these or to decide to intervene, control or resist to opposed powers. This decision can be based upon a subconscious action or a knowledge-based act. This allows me the opportunity to develop an understanding of power relations in tourism development and to build on to specific issues that arise throughout the research project.

To be able to disentangle relations of power and the meaning behind decisions of the agency to respond to these, they need to be considered in a specific authentic context. As stated by Denzin & Lincoln (1994: 3), 'qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meaning people bring to them'. Therefore, to gain insight into the human dimension, I chose the specific location of Murter to explore the relations of power in this context and, following the ideas towards approaches that came along my path, to subject these to specific case studies.

### 3.1.3 Research Design

To gain insight into the local context and really strive for comprehending this, it was essential to remain open towards any information that came on my way. I therefore adopted an inductive approach to my research. The significance of this approach for exploratory research has been recognized by Westwood (2004:5-2), who stated that 'in order to move tourism research forward, it is important to break new ground, to recognize creativity and diversity and adopt a multi-faceted approach to research'. Although I used an inductive

approach, I did present a theoretical framework for the research in advance of the field work. It is rather difficult to remain completely open-minded and without prejudgments, while the context of the case study area has been set out as it is present in the scientific literature. Therefore I acknowledge the influence this may have had in steering my thoughts towards certain issues. However, as my field research evolved I came across new information that was of high importance to the movements in power relations. This brought me back to the literature on moments throughout and even after my fieldwork. As a consequence of searching for literature meeting the field research data, I partially regained my path of the inductive approach.

The main research design was developed before entering the field, mainly through the Matra project that brought forth the opportunity to engage in this study. 'The qualitative researcher -as the bricoleur- uses the tools of his or her methodological trade, deploying whatever strategies, methods, or empirical materials are at hand. If new tools have to be invented, or pieced together, then the researcher will do this. The choice of which tool to use, which research practices to employ, is not set in advantage' (Denzin & Lincoln 1994:2). It is challenging, though, to refrain from having any ideas about certain directions to go or techniques to use. Along these lines, I followed the methods that felt best at a particular moment in time, however I remained open towards any changes that arose from the research.

## **3.2 The Fieldwork**

There is a framework of power relations in the context of tourism development, which is based mainly upon political and economic structures and socio-cultural values and norms. Especially the socio-cultural context is derived from status, gender and ethnic relations and values of the locality. It has been mentioned that power relations 'define the modern day structures of societies' (Aitchinson 2003). However, both power relations as well as structures are intangible and invisible assets, which makes them difficult to reveal and even harder to define. They are contextualized by the opinions and feeling of the community members. Therefore, it was important to be open towards the opinions of the local people and to make them feel comfortable to openly talk about anything they wanted to tell me. As mentioned by several scientists, a less structured approach will evoke the emotions associated with the topic (Moutinho 1989, Ryan 1995). Therefore, the interviews have occurred mostly unstructured. Sometimes, however, especially after the first few interviews had been undertaken, it was necessary to hold on to a number of leading themes, to avoid to go completely astray. As much as an inductive approach has been followed, it cannot be denied that 'the researcher will almost always retain control of interpretations, having the power over inclusions and exclusions, the contextualization and the storylines that are used to shape the narratives' (Westwood 2004:5-23). Nonetheless, since methods can be sufficiently flexible to grow naturally from the research question, and in turn from the nature of the social setting in which research is carried out (Holliday 2002:145), they were adapted throughout the process.

The field research has been conducted in two phases: 1) a broad scanning and exploration phase and 2) a phase of in-depth sub-case studies.

### **3.2.1 First Phase**

The first part of the field research has occurred quite unstructured, throughout a period of 6 continuous weeks. I explored the context of the municipality of Murter around certain themes that came forward through the literature, but also about personal lives and opinions that came forth in the interviews, allowing the participants to influence the topics and the flow of the interview. Together with my fellow researcher, we intended to work with, what Bogdan & Knopp-Biklen (1998:95) consider, very open ended interviews: 'the researcher encourages the subjects to talk in the area of interest and then probes more deeply, picking up on topics and issues that the respondent initiates'. This first phase I was seeking for a general understanding of the community and its context, through the main issues and discussions.

The interviews have presented themselves through snowball sampling (Noy 2007), which means that one interview or source would lead to another. It has been proven particularly useful in terms of power relations, social networks and social capital, where Noy (2007) has argued for a reconceptualization of the method of snowball sampling.

An important aspect for co-researchers to open up during a conversation is that it takes place on a location where they feel comfortable and feel able to speak freely. Since informal meetings in social spaces are a common feature in the Murterian (and perhaps Croatian) culture, it happened often that interviews would take place in public spaces or locations where more people were around (offices, cafés, restaurants) and therefore some interviews attracted the attention of people around, who spontaneously joined in the conversation. (cultural aspect, also because everyone knows each other) Most participants were very relaxed and comfortable in the places where they were interviewed. Only men, when among friends or relatives, tended to react on each other's presence by loudening their voice in attempt to out voice one another and strongly talking about topics like politics; expressions of macho behaviour as is common in patriarchal structures.

We made audio recordings of all interviews as the use of recorded data serves as 'a control on the limitations and fallibility of intuition and recollection' (Hammersley & Atkinson 1995:186). This has provided us with a precise way of data gathering, since we were able to type out literally what has been said during the interviews. Due to the general acceptance of technology as very much a part of every day life, using mechanical devices is a valid and necessary way of collecting data (Westwood 2004:5-42). Although some people were a bit hesitant in the first place, all co-researchers agreed in the use of a recording device. At the beginning of some interviews it was noticeable that the co-researcher was somewhat intimidated by the recorder, but in most cases this faded away throughout the proceeding of the conversation.

Within all interviews, several key themes were brought forward around which the main issues developed: politics, economy, culture, society, gender, religion. From a certain point, these became leading themes for the interviews, nevertheless still unstructured. Throughout the interviews these topics were related to the participants' personal backgrounds and it was up to them what they wanted to express. Eventually, the interviews led to a saturation of information on the general topics of our researches, leaving me with five main issues and several potential case studies to go more in depth about these.

During a three week reflection period back in the Netherlands, I took the time to review the overwhelming amount of information I had gathered and selected four specific case studies for the second field research.

### 3.2.2 Second Phase

Entering the field again for another three weeks, I aspired to go further in depth on the most important issues, through four case studies that had presented themselves in the first visit. My main aim was to analyse four case studies more in depth. I had selected case studies that would illuminate the main issues that arose from the context and power structures under research. 'Information-rich cases are those from which one can learn a great deal of central importance to the inquiry' (Patton 2002:230). These cases would, therefore, provide a better insight into the position of the agency within the context of Murter and reveal the consciousness or subconsciousness in which individuals and collectives would follow or resist to relations of power.

This time the interviews became more semi-structured, since I had more specific topics to discuss, and sometimes even specific questions that evolved from the first phase. I had decided to make use of some projective techniques, to make the study more holistic and to empower the co-researchers in allowing them to determine much of the agenda (Westwood 2004:5-37). Advantages of projective techniques are considered: overcome self-censorship

and self-consciousness, encourage expression and fantasy, change perspective, inhibit rationalisation and cognitive responses and encourage expression of personal emotion' (Branthwaite & Lunn 1985:109). Although I would have liked to make use of only these projective techniques in the second phase of my research, time limitations for the preparation constrained this. I therefore decided to hold semi-structured interviews and include in each conversation a few projective questions. These have, especially in the case study of the individual woman, revealed deeper issues and more emotional thoughts.

Together with my fellow researcher, I have undertaken a total number of 55 interviews, spread out over a period of 9 weeks. Of these, 33 interviews occurred in English, 3 in German (with my fellow researcher as translator) and 8 in Croatian with the assistance of an interpreter. In this second phase of my research, I have selected 4 sub-case studies that best illustrated the main issues that came forth out of the first phase. These particular sub-cases have been selected, because they came forth almost naturally from the local inhabitants in the case study area. since the information on which I based my choice for the sub-case studies is highly qualitative, I am aware that this may raise issues, but I am merely trying to raise one truth: the truth for the local inhabitants. Most of this information has been checked through triangulation of sources; gaining similar information from at least three different sources, preferably from different backgrounds. Where possible, I have strengthened the stories with facts from the scientific literature.

### **3.3 Embodiment of the Researcher**

A key element of post-structuralism is the importance of self-perception; acknowledging the reflexivity and positionality of the researcher in the analysis (Ateljevic et. al 2005). Recent literature in Tourism Studies has begun to highlight the importance of acknowledging the embodiment of the researcher. The dominant idea of a disembodied and objective science has been contested by several researchers with a more critical perspective on tourism studies. Social researchers are increasingly being asked to identify their position within their writings, as texts are revealed as epistemological representations (Marcus & Fisher 1986 in Ateljevic & Doorne 2003). This positionality is termed 'embodiment' and acknowledges that a researcher influences the research and its results (Swain 2004). 'Individuals interact with their bodies and through their bodies with the world' (Davis 1997), and therewith also have an influence on their research. In addition, there is a relationship of power between the researcher and the co-researchers (Swain 2004). Denzin and Lincoln (1994) described the researcher as a 'bricoleur', to whom research is an interactive process and which he/she influences by his or her background and personality. Aitchison (2001) has acknowledged that researchers cannot divorce themselves from the context of their own social position and privileges. She relates this to the researcher's power to be able to speak. In addition, there is a relationship of power between the researcher and the co-researchers (Swain 2004). According to Swain (2004) we need to expose the power dynamics and challenges that occur in the relation between the researcher and the researched. As Swain (2004) has argued, embodiment not only acknowledges and describes that there is a relation between the researcher and the researched with influences from both sides, but also exposes power dynamics and difficulties in their intersectional relationship.

In conclusion, Westwood (2004: 5-14) considered that 'in order to fully reflect the human element which is so important in qualitative research, the self-awareness, the perspective and the cultural consciousness of the researcher must not only be recognized, but must become an integral part of the process'. I therefore acknowledge my influence on this research, through my relationship with our co-respondents as well as through the reflexion of my values in observations and interactions. This relation is mainly influenced by gender relationship that is based upon my values and the social structures of Croatia. I acknowledge that I am a female researcher in an area of male domination. This may have certain influences on the results of my research. Next to that I am an outsider to the people in the area, unacquainted with the local lifestyle. This may also influence the research in certain ways. Influences can work both positively as well as negatively. I have noticed that as a

woman it was sometimes easy to find people (especially men) willing to talk to me. However, if during a conversations questions became too specific or too knowledgeable for their perspective of how much a woman can or should handle, men reacted by either shutting down and restraining further in-depth information through simplifying their answers or by taking over the conversation through asking questions or loudening their voice. Women on the other hand, often felt not knowledgeable enough to talk to me and would try to refer me to somebody else. In general, women tended to be more open towards me and shared their personal emotions quite easily when they got comfortable. Men generally remained more formal, unless the conversation was around sports or politics. Then the men seemed to become more engaged. Those topics seemed to provoke stronger reactions.

Ryan (2001:266) suggests that 'subjectivity is equally a part of the tourism experience and the research process'. It should therefore not only be the researcher, additionally also the context of the research (and the co-researchers for that matter) should be considered. In recent literature an increasing amount of attention is paid to the cultural complexities, informed by social categorizations such as gender, class and ethnicity. One of the key concepts that provoked this emergence is considered again this term 'embodiment', through which the body is recognized as defining the limits of subjectivity, identity and practice (Swain 2004). It is argued that through the body, and through its movements and representations, socio-cultural structures can be identified (Noy 2007). Here we come back to the importance of the analysis of a specific area, contextualized by its culture and structures, and the relevance of its agency to (sub)consciously respond to this.

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## 4. Croatia: A Country in Transition

According to Ateljevic & Čorak (2006:299) Croatia is characterized by 'a complex web of structural and social/agency elements, which condition and shape the nature of the tourism industry'. The entangled set of elements can be considered a complex, multi-dimensional network of relations, where tourism development is a part of. It is therefore important to unravel some of the historical development of this larger setting, in order to create an understanding of the present situation in which relations of power occur, before specifying the story towards a smaller locality. Hence, it is needed to firstly provide a holistic empirical account and continuously narrowing down towards the case study area.

In this chapter I provide a contextual story of contemporary Croatian society and of the island of Murter specifically. To realize this, I will give a historic overview of the political and economic developments and present some reflections of the social systems, with a special focus on tourism development. I will come to the most recent developments in which the country is undergoing a transformation from a communist system towards becoming a democratic country. This transition has strongly informed recent changes and developments of any specific locality in the country. The chapter will come to the main transitional issues that continuously inform the re-evaluation of local norms and values.

I have made use of scientific data sources, empirical sources and my own field research. Although it is difficult to separate structural influences, because they are complexly interrelated elements, I will attempt to disentangle them, while providing general information where needed to maintain a comprehensible storyline.

### 4.1 Dalmatia in Pre-Yugoslavia (*16<sup>th</sup> Century – Beginning 19<sup>th</sup> Century*)

Different parts of Croatia were exposed to different political, economic and cultural influences. This brought about a great diversity and heterogeneity in cultural norms, which is expressed in the regional distinctions (Goldstein 1999). While the northern part of Croatia has been under rule of the Austria-Hungary Habsburg Empire (since 1527), the Illyric provinces (including Dalmatia) had closer ties with the Republic of Venice. The Venetian state held a claim over the coastal part and islands of Croatia (Ateljevic & Čorak 2007). The Dalmatians, especially, became bound to the Venetians by language and culture, mainly because of the control over the eastern Adriatic Sea, which made them important trading partners (Goldstein 1999). As stated by Ateljevic and Hall (2007), in the region of Dalmatia people consider themselves Dalmatian, rather than Croatian. They explain how a collective Mediterranean identity was created in the region through historical associations with Venice. From my own experience in the region, if you ask people where they are from, they will first say they are Dalmatian. After that they might add that they are Croatian. People are proud of being Dalmatian; it has meaning to them. They feel strongly connected to their region and to its history. The dominant influence from the associations with the Venetians has brought the Dalmatian region a conscious collective identity and a more macho, or 'Southern', outlook (Ateljevic & Doorne 2003). As described in several articles (Ateljevic & Doorne 2003, Ateljevic & Čorak 2006, Avelini Holjevac 2006, Ateljevic & Hall 2007), this has been translated into values of expressive behavior, passion for (mainly sea) food, a carefree approach to life and a specific division of (social and work-related) roles between men and women.

The territory of Croatia is not only strategically situated along the Adriatic coast, but also between the East and West of Europe, which made it a 'buffer state' (Hall 2002). Due to a long history of invasions and occupation by several other nations and cultures, which stirred many migration flows, Croatia knows a multiethnic population (Zdravkovic & Amine 2007). After the Austrian-Hungarian Empire was defeated in World War I, a new pattern of state boundaries was defined in the Balkans, founding the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (Goldstein 1999). This name was soon changed to Kingdom of Yugoslavia ('land of

the southern Slavs') in 1929 by the then ruling King Alexander I (Goldstein 1999). The Kingdom of Yugoslavia consisted of an uneasy mix of rival south Slavs and non-Slav groups and was politically dominated by the Serbs, who formed the largest ethnic group (Hall 2002).

#### **4.2 Pre-War Croatia and Tourism Development (19<sup>th</sup> Century – 1995)**

The beginning of tourism in Croatia initiated in the 19th century, when the European aristocracy, mostly the royal elite of Venice and the Habsburg Empire, were attracted to certain parts of Croatia's seaside, such as Opatija and Hvar, mainly for the purpose of health/spa tourism (Ateljevic & Čorak 2006, 2007). Although remains of the Roman and Italic-Venetian times are still visible in the architecture throughout the Dalmatian coastline, and imprints have been made on the present Dalmatian norms and values, the more recent history has left an even stronger impact, which still overshadows every-day life.

After the Second World War, Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRJ) was declared by Josip Broz Tito in 1945 and the communist system was introduced (Hall 2002). As argued by Sekulic (1992), Tito's Partisan movement gained support among the Yugoslav people, mainly because they were the only force fighting against the German occupation and they wanted to restructure Yugoslavia on the basis of equal rights of nations. Pursuing a different type of communism (national communism) than Stalin (traditional communism), Yugoslavia was split from Soviet domination (Sekulic 1992, Hall 2001). The communist state developed a 'market socialism' since the early 1960s, where federal devolution and private sector expansion were allowed, with special attention to tourism (Ateljevic & Corak 2006). At that time, Yugoslavia progressed economically far beyond all other Central and Eastern European countries and established good relations with both Eastern and Western territories (Zdravkovic & Amine 2007).

Since the end of the Second World War, the coast was becoming popular as a holiday destination for the domestic population of Yugoslavia, but also for an increasing European market. Although not the main reason for its construction, the in 1965 finalized Adriatic highway that runs basically along the whole length of the Yugoslav coast, encouraged the development of coastal tourism, (Hall 1999). The coastal and island population started to be heavily involved in tourism, renting rooms, apartments and houses to tourists. In many communities, like Murter, it became a supplement and even a replacement for traditional industries. As stated by Gal & Kligman (2000: 42), the family became rooted in the private sector, creating a sphere of commodity exchange and of social labor. Family businesses usually take on an unofficial style, where many family members are informally employed and tangible and intangible services are repaid with favors or preferential treatment (Ateljevic & Doorne 2003). This way the private sector can be seen as a narrow reflection of the structure of civil society as a whole, in which family values are strongly embedded (Gal & Kligman 2000: 42).

In the 1970s tourism became one of the key developmental factors, especially for the coastal areas and islands, and the main industry in the overall economic development of Croatia (Radnić & Ivandić 1999). It showed a continuous and dynamic growth for nearly 20 years (1970-1989, pre-war period), with a peak year in 1988. Notably, as clarified by Ateljevic & Corak (2006), Croatia generated the lion's share of Yugoslavia's tourism income. It were predominantly Western tourists who travelled to the Adriatic coast, because they could travel here without any visa requirements, while travelers from Central Eastern Europe would have to go through difficult paperwork.

When Croatia became an independent country (1990), the Yugoslavian federation started to collapse. The first democratic multi-party elections took place in April 1990 when the Croatian Democratic Union defeated the Communist Party and was elected the party of government (e.g. Križan 2003). Croatia officially reached its status of independency in October 1991(Goldstein 1999). Since Croatia split from the Republic of Yugoslavia and became its own nation, the country played a part in provoking a conflict situation that resulted

in an ethnic war. The country has gone through a dark period of depression, poverty and conflict of which they have not yet completely recovered (Stubbs 2006).

The new Republic of Croatia underwent a severe recession in the first half of the 1990s due to several factors: the transition from a command economy, the severing of ties with the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, and the enormous impact of the war upon the society and economy (Goldstein 1999, Križan 2003). The continuous growth in tourism turnover was also interrupted by this breakout of the war in the former Yugoslavia region (Radnić & Ivandić 1999). The number of overnight stays dropped tremendously, numerous tourist facilities were closed down and the development of the Croatian tourism industry was slowed down for half a decade. Because of the lack of security, Croatian tourism fell in 1992 and 1993 to 10 per cent of its pre-war volume, and foreign tourists stayed away almost entirely (Goldstein 1999). Jordan (2000a) considers that this has a 'conserving effect' on tourism development, a long pause in which tourism was kept from modernizing with the rest of the destinations in Europe. Radnić & Ivandić (1999) have shown that this conserving effect had negative impacts on the tourism industry; Croatia lost a substantial share of the traditional Western-European markets as well as missed the opportunity to develop and expand and with that missed the opportunity to ensure a share in the changing international demand. As explained by Ateljevic & Corak (2006), the Yugoslav war coincided with a change in the demand from the traditional sun, sand, sea market towards a search for more cultural and active experiences. Croatia did not have the knowledge or the capacity to comprehend and aim towards these new markets. In coastal and island communities, such as Murter, where tourism is the main source of living, people went through a process leaning towards poverty and depression that severely impacted their economic and societal development. However, Ateljevic and Doorne (2003) affirmed that during the previous two decades, in which the tourism industry flourished, people were able to accumulate savings that helped them to 'survive' the war and first years of recession. This way, the community was able to stay away from a complete devastation and the people were soon ready to return to 'business as usual' (ibid.).

#### **4.3 Post War Transitions and Tourism (1995 – Present)**

Croatia has developed along a backdrop of socialism, war and, continuously, an economic transition. Several writers (Horvat 1999, Radnić & Ivandić 1999, Jambresic Kirin 2000, Starc & Sumpor 2003, Stubbs 2006) have shown that this history is still influencing contemporary Croatia. It continuously influences the people in their daily life and determines changes towards the present set of norms and values in society. According to Horvat (1999), changes in society are only partly caused by post-war stress. She adds that they is to some extent also a consequence of social restructuring of the regions. Next to the recovery from war, she distinguishes a parallel process of socio-cultural change, which is considered a consequence of many influences, ranging from geographical restructuring to tourism developments and the approaching EU context. However, the degree of influence of Croatia's war-history, can be demonstrated: the changes it caused in values and attitudes still pervade in contemporary society. It can therefore be argued that the influence is relatively strong and deep seated. For example, Starc and Sumpor (2003) come to conclude that 'the leftovers of socialism will not vanish simply because there is no more socialism around'. Although the country is pursuing a democratic system, the imprints of socialism still remain in the minds of the people and even continue to influence development. Although the communist hegemony had disappeared from Croatia's politics, many elements from this period remained. Grdečić mentions the economic system, social structure and political culture, the weakness of civil society, the apparatus of the state, and even the communists themselves. A strong reflection of this can be found in the development of tourism businesses in Murter. In general, the local people offer one or two rooms in their house to tourists, but the larger tourism enterprises, like guest houses and the marina, are mostly owned by people from outside the community. The local society lacks the strength and insight to participate in the larger tourism developments and as a consequence they stand along the side and watch others make use of the informalities of the state to build well established tourism enterprises. The local people

are left with their criticism and a feeling of powerlessness, which they partially may have brought upon themselves.

This can be translated into a long term 'process of consolidation' (Vučetić 2004), which does not progress linearly, but tends to swing back and forth, creating moments of progress, stagnation and even backtracking. Generalizing the post-communist situation in most of the Balkan region, common patterns and tendencies can be discovered. All these countries suffer from a lack of rule of law, corruption, threats of civil unrest and widespread public mistrust, and have had to cope with drastically decreasing living standards, rising social inequalities, general feeling of insecurity and pessimistic future perspectives (Gal & Kligman 2000, Krastev 2002, Starc & Sumpor 2003, Vučetić 2004).

Croatia is considered a country in transition, which can be seen as 'a holistic process representing the shift away from central economic planning, almost exclusively in terms of market-orientated reform' (Hall 2004). Dulčić (1997) adds to this economic process that there is also a transition in the political system. The country is undergoing a transition process from communism towards a democracy. Stubbs (2006) argues in extension, that Croatia has undergone not simply one, but a 'triple transition'. He considers: 1. the transition from war to peace, 2. from a centrally planned to a free market economy, and 3. from a single party system to a pluralist democracy. I would like to add to this, that transition also provokes changes on a socio-cultural level. Although this shift may move more gradually and may be continuously induced by the other three, it should be taken into account as a fourth process of transition.

The process of transition, which started in 1990 and continues till present day, infiltrated deeply into all facets of Croatia (Jambresic Kirin 2000). At its beginning this transition has been marked by some historical highlights. Firstly, the transition came into being after Croatia's independency and liberation from the communist system in 1990. Secondly, the struggles of war between the Balkan nations (1991-1995) had a mainly socio-cultural impact on the young country. After the war ended Croatia underwent a fast start of the process of political and economical changes. These may have slowed down over the years, but the adaptation of society and system is still happening continuously. The transition has strongly influenced, and continues to influence, the shaping of the contemporary society, but it also affects the political and economic restructuring. Transition, being a process, is something that happens over time and it is often something that does not progress linearly towards improvement. Rather it brings forth a number of struggles that complicate or slow down the development. These struggles can be considered 'transitional pains', comparable to what has been described in organization and management literature as 'the symptoms, which an organization experiences because of a failure to develop an infrastructure appropriate for its stage of growth' (Flamholtz 1995). In the process of transition, Croatia was in some ways reluctant in setting the ground for an open market economy and a democracy. As a consequence, a number of transition issues can be distinguished: privatization process, corruption in politics, grey area in economy, independency struggles, discussions of land ownership rights and debates of gender issues. Each of these issues will be discussed in the next paragraph.

#### 4.3.1 'Transitional Pains'

##### **1) Privatization Process**

At the end of the 1980s, the main industries in Croatia were composed of both public and private elements. As Jordan (2000a & b) explained, the socialized elements of the public sector were prioritized and they dominated the economy, while private businesses were merely tolerated. This was also the case for the tourism industry. It was a socialist system, which was far from balanced, but catered for the commercial mass tourism trend at that time (ibid.). To summarize Jordan's main findings: The larger economic units, like hotels, marinas, and auto camps, were state-owned by so-called 'self-governing' companies. Gradually they

grew into corporate groups, agglomerating with all kind of companies relevant to tourism, so also smaller units, such as restaurants and shops. Within a community, basically all main tourism enterprises became combined into one element, leaving only a few small entrepreneurs as the private sector. This way, they became monopolies without competition and became to dominate economic as well as political and social life in municipalities like Murter. These few larger enterprises became the main source of employment (Raseta and Pajic 1986). In most households, at least one member worked in a factory in town. As elsewhere in Croatia, household-level agriculture did not entirely lose its meaning, but took the status of 'secondary employment' (Žimbrek, Žutinić and Par 2000) or additional source of livelihood. The private sector was limited in size, since it was hard for private companies to survive, due to numerous disadvantages in terms of taxation, financing and lack of political representation. The socialist system stimulated the endurance of the public sector corporate enterprises, but it did not motivate them to make profit. This way, competition and personal responsibility remained undeveloped (Jordan 2000a, Stipanović 2005).

When the country reached independency (1990), the Croatian economy also underwent a process of redefining, restructuring and rebuilding, parallel to the political restructuring. However, it appeared to be challenging to reach macroeconomic stability, due to avoidance of foreign investors, mainly because of unstable political conditions (Kordej De Villa et al. 2004). Croatia took a reserved position towards the influence of foreign investors in their national economy. They avoided entrance of foreign companies into their economy, by disallowing them to invest in the business sector. However, without these investments it proved to be difficult to reach a more stable macroeconomic level. As a consequence, the economic transition proved to be a 'long-term and painful process' (Ateljevic & Doorne 2003). In economic transition from a socialist economy to a market-oriented economy, the Croatian (tourism) industry became fundamentally exposed to a privatization process. Throughout my field research, interviewees have explained that the state's lack of capital was the driving force to initiate privatization of all the state-owned enterprises.

The process started during the war time and due to the political and economical instabilities of that time and the general attention focused on the war, privatization initially progressed unnoticed. The 1991 Act provided for 2 phases of privatization. The first was the phase of autonomous privatization, in which existing firms drew up their own plans of privatization, which the state allowed or disallowed (Grdešić 1999: 118). This gave room for a certain elite group to strategically take over the best running state-owned companies (Krastev 2002). Communist managers were the only people around with the expertise to run the economy, and they showed remarkable skill in buying the firms they managed (Grdešić 1999: 118). The beginning phase of privatization did not proceed straightforwardly; it basically happened in a non-transparent way and there was nobody to control or even notice it. The redistribution of economic wealth and power helped the new political elite to gain control over the real sources of power (Ibid.). In a later stage of the privatization development, the process became characterized by conflicts between entrepreneurial and political interest (Stipanović 2005). The elite who were buying the companies often had no specific interest in engaging in business.

On 30 June 1992 all firms not already privatized became under the control of the Croatian Privatization Fund. The government played a direct role in the privatization process through this CPF. Acting as manager of state property, the government had wide discretionary powers to sell companies, value them, appoint managers and monitor performances. Jordan (2000a) considers this process in Croatia to be 'pseudo-privatization'. Despite of the elite taking over the largest and best running companies, numerous large, formerly self-governed companies remained unprivatized for several years. Some of them still did not go through the actual process of privatization. However, the general context in the country changed from a socialist system to a democracy, which is pursuing a market economy. Therefore, these companies needed to be adapted to this new system, although it could only be a pseudo-privatization. They were merely transformed into holdings (a new form of organization),

instead of splitting them up into smaller economically independent units before privatization (ibid.). Current and former employees were entitled to a number of shares in the holding, according to their time of employment. The undivided shares were acquired mostly by state-owned banks.

Next to the creation of holdings, Jordan (2000a) additionally mentions that the fear for foreign influence was a legislative obstacle to 'real' privatization. Kordej De Villa et al. (2004) recognized that Croatia attempted to avoid entrance of foreign investors into the national economy for a long time. The overall economy of the country was relatively unstable, mainly because of unstable political conditions due to the conflict situation. Although the general economic and political conditions have improved, nowadays the country still fears foreign investors to enter into their economy. There is a common belief, or even fear, among the population that Croatia's economy would be invaded by 'outsiders', since it has not yet regained enough strength to survive in the global economic system.

The aftermath of the war strongly influenced the privatization process. A new and incomplete legislation, the wide discretionary powers left to the state privatization authorities, the opaque rules and regulations, and the minimal monitoring process led to a non-transparent privatization (Grdešić 1999: 120-121). The limited transparency and parliamentary control allowed for favoritism, shady deals, a client system, and other deviant practices. Although most of these malpractices and corruption were not criminal acts, they were not considered socially equitable or morally correct (Ibid.).

## **2) Political Corruption**

Although the term is highly contestable, scientific literature has predominantly approached corruption as a kind of behavior that differs from the norm that is actually established or is believed to dominate in a certain context (Friedrich 2002: 15). Corruption has mainly been used from a political perspective, as the behavior of public officials that diverges from socially accepted norms in order to serve private needs (Huntington 2002: 253).

As mentioned before, there was an extreme inequality in the division of economic power and resources in Croatia. Clearly, the lack of transparency in this pseudo-privatization process strengthened these inequalities. During my field research, people explained to me that during the war, many Croatian men became involved in the army. While they were out there as soldiers, defending their country, the 'elite' (meaning the small group of people who holds power because they have money or because they have the right network) took the opportunities that were arising through privatization to acquire a company. At the end of the war (1995), when the soldiers came home, there was nothing left for them to sustain their livelihood, because the companies were sold, their holdings had been neutralized and many jobs were gone. Throughout this research, people have mentioned that the process of privatization evolved non-transparently, and was circumstantially uncontrolled and unquestioned. This provided space for strategic behavior of the elites, who used 'predatory projects to extract resources from the state' (Krastev 2002). For instance, the difficult economic situation brought about an overall breakdown of the market and some state companies were severely damaged due to the war (Zimbrek, Zutinic and Par 2000). It was relatively simple to lead them towards bankruptcy, making them invaluable and therefore allowing them to be sold for ridiculously low prices. Some companies are said to have been sold for a symbolic amount of i.e. 1 euro. In many cases, where the companies were transformed into holdings, the elite bought holdings from employees, until they held 51% of the company share. Having monopoly decision power, they then took over the management of the company and changed the organizational structure by neutralizing the remaining 49% of the shares.

In his analysis of the democratization process in the Balkan region, Krastev (2002) concludes that governments have failed to restrain or control this kind of corruption, basically because of the widespread perception among citizens that everybody and everything in

public life is corrupt and the weak states lack a political system where enough is at stake to revive a general interest of their citizens. Corruption often occurs in the absence of effective political institutionalization (Huntington 2002: 253). This way, both causes strengthen each other. Weakness of the state is not simply caused by reform. Krastev argues that the elite refuse to take any responsibility for the welfare of people, while they have become in a powerful position. 'When massive amounts of state property are subjected to privatization through a politically controlled process, political power translates into economic power' (ibid.). Although the privatization was meant to reach for an open market economy, this largely remained an outer appearance. In the meantime, the dominant elite pursued to maintain in their powerful positions. The elites found themselves in a position to use their economic power, together with their political privileges, to enter private ownership of previously state-owned companies. This increased the feeling and perception of mistrust in any public institution among the Croatian citizens.

Corruption is viewed as one of the main obstacles that post-communist countries have to deal with in their attempt to combine democracy and open market economy (Shleifer 1997). As stated by Huntington (2002: 254), revealing corruption requires that the difference between public role and private interest is recognized within social rules. If the Croatian society does not make a distinction between for example the role of the mayor as a mayor and his role as a private person, it is impossible to accuse him of corruption in the use of public monies (Huntington 2002: 254). According to traditional rules in many societies, a government official has the responsibility to provide employment to members of his family and help them in any way possible. The official has gained a certain power and influence, thanks to the governmental position, and this should be beneficial for the family as a whole. Anders (2002: 43) makes a comparison between civil servants in Malawi and chameleons, by stating that in order to move around successfully, civil servants have to cleverly negotiate claims and expectations from colleagues, superiors and family that often conflict with one another. Anders explains how corruption is socially accepted if it serves unselfish means. This way a parallel area is created in the institutional environment and politics, where informal social (family) networks thrive by their own rules. In many societies this informal sphere forms a certain grey area within the institutional environment. This kind of dishonesty is generally accepted by society, because for numerous 'common people' it is the only way to accomplish something. The goal of each family is for (at least) one member to acquire an official position, so the family as a whole can enjoy the benefits of that status. Also in Croatia this grey area thrives. Positions within the local government are highly valued by the inhabitants of a community, for one because it is a well-paid, stable job, but also because it brings a certain power. These jobs offer the possibility to push forward family members for jobs or to conceal particular actions. As Huntington argued it would only be possible to define such behavior as nepotism and hence corruption, when the grey area in politics would not be accepted by society (Huntington 2002: 254). In Croatia this grey area should be seen as part of the socio-cultural context. With respect to Huntington's opinion, we should accept that there is a grey area in Croatia's institutional environment that should not too quickly be labeled as corruption, because it is generally acknowledged by society. The term corruption should rather be applied to cases of 'perceived' corruption (Treisman 2000); incidents that are unusual regarding the commonly accepted norms of behavior (Huntington 2002: 254).

This socially accepted grey area provided room to maneuver towards the development of illegal constructions. Local people acquired a sense of indifference towards illegality in house and apartment building. In summary of several scientific analyses, Petrić (2007) concludes that local communities in Croatia show a high tolerance towards illegal constructions. This is also the case in the community of Murter, where throughout the last 20-30 years many houses have been constructed without the proper permission papers. Nevertheless, although many constructions have been built illegally through corruption practices, it has been socially tolerated, perhaps in a way even accepted, and any form of control has been minimal. Therefore, it can be said that this occurrence coincides with the grey area in Croatian politics. If an individual would like to build a construction on a private piece of land, they have to file a

request with the municipality. The municipal decision highly depends on the spatial plan, which was in Murter last renewed in the end of 2007. However, in many cases when the municipality disapproves the construction request, it can be filed again on county level. It is possible for the county to approve such a request, even though it is against the spatial plan and the decision of the municipality, because they have the power to overrule these. The county is situated hierarchically higher than the municipality, but eventually it is the national government who can have the final word of decision in any case. This vague composition, which falls in the grey area of politics, is a reason for frictions between different levels of state authority and misuse of these frictions by people who want to construct a house and have enough money or connections.

### **3) Grey Economy and Informal Networks**

Williams & Baláž (2000) have argued that the role of tourism in the process of transformation has to be seen in terms of the 'intersection of the new and the old'. This also seems to be the case in Croatia. Horvat (1999) recognizes Croatian entrepreneurial culture as suffering from post-war stress, yet it is still grounded in traditional values and orientations to family and community networks. This can be explained by a certain sense of informality in local social structures. Due to the socialist system during the communist times, where individual accountability was absent and certain people enjoyed political privileges, any sense of public good eroded. It has brought the people a certain sense of indifference towards state law and policy. The suspicion and mistrust of state institutions provided grounds for local societies to develop 'informality' in their social networks. Since the people could not rely on their governmental bodies, they sought for different ways to accomplish things on their own. The development of informal social networks has provided space for hidden economic activities. In their analysis of the influences of local social networks, Ateljevic and Doorne (2003) illustrated how this informality in fact resulted in a stable, flourishing tourism industry. Small entrepreneurs tend to register only a certain percentage of their guests officially. Avoiding taxes this way, people retain a larger share of their income. This enables the people a source of living and it additionally generated capital, which could be reinvested in the tourism industry. As a consequence, a certain level of stability could be reached with the perspective of a continuous and secure tourism development.

Although they see the advantages of these hidden economic activities, Ateljevic and Doorne (ibid.) describe this phenomenon as 'the culture of the black market'. Within science the terms 'black market' and 'black economy' are often used to describe the informal sector. However, this term is value laden and has a very strongly negative connotation. In my point of view, black market and black economy refer to arenas of illegality, perhaps with criminal activities. Although a certain degree of illegality is present in the Croatian political structures, the hidden economic activities created by informal networks should not be counted as such. They present merely ways of economic survival. It is mostly literature about the economy of cultures in so-called developing countries (e.g. Chan & Unger 1982, Meagher 1990, Bagachwa & Naho 1995, Dahles & Bras 1999, Anders 2002) that considers how these practices may be embedded in the social and economic structures of a society and should therefore not be considered in a contrast of black and white, but rather as a grey area or 'second economy' (Bagachwa & Naho 1995). Dahles & Bras (1999) speak of a 'dual economy' in their study of small tourism entrepreneurs in Indonesia. Power structures in Croatia narrow down the space for sources livelihood of the general population in the legal economic system, forcing them to search for other opportunities. Therefore, a parallel area is created in the economy, where informal networks thrive by their own rules. As argued by Bagachwa and Naho (1995), alternative market activities involve illegal production and trade of goods and services, but they become legal in themselves by acceptance within the informal social networks, and therefore develop into a parallel legal market. It creates ways of economic survival for the common people and in many cases the existing power structures maintain the necessity for a dual economic system. If scientists would approach the informal social networks in Croatia also as a grey area, the opportunities provided in this structure

become more pronounced. Additionally, it becomes visible that the parallel economic systems in many societies mutually maintain themselves.

As Dulčić (1997) described: 'Due to a poor transparency of the privatization model and the conservative development structure of the societal power, the transition process in Croatia generates negative experiences which tend to slow down, even hamper the process of development'. The weakness of the transition process (Jordan 2000A) and the weakness in institutional and administrative capacities in Croatia (Kordej De Villa et al. 2004:630) gave ground for the continuation of a grey area in societal and economic, as well as political structures. This resulted in the rise and continuation of informal social networks, producing a parallel economy system and adaptation of the norms for patterns of behavior towards corruption practices in the institutional environment.

Although at first locals are acceptant and rather indifferent towards 'grey' practices, like illegal constructions and tax avoidance, it has also become a subject to express inequality. A person would never say that he or his family uses illegal practices, but their neighbors can only have realized the construction of their house by bribing a municipal official. Especially when 'outsiders' from the mainland enter into small communities along the coast or on the islands to buy land, construct a house or start a business, and they are able to accomplish in a relatively short period of time what community members had not achieved in years, they are considered corrupt. People sense this as unfairness, because they have not had the power to do this (or rather: they claim they do not), but they will in most cases refrain from reporting others to the authorities. It can be said that corruption and illegality, as well as grey areas, play a role in the structures of society. However, it remains accepted within the informal atmosphere and therefore forms a parallel system.

#### **4) Struggles of Independency**

Since its disintegration of the former Yugoslavia in 1990, Croatia has gone through a centralization of political power and authority in the capital Zagreb, in part as a result of the necessities of war, but also in part as a conscious political choice (Stubbs et al. 2006). 'Croatia built a strong centralist state to protect this first time opportunity of freedom' (Kordej De Villa et al. 2004). Kordej De Villa et al. (2004) and Stubbs et al. (2006) agree that the main causes for centralization can be found in an attachment to 'authoritarian nationalism' and the fear of development and strengthening of tendencies for regions to aim for separation.

The notion of dependency is nothing new for Croatian citizens (Starc & Sumpor 2003). With a history of state rule by other nations, the country has known almost half a century of centralized, top-down civil administration (Hall 2000). As stated by Starc & Sumpor (2003), these developments have brought Croatia to the syndrome of 'one big capital city and the rest of the country'. Government institutions are concentrated in Zagreb, creating dominance of a strong political capital development, which has been supported by the domestic and international business sector, ensuring an important economic as well as political and cultural position (Hall 2000, Starc & Sumpor 2003). As a consequence, widening regional gaps can be distinguished between urban, areas such as Zagreb, Split and Sibenik, and many of the more rural areas, like islands and the inland countryside. The latter have now been designated as 'areas of special state concern', because they are marked by issues, such as high unemployment, low human capital, an ageing population, and tensions between settler, returnee, and domicile groups. (Stubbs 2006). The largest part of Dalmatia is depressingly confronted with the fact that there are places in Croatia where the unemployment figure is almost three times less than in their own county (Starc & Sumpor 2003).

Over much of the Balkan region there has been a desire to reduce any form of centralized planning, as a reaction to the past state socialist impositions (Hall, 1998). To accomplish this, a disconnection between 'top-down' policy making and development strategies and 'bottom up' community development and mobilization initiatives would be crucial here (Stubbs 2006).

However, several scientists (Starč & Sumpor 2003, Kordej De Villa et al. 2004) have concluded that the main problem is the (lack of) willingness of those who have centralized the power to decentralize it. Kordej De Villa et al. (2004) argue that tendencies towards centralization remained, even though the main reasons for it already ceased to exist in the late 1990s, due to 'an ever growing state administration to maintain its position' and 'the interest of politicians in power to maintain control of the distribution of funds'. In conclusion to this, both maintaining dependency of small communities and rural areas and a continuous form of centralized power have weakened, or even altered, the development of political and economic decentralization.

In general it can be observed that plans for development and regulations are technically competent, but have rarely been implemented due to Croatia's institutional weaknesses and lack of administrative capacities (Kordej De Villa et al. 2004). 'As part of the socialist legacy, regional development policy is remembered as a purely redistributive state activity linked to planning' (Kordej De Villa et al. 2004). This becomes visible in the compilation of the National Island Development Programme (Starč et al. 1997) and the Strategy of Development for Croatian Tourism (Jordan 2000), both appeared in 1993, which have not been officially implemented until today. This can perhaps partially be blamed on the inherited difficulty to orientate management towards new goals, due to the communist past (Jordan 2000). In addition, such plans are often considered unrealistic and do not respond to the actual needs of local communities (Petrić 2007). It has been mentioned by Jordan (2000) that, despite clear goals, these kind of official documents did not consider economic and regional irregularities. In extension, Petrić (2007) has argued that the communist past has created a two-way inefficiency: information from policy makers towards the public is considered inaccessible and impossible to influence, while the public has no faith in official procedures and mistrusts institutions and therefore makes no attempt to influence them.

People in Croatia feel pessimistic about the near future and see their membership in the European Union as the best thing that could happen to them' (Krastev 2002) An increasing amount of recent articles focus on Croatia's potential for entering into the EU (i.e. Mihaljek 2005, Ateljević & Čorak 2006, Stubbs 2006). 'After a long period in which a host of bilateral donors, like the World Bank and USAID, held sway, the European Union context is gradually becoming the most important in structuring development policy in Croatia' (Stubbs 2006). Croatia became an official EU candidate in 2004 and the authorities seem to agree in a positive future for their country as part of the EU. Kordej De Villa et al. (2004) mention the EU as 'the only goal that unifies all Croatian governments since 1990'.

As mentioned by Ateljević & Čorak (2006), increasingly rigorous government regulation, the continuous process of privatization and the shift towards EU is widely perceived as a potential threat; an economic 'other'. The EU is related to the Western systems of free trade, taxation, formalized relationships and transparency, which perhaps form a 'threat' to Croatia's grey economy, resistance to foreign influence and investment, and informal social networks, which now form the basis of a stabilized level in the business environment. From the interviews and research in Croatia, along the Dalmatian coast, it can be said that large portions of the regional population fear accession into the EU. One of their main concerns is that their currently non-transparent economy will have to open up to the EU and expose to potentially large scale foreign property investors (Mihaljek 2005). One of the interviewees described Croatia's economy as '*a small, untrained man having to fight against Mike Tyson*' (referring to the economy of the EU as one of the world's top boxers). Although advantages are considered, for example the force on implementation of the national law system, many local people fear that their national economy is still too weak to be opened up and they hope that the entrance of their country into the EU will be temporarily postponed.

In relation to tourism it is questioned if accession to the EU would offer a leading role for tourism in the overall economic development of the country. As Mihaljek (2005) concluded, the risk of overdevelopment should be minimized. This is challenging, however, since the

legislations and regulations on property and construction are relatively weak in their current law system. Opening up to the EU could bring forth an 'invasion' of foreign property owners, who can buy land for comparatively little money, but who may cause a negative increase on the property prices for local people.

## **5) Land Ownership Discussions**

Until the 1960s agriculture was the main source of income for many rural Croatian communities, and therefore land ownership was an important economic asset for people in the rural areas. Unlike in most other socialist countries, in socialist Yugoslavia most land remained in private possession. Despite the centrally held ideology of socially owned property, only relatively small amounts of land were nationalized, while most of the land stayed in private ownership (Leutloff-Grandits 2007: 2). During this period of time, land ownership did not have any specific political or economic advantage for communities or individuals, besides the personal value rural people attached to having it.

In the postwar period, access to land was promoted by the Croatian state. Their intention was to reestablish an economic base for the country. Since many other industries, like factories and tourism, seemed more difficult to restore, they stimulated agriculture. The state assumed that, given the large amount of privately held land, agricultural production could be transformed relatively easily into a market-oriented industry (Leutloff-Grandits 2003: 232). It soon became clear that this transformation was much more difficult. Despite the existence of private property rights in socialist Yugoslavia, land was highly fragmented into small parcels and legal ownership was often unclear, which were obstacles for market-oriented agriculture. This situation of fragmentation and ambiguous ownership patterns was a legacy of the centuries-old inheritance system, which continuously divided the land into smaller parcels, and social organization of agriculture, in which several brothers shared ownership rights to agricultural land and often worked it together (Ibid: 152). The Croatian situation can be compared to Verdery's analysis of post-socialist Romania (1996: 133-168), where she shows that during the socialist period formal land titles were still kept, despite the land being placed under state administration. However, because the land registers were not updated under socialism, the restitution of private property in the 1990s had to be based instead on the formal land titles of pre-socialist times. Such restitution of property proved very difficult to achieve in practice, because some heirs had died or had moved away permanently. Although much of the land remained private under the socialist regime in Croatia, the huge gap in land ownership registration resulted in a comparable situation. Plots were very dispersed and the boundaries between plots were seldom marked (Leutloff-Grandits 2007: 20-21). As a consequence, conflicts arose over the exact location and size of the landholdings, but also over the actual ownership of the plots. Quoting Leutloff-Grandits (2002): "Claims to property inherently positioned individuals and families in the postwar social and political power structure, which was mainly shaped by dominant political discourses of the authoritarian Croatian government and other organizations. Through these agencies the reading of past experiences was mostly presented in an ethno-national context."

It has become very difficult to prove which piece of land belongs to who and many conflicts are arising between families and among families. Many times people or families are trying to get rights over a piece of land that may not even be theirs. They may be aware of this or they may not. As a consequence, many cases are taken to the court these days, since a judge is often the only body that can take a final decision in solving the many disputes that arise between neighboring owners. An example of such a case that has been taken to court, can be found in the ground that has been used to build the elementary school of Murter (and Betina). The elementary school property was obtained from pieces of land of about 100 different owners. Most of these agreed in the use of their land for a school, some did not reply or did not agree. Now many people have discovered the power they have because the agreement has not been documented. They have taken their case to court. They start to claim their land back, or request a financial compensation. The municipality already had to pay some of them large amounts of money. Next to that it is in many cases also not

documented who the owner of a piece of land is. One piece of land may have ten people who claim to own it. Also these cases are taken to court. In short: one big mess! “These values are particularly strongly expressed in issues of land ownership and development where locals are frequently reluctant to sell to ‘outsiders’ for fear that land would be inappropriately developed, that is, reflecting cultural values inconsistent with those expressed locally” (Ateljevic & Doorne 2003).

## 6) Gender Issues

As argued by Noy (2007), the unique interrelation between bodies (embodiment of dynamic social processes) and particular spaces constructs hegemony and identity. In Murter (and in Dalmatia in general) spaces have constructed and shaped the male body as symbolically valuable capital. These spaces include the physical as well as the socio-cultural. Noy (2007) uses the example of war: ‘the warrior acquires his military skills through training in military zones and later embodies the heroic image in *battlefields*’ (original italics). As Ateljevic and Hall (2007) conclude, communism did not necessarily disrupt traditional structures of Croatian society, rather it has brought about a deepening of historically complex divide of gender and ethnicity. They explain that patriarchal gender structures deepened with nationalism and they only grew stronger with the state of war and the ‘very real endangering of men at war’. The role of women was ‘reduced to producers of the nation’. Before the break out of the war on the Croatian coast, the Swedish war reporter Hildebrandt (2002) wondered about the willingness of local men to fight. She considered “those exaggerated dramatic, sentimental macho’s, who spent their days sitting at the bar chattering, would they really put on uniforms and die? Those young men, so full of their male pride and longing to become part of the West, would they trade their Levi’s jeans for camouflage clothing and weapons?” With this she relates machismo with dramatization and sentiment, rather than pure brutality and aggression. However, the war did begin and although it may not have been the first choice for those men to do, many of them fought. As a consequence, then, the masculinity connected the spatial context of war with the male bodies of the soldiers and constructed masculine identity of ‘war heroes’. Some interviewees mentioned during my field work that the mayor of Murter is a veteran and has earned a great deal of respect from the local population, because he is valued as a war hero. This, together with his sympathetic character, may have pushed him forward in the patriarchal Murter society as the ideal candidate for mayor. Even though comments have been made about his performance and prioritization choices, many locals have elected him, even three times in a row. In addition, it has been mentioned that small island communities like Murter do not have access to a good crowd of knowledgeable inhabitants, who would be suitable for the position of mayor. Therefore, although he may not be particularly knowledgeable, he gained status by being a war hero.

The macho identity presents men with two norms for behavior: continuous seduction of women and the production of a son (Ateljevic & Hall 2007). The macho identity can only be acquired through the eyes of other men and therefore the expression of machismo values always occurs in public. In such patriarchal culture women are objectified: they are being looked at and acted upon as an object ( Young in Veijola & Valtonen 2007), or in other words, seduction of women by machismo predators (Abramovici 2007).

The strong traditional gender values have been strengthened and reproduced through the Catholic church. Religion has become a context for social obligations and (mostly gender related) restrictions. One of the most important social ideals is marriage. As explained by Ateljevic & Hall (2007), marriage changes the gender role of women into more ‘serious’ and dedicated wives and mothers, however, the macho role for men is only strengthened and needs continuous restatement. Next to the seduction of women, men also perform masculinity through companionship. Ateljevic & Hall (2007) exemplify conversational discussions about (mostly) women and politics together with excessive drinking in social locations, like a bar. They add that through the structural values of masculine identity, men never open up to the more feminine values and soft, romantic emotions. These remain

unexplored and excluded from their identity and therefore incomprehensible. Although women are inscribed with values of emotional, soft and romantic and are seen as responsible for the domestic activities, young women are fulfilling this role with a sense of pride and empowerment. Ateljevic and Hall (2007) highlighted how women feel part of the play, by performing their role and comparatively acquire their feminine identity through the eyes of other women. In addition, this value measurement is also strengthened through marriage and ageing, when attention of men is decreasing, their 'bodily self-esteem' is increasingly gained through the eyes of other women.

#### 4.3.2 Murter Context

The island of Murter is connected with a bridge to the Adriatic coast of Croatia. This geographical location has, historically and contemporary, influenced society and culture on the island. Traditionally, the first village on the island was called Murter, just like the island. This community is situated on the southern side of the island. The old part of the settlement, then called Selo, was placed land inwards to protect the inhabitants from dangers of the sea (mainly piracy). Later on, the community expanded further towards the sea and fishery became an important source of livelihood.



Figure 1: The island of Murter.

Kunst (1996) has identified that Croatian islands, due to their natural characteristics and insufficient traditional economic resources, are isolated entities. It can be said that island communities are determined and demarcated areas, due to scale and isolation, which often merges with limited access to (financial) resources and development. The isolation and therewith coming challenges of life on the island of Murter have been expressed by several interviewees throughout this research. They mention that for their ancestors life on the island has been harsh. The ground is not very fertile and consists mostly of rocks. Therefore agriculture could not thrive. The men worked out at sea, catching fish and seafood, while the women were left alone on the island, to take care of the children and work the land. One interviewee spoke of 'white widows': women who live most of their life alone, always in doubt whether their man is going to come back home or if the sea would keep him.

MacDonald & Jolliffe (2003) summarize that many scientists have mentioned that rural communities and peripheral areas, such as islands, face the challenge of continuous economic development. The prospects of development on the island of Murter had been relatively limited until the arrival of tourism (Kunst 1996). In Murter tourism has become a development tool to supplement, or in most cases even replace, traditional industries that are in decline, such as fishing, farming and wooden ship building. This can be considered a reflection of the national tourism policy. Although it was also important for the Dalmatian coast before 1990, especially after gaining national independency tourism was acknowledged as the most important potential motor of the Croatian economy (Jordan

2000A). For the majority of coastal and island communities it is still the most important sector.



*Figure 2: Aerial view from the harbor of the municipality Murter-Kornati.*

The bay of the municipality Murter-Kornati is closed-off from the open sea by a myriad of small and larger, mostly uninhabited islands. The name of this island group, Kornati, can be found back in the name of the municipality, reflecting the pride of the local inhabitants and the importance of these islands. A striking feature within the society of Murter-Kornati is that basically all local families hold property rights over a piece of land on one of these islands. The islands traditionally served as an expansion of agricultural and cattle land and a good location for fishing activities (Ateljevic & Doorne 2003). Historians generally agree that there has never been permanent life on the islands (Juran 2007), however, small shelter huts were built by the local population, where land owners would stay during the sowing or harvesting periods. The reason why shepherds from quite distant Murter occupied Kornati pastures is that the island of Murter was densely populated. In addition, the beginning of the Cretan war (1645- 1699) brought a restless period with strong fear for pirate attacks. From the mid 17<sup>th</sup> century the isles of Kornati were first leased by inhabitants of Murter and in the 19<sup>th</sup> century they bought the land from Venetian and Zadar nobilities (Juran 2007).

In 1972 a large number of these islands were grouped into National Park Kornati and have since served as the main tourist attraction for the village and developed as a very popular destination for maritime tourists. Nowadays the islands are to a lesser extent used for agricultural or cattle purposes, mainly because it is hard work and it earns relatively little money. Consequently, local people increasingly attempt to use their land for tourism purposes. Some local entrepreneurs have turned their shelter huts into small restaurants or bungalows (Ateljevic & Doorne 2003). Also on a national level there is a large discussion about the protection of the area and the level of opening it up for tourism purposes (Zellmer 2008). Though, the main problem for potential investors is that the land is scattered into many small pieces and there are exceptionally many owners involved.

One of the issues concerning land ownership is the ownership license (Zellmer 2008). It has been about two generations since the land parcels on the islands of Murter and Kornati archipelago have been acquired. At that time, it was a matter of spoken agreements and business was often finalized with a handshake. The land has been passed on as heritage from father to son. Nowadays, it is becoming important to have proof of your land ownership in the form of a license. In many cases, however, the people are not exactly sure which

parcel is theirs and how far it reaches. This has created a very complicated situation, in which families are even taking their cases to court to prove that a certain piece of land is theirs. Especially parcels that are situated in areas where building is permitted (through the spatial plan of the municipality), the land is valuable and often fought over.

The Murter-Kornati area is very unique in the Adriatic, because it is claimed to have the highest percentage of land per capita. Although the ground is not particularly fertile and owning land parcels does not have any fiscal advantages, inhabitants of Murter-Kornati do express pride in their island parcel ownership. It is much more socio-culturally valued, and less economically. For one, it is a way for the Murterians to distinguish themselves from many other small villages along the coast, that through land leasing remained under control of the noblemen of larger cities. Murterians feel strong, firstly, because they were in control of their own properties since the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and secondly, because they remained owners of their land throughout the communist system. Secondly, it is a remain of the strength their ancestors had to work hard for acquiring that land. History has been proven highly valued by the people in Dalmatia (Ateljevic and Hall 2007) and the cultural significance of land ownership advanced perhaps simultaneously with the development of a patriarchal pride.

People in the rural areas and on the islands in Dalmatia have led a harsh and poor life, working the land and fishing the sea to make a living. Murter island society, therewith, is grounded in strong family and community values, guidelines of the Catholic religion, and gender related ideologies. Marked by the socialist past, but acquainted with practical values of an island culture and possession of property, Murter society has shaped into its contemporary structure. It has been mentioned that 'issues of gender and tourism in the Balkans are yet to be fully explored' (Ateljevic & Ćorak 2006). The distinct gender relations of Dalmatian culture, and more specifically in this case Murter society, have been mentioned. It is said that the local society is based upon the notion of patriarchy. Patriarchy is explained as 'a social system in which men, as heads of the domestic households, rule the society, and a symbolic order that gives priority to social relations, power struggles and descent between men' (Veijola & Jokinen in Veijola & Valtonen 2007). Throughout history, the patriarchal nature of society shaped the present social interaction on Murter with a gender-related division of tasks (Ateljevic & Doorne 2003), which is characterized by a strong machismo culture. Here the body can be considered a holistic space where patriarchic cultural norms are being implicated and inscribed (Noy 2007).

It is not only the period of communism that has resulted in a deepening of historically complex divide of gender and ethnicity, also the process of transition has led to a strengthening of traditional customs and gender related values. The privatization, as part of the transition process, has impacted social and entrepreneurial culture in Murter. The mistrust of any state institution is reflected in close family relationships (Ateljevic & Hall 2007), where the extended family forms the source of social and financial support. Family property and businesses are inherited intergenerational. Ateljevic & Hall (2007) state that it is the gender related attributes, informed by geographical and cultural aspects, which simultaneously provides the basis for development of the tourism product. In the intensely patriarchal culture of Murter, dealing directly with tourists is often regarded as beneath male dignity. Women are responsible for most of the daily activities of the business as well as their household. However, they remain financially and socially dependent on their husbands, because ownership and management are considered male tasks (Ateljevic & Doorne 2003). Women therefore reflect a 'double burden' (Hall 1998), being responsible for the domestic tasks of the household and, in extension, proceed with the same role within the family business. In extension to this, Avelini Holjevac (2006) expressed that women in Croatia are bound by the 'phenomenon of glass ceiling', which reproduces the patriarchal, gender based socio-economic inequalities. Although women have become (almost) equal in public life, in the private sphere the traditional patriarchal gender structures are reconstructed (Ferge 1997). Therefore the traditional role construction of men and women remained largely

untouched within family sphere. This found a continuation through the private family enterprises, which are constructed on the basis of family relations.

#### 4.3.3 Key Issues

In general, it can be concluded that although the state is pursuing a process of transition towards democracy and a market-oriented economy, there remains a certain degree of political control due to the powerful position of a small group of (elite) people and the remains of socialist structures in society. This way, the transition process has strengthened traditional norms and gender-related values among the general population next to a continuous influence of modernization and Europeanization.

In conclusion to this chapter, the process of transition has strongly impacted the context of tourism development in Croatia in general and for the municipality of Murter-Kornati in specific. It has strengthened traditional values and gender based patterns on the one hand, but on the other hand it has also opened up new political, economic and cultural processes. Throughout the transition, six main 'transitional pains' can be distinguished in this complex web of power structures. These themes should be considered for a closer look through case studies: the privatization process, land ownership rights, grey area in economy, corruption in politics, independency of local governments and gender relations.

The community of Murter provided context for four distinct sub-case studies. The issue of independency is represented by a case study on the recently founded local government of Murter. As a previously state-owned company, the privatized marina Hramina in the harbor of Murter provided a good example of the ongoing issues related to the process of privatization. Landownership issues are discussed through an evaluation of the situation of one of the most touristy areas along the beach of Murter. The gender related issues have been expressed through the story of a Murterian woman. The remaining transitional issues of grey economy and corruption are interwoven in each case study in one way or another. In some cases these relations will come forth more pronounced than in others.

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## 5. Case Studies

I have established that there is a need for more dynamics and empirical use of power theories in the post-structural approach, to disentangle relations of power in tourism development. Within the context of Croatia the political, economic and socio-cultural transformations strongly influence and challenge the existing power structures. They have provoked changes towards strengthening of traditional values on the one hand, while enhancing new processes towards modernization and Europeanization on the other. This has created many conflicting situations, in which relations of power are reevaluated, resulting in reproduction, confrontation or adaptation of traditional norms and values. The societal structures that traditionally built relations (of power), and the resources that determined the position of each individual or group within that relation, are continuously exposed to transitional developments. The five main 'transitional pains' that I have analyzed in the previous chapter challenge the complexity of the realities that Murterians knew and lived with during the socialist period and allow them to reconsider these. In this chapter I aim to analyze the awareness of individuals and collectives of this process and their capacities to follow or to choose to resist their surrounding power structures. Four sub-case studies will reveal some influences of macro-level transitions on the composition and relations of local society.

The first section discusses the power of local government units through a comparison between two communities on the island of Murter. As a community, Murter decided to resist against the ruling municipality of Tisno by taking control of their own development. The community of Jezera has also found a way to improve their development, however, they chose to continue to follow the municipality of Tisno. A comparison between tourism development in these two municipalities will reveal the advantages and disadvantages of the choice to resist (become independent) or not resist (remain under Tisno) to contextual governmental power structures as well as consider other influences.

In the next sub-case I take a closer look at the privatization process through the historical developments of the marina Hramina in Murter. Gaining an accepted level of independency in the socialist era, the marina enjoyed a steady growth. The war had a severe impact on marine tourism, but the loyal staff of the marina kept its head above the water. During the privatization process, however, the marina went through an obscure restructuring. Although the marina staff is mostly positive about the developments, within the community of Murter the opinions are divided.

Landownership is a complex issue, which strongly influences tourism development on the island of Murter. A third sub-case study therefore takes a closer look at landowners and their development decisions around one of the most important areas for tourism: the road that runs in between two of Murter's beaches. One of the issues that arises here, evolves around the entrance of 'outsiders' into the island community and the level of influence they bring into the local tourism activity. The Murterians experience how others are profiting from tourism businesses in their community. In response to this they have build up a local defense mechanism by excluding these others.

During my field research in Murter I have come across some amazing people with interesting life stories. Though, the very first person I met and interviewed, has left me with a striking impression of gender based power structures in the local society and I gained a deep sense of respect for the path she has chosen in life. The fourth section of this chapter analyses her situation as a woman with a higher municipal position in tourism, through the decisions she took not only to resist, but also to intervene in existing gender structures. This section will explain the importance of patriarchy and masculinity in her society and how her choices in life collided with this.

Every sub-case study begins with an account of the recent historical development, resulting in the situation under consideration. This will set the context in which the relations of power reconstruct the rules that define boundaries of inclusion and exclusion (Aitchison 2005). Continuously, I raise a discussion considering the agency of individuals and collectives towards deciding to follow or resist to the existing structures that determine relations of power between them. Each sub-case study ends with a conclusion to the discussion of that specific transitional issue.

## **5.1 The Municipality of Murter-Kornati towards Independency**

### **5.1.1 Introduction**

After gaining independency in 1990, the republic of Croatia introduced a new constitution, which was implemented by the end of 1992 (Kordej de Villa et al. 2004). One new legislation allowed that communities (such as parts of municipalities, groups or villages) can claim municipal status, even disregarding the official legislative conditions the community should comply with. The fashionable trend since 1993, to found independent municipalities, permitted any petty rural area to start a commune of its own. Normally a community would have needed a minimum of 10.000 inhabitants, and some basic administrative capacity, to be able to turn independent (Ibid.). According to the old constitution, independency in communities that do not fulfill the requirements, would bring dangers to the local economy and they would run the risk of having inefficient social services. Many communities, especially in rural areas, are unaware of these difficulties. They only hope and expect that the new constitution brings opportunities to break free from the long history of dependency, with them hanging at the bottom of the hierarchical political formation. They have been excitingly awaiting the moment to try their new independency on their own. Consequently, many existing municipalities were split up, creating numerous small municipalities that have often proven too weak to provide basic services (Starc & Sumpor 2003). There are many municipalities incapable of justifying their title either by revenue or by the functions that are statutorily predetermined (Ott & Bajo 2001). Although they were aware of the necessity to build institutional structure, gain administrative experience and create human resources from scratch, the community of Murter expected mostly advantages from splitting up from the larger municipality on the island. Their main argumentation was to break free from the ruling municipality of Tisno, where Murterians felt suppressed in their development. By becoming their own municipality they would grow to be independent. After careful consideration by an establishment board, existing of a selected group of Murterians who were put in charge of arguing the decision, the municipality of Murter-Kornati was officially established in 2000.

### **5.1.2 Historical Development**

At the time of the French occupation (1805 – 1814), it was imposed to the people on the island of Murter that their centre of management should be placed in the community of Tisno (Juran 2007). It can be argued that Tisno was geographically the most suitable location, because it is closely connected to the mainland and was therefore the best accessible. Tisno became the municipality and Murter, Jezera, Betina and two small villages on the main land fell under their government. Since the French occupation, the island's governmental structure remained unchanged, until the community of Murter decided to split up into its own municipality in 2000.

Although there are four communities living jointly on one island, there have always been differences between the people from Murter, Jezera, Betina and Tisno. Traditionally, it is said by the islanders that Murterians and Jezerians were falling more closely together, as well as Betinians and Tisnians were, though when I asked for the reason they could not give a clear explanation for this. There are feelings of resentment and even rivalry between the communities; a strengthening of divergence between 'us' and 'the others'. It can be questioned whether these thoughts are shaped by reality or merely formed by a sentiment among the people, since they have developed more on a spiritual level than on a physical level (Juran 2007). It is a cultural value, embedded in the island's societies, that defines

boundaries between the communities and determines their attitude towards one another. Even today, in the modern period, these animosities between the villages are present. Although to a lesser extent, it can be noticed among the young people in a certain feeling of belonging to their community and pursuing competition for being better than the other communities. According to Juran (2007), this can partially be explained by the history of each of the communities. The Murterians were the first people to arrive on the island and they have mainly lived from the sea, although some complementary agriculture was present. With a continuously growing population, Betina was first created by the Murterians as an expansion of their living area. Murter and Betina are situated so closely together that they have basically melted into one village. Therefore it may seem odd that they do not act as one. Although Betina still had access to the sea and the islands, it also grew more towards the mainland and in that sense, the inhabitants started to feel more strongly connected to their neighboring village of Tisno, who lived from trading. Later on, this difference in interests became the main reason for the disharmony between them.

The relationship between Tisno and Murter was generally without animosities, because they had differing territorial and economic interests (Juran 2007). Tisno has a very long coastline towards the mainland and is connected to this by a bridge, so the community was not oriented towards the sea, but towards the mainland for trading purposes. Murter on the other hand, is completely oriented towards the sea and the islands for fishery and small agriculture, and had no specific interest in the mainland. However, being part of the municipality of Tisno, Murter was strongly dependent on their decisions. Although several communities belong to the same municipality, they may not all have the same influence in decision processes. This is difficult to observe and measure, though, so the interpretation of Murter's dependency mainly comes from the expressions of my respondents. As one of them told me: "Murter felt strongly neglected, especially when it came to the division of the budget. We always seemed to be put in the last place". This hindered their development as a community, because Murter was bringing a great share of income from the administration of their population and high number of tourists, but they received relatively little money for their development in return. Administrative income is mostly derived in the form of communal fees and salary tax deduction (Starc & Sumpor 2003), as well as through tourism receipts. Simply said, the number of inhabitants, their assets and the amount tourists, determine the income of a municipality. The inhabitants of Murter were not satisfied with the Tisno municipality mandate. They felt suppressed from development and progress. This became the main reason for the community to split from the larger municipality of Tisno and be able to decide on their own development.

Since most of the land on the Kornati archipelago was owned by Murterians, the territory of the new municipality naturally covered the territory of the islands as well (Zellmer 2008). The municipality of Murter-Kornati was officially recognized by the state on 17<sup>th</sup> of November 1999 (Croatat). However, the starting phase of a new born municipality can be challenging, so an establishment board (consisting of community representatives) was set up to guide institutional structuring. On the 28<sup>th</sup> of June 2000, Murter became an independent municipality. The first mayor in position was elected Ivo Marušić, representative of the HSS (the Croatian Socialist Party). A community council came into place and the village started to develop itself as an independent municipality. Having the right to their own financial resources, Murter expected to gain the power to decide upon their own developments and future. Whether they actually did it, can be debated and this will be explained by the following discussion.

At the time that the municipality was formed, Murter invited the people from Betina to join in the negotiations for the new municipality. Since the communities are practically intertwined, it seemed a logical development to join forces in independency. However, one of the main questions the Betinains had, was how they could be sure that their interests would not be outnumbered by the interests of Murter. They feared to become outnumbered in their votes in the council, because Murter has many more inhabitants than Betina. Therefore, they

insisted to have an equal number of votes in the municipality. When Murter could not assure this, the Betinains refused the offer and preferred to stay with Tisno. In addition, on a political level, Tisno had an interest in keeping Betina in its municipality. Firstly, because Betina brought access to some of the islands of Kornati. Although the orientation towards the sea is not their main interest, this is an advantage for trading and tourism. Secondly, Betinians own a lot of land in the Modrava on the mainland, which, adding it up to Tisno's land, let the municipality cover a large administrative area. The national state of Croatia divides their budget over the local government units according to the size of their population. The state budget for the municipality as a whole is going directly to the municipality of Tisno, which places them in the position to decide how this budget is divided among their communities. According to inside sources, presently some young members of the local board in Betina see the advantages of joining the municipality of Murter, mainly because it is physically more natural: not only are their families bonded, their land is also territorially mixed: the villages have one elementary school and share one cemetery. This could lead to discussions within the community and perhaps even to a change of 'sides'. If Betina would join the municipality of Murter, this would unite all the islands of Kornati under one municipality. Perhaps this way the municipality would gain more influence in the protected area of the national park, at least on topics regarding tourism.

### 5.1.3 Independency Struggles

Eight years after gaining independency, the municipality of Murter has gained a great amount of experience in administrative functioning. The main question that rises here is: Did they gain power or loose power by choosing for self-governance? They achieved power in the form of access to their own resources, but did they really become independent? I will discuss that separating from Tisno municipality brought strengths, but also weaknesses for the relational power of Murter, which also influenced local tourism development. Independency, in the form of self-governance and having their own municipal budget, are clearly advantages for Murter. However, the community has also experienced some heavy disadvantages, since they had to stand on their own and could not fall back on the political buffer that Tisno used to provide them with. The municipality of Tisno used to handle the political relations with the provincial and national level. Now these levels communicate directly with the municipality of Murter, that is less experienced, smaller and perhaps in that sense weaker against these higher 'powers'.

Splitting up from the larger municipality on the island brought some risk for Murter, since they did not have organizational resources to draw from. The new-born municipality was not familiar with an institutional structure, it lacked administrative experience, was without secured funds, and there were no established human resources to draw from for governmental functions, like the mayor and the municipality council. In addition, it has been mentioned that most of the newly created municipalities since 1992 have less than 10.000 inhabitants, which causes economy of scale problems and inefficiencies in service provision (Starc & Sumpor 2003). According to the statistics of Crostat, the Croatian Central Bureau of Statistics, the municipality of Murter accounted for 2.075 inhabitants in 2001 (see table 1). In that same year, the municipality of Tisno was comprised of 3.239 inhabitants. From these statistics, we can assume the comparative advantage of administrative population between these municipalities. Although still far below the minimum number of inhabitants that the old constitution required, the municipality of Tisno does have a long experience of administrative independency. They have gained knowledge of administration and built human resources and institutional capacity. Therefore, they hold a stronger independent position than the new-born municipality of Murter.

*Table 1: Number of inhabitants per community in the municipalities of Murter and Tisno (2001)*

Kornati	7	Betina	774
Murter	2.068	Dazlina	62
		Dubrava kod Tisna	185
		Ježera	841
		Tisno	1.377
<b>Municipality Murter</b>	<b>2.075</b>	<b>Municipality Tisno</b>	<b>3.239</b>

*Source: Crostat the Croatian Central Bureau of Statistics (www.dzs.hr)*

Taking a closer look at the number of inhabitants (table 1), we can clearly see the advantages that the communities of Betina and Ježera bring by their belonging to the municipality of Tisno. Betina and Ježera together provide for about half of the population, delivering perhaps also half of the income to the municipality. When it was still a part of Tisno municipality, Murter provided for an additional one third to the population. Except Murter has now gained the freedom of keeping their income from tourism receipts and overnight stays for themselves. By turning into an independent local municipality they empowered themselves to keep and spend their own money. Nevertheless, both municipalities as separate entities as well as in joint form do not gain enough income to provide basic services and support a flourishing development of their communities. However, from information provided by inhabitants of both municipalities I can conclude that Tisno may have an insufficient income from taxation (from income tax and profits tax), but Murter has even less tax revenue (due to a third less inhabitants), and therefore relies more heavily on non-tax revenue such as utility charges and contributions from their inhabitants. Such extremely small local government units like Murter are simply incapable of financing current expenditures and of providing the basic services to their area (Starc & Sumpor 2003). As a consequence, they have to depend on direct transfers from the regional and national budgets. This leads, despite the theoretical decentralization of territory, to the actual centralization of the Croatian government (Ott & Bajo 2001). The self-governance of Murter appears like independency, but in fact the community pushed away the safeguarding buffer that Tisno used to provide and opened itself up the unpredictable and obscure arena of national politics. This volatile game is much more challenging to play than the comparatively moderate competition Murter had with Tisno. For Murter it was mostly important to be able to take its own decisions and keep control over its own budget. "The reasons for founding new units are mostly the desire for the stronger or more rapid economic development of a given new municipality or city, combined with the conviction that this is impossible with the current territorial organization (Ott & Bajo 2001).

Murter expected to become more prosperous when independent from Tisno, since they can decide on their own development. However, progression does not happen linearly. In a way, independency also brought new challenges to the community. They did not become really financially independent, because their income is not self-sufficient. Therefore, they receive direct transfers from regional and national budgets, which perhaps made them even more economically dependent than before. Also, the municipality lacks internal and external control (for example criteria for the level of salaries for the administrative bodies or the control over tourist taxes from the private accommodation owners) and there are no evaluations of their activities (Ott & Bajo 2001). In a way, this economic dependency and lack of control has created space for a new problem: Murter, like many other small municipalities in Croatia, has undergone an excessive politicalization (Ibid.). These small, new municipalities have entered the bureaucratic world of politics and the importance of political connections became a fact. To receive permission to be able to do anything in the community, they need the support of the regional or even state government. As a consequence, the communities need to follow the right legal procedures, but also become part of the leading party's networks and follow the informal rules of the grey area in politics. In this sense, their independency from Tisno has made Murter more vulnerable to larger

political influences and created space and attractiveness for corruption practices and nepotism on the local level. Local people that have connections with powerful persons on higher levels (region or state), gain power and acknowledgement on local level. They can help family members and friends to acquire permission papers or a position in the local government.

Real forms of cooperation for the joint provision of public services among municipalities or between municipalities and regions is poor (Ott & Bajo 2001). Rather there is an inconsistent relation between the levels of governance in Croatia. As Ott and Bajo (2001) argue, "there is no clear delimitation of function between the levels of government, even in spite of the many laws that regulate the financing system". Since 1990, Croatia made its first attempts towards a local government financing system. This financial decentralization has been extensively analyzed by Ott and Bajo (2001), who conclude that this new system has many shortcomings and criteria are not clearly defined. Administrative functions were transferred to the counties, communities and cities, which have become the units of local self-government. The counties, cities and communities regulate their own internal organization and structure and the way they work in their statutes. However, for many decisions, for example on land use, land planning and land ownership, they have to ask for permission of the regional governments. This gives these regional governments a high level of power in the communities and cities. The central government carries out the financial and administrative control of local units and provides them with various subsidies. These subsidies are sent to the counties, who are responsible for providing resources to their local units, especially those with fiscal capacities below average according to the size of their revenues (Ibid.). As Ott and Bajo (2001) explain, these counties are influenced by a duality in their functioning, since they are both a local administration as well as a self-government. This dual role affects their work and the position they take in relation to the cities and municipalities within their territory. Many decisions and plans are made on a higher level than the municipality, creating the level of powerful (regional and national) government that is above the local one. In a way, the county has more political power than the smaller municipalities in relation to decisions about specific development applications, like the approval of building permission requests. Firstly, they are responsible for the division of subsidies and secondly, they have closer connections to the national level politics.

The community of Murter has opened up to the complex grounds of national politics, causing complication and politicalization of the local municipality organization. Within this complicated web of political power structures, it can be said that it is eventually the leading party in the national government that holds the most power. Following this are the leading parties on regional level, who gain power if they belong to the same party as the leading national party or if their party has formed some sort of a coalition with the national party. At the bottom come the local parties, which can draw some influence from coalitions or other forms of connection, but in reality are in turn more largely influenced by these connections. In explanation of this, within the central government of Croatia there are many political parties represented that cooperate in a democratic system, gaining strength (in the form of seats in the parliament) through the votes of the people. Reflecting this to the local level, within the municipality of Murter there are many political parties represented, but they do not merely obtain strength through the votes of their people, additionally the political representatives gain strength from their party's national status. The stronger the representation of a party on national level, the better the local representatives of this party are in pushing forward local issues and requests. As one interviewee explained:

*"If you have representatives from your party in the government, of course you have the chance to make some calls and arrange some things that the other cannot".*

Therefore, they maintain good and close contact with the higher levels in their party and aim to follow their guidelines. However, it has been proclaimed that local party representatives

take these guidelines as their main lead, ignoring the specific local needs and identity. As stated by a respondent:

*“Fundamentally, the local government administrators do what their superiors (from the party) tell them to do”.*

They are merely marionette puppets, whose strings are played by a higher power structure. Another respondent mentioned that:

*“It is always in the advantage of a community to have one community member seated in a position on a higher level, for example in the region or even on state level”.*

This person can act as a player within the higher power structures. This way, they may accomplish to influence planning and development decisions and create attention for their local issues.

#### 5.1.4 Comparison Murter - Jezera

Now that it has become clear that the ‘independency’ of Murter as a municipality has brought some advantages as well as many disadvantages, we should take a closer look at the impacts specifically on tourism development. Does self-governance bring opportunities for tourism development in Murter? To evaluate this, I will make a comparison between tourism planning and development in Murter and Jezera, a community that remains under the municipality of Tisno.

The community of Jezera has experienced an increasing economic development over the last decade, in which it distinguishes itself from the other three communities on the island. People from Jezera have a very specific history on the island. They have less cultivated land on the island than the other communities and until about 30 years ago they had a comparatively lower level of economy than the rest of the island (Juran 2007). Their community is intensely focused on the sea, which traditionally made them sailors and fishermen. Perhaps it is this history that has provided them with a different mentality. Murterians describe the people from Jezera as *“open, extrovert and more wild”* in comparison with themselves and the other communities. Jezerians added to this that they are generally a bit more concerned about their development than the Murterians, and they also see themselves as more self-critical individuals. Additionally, they have expressed a very strong sense of community feeling; *“we work hard and we work together”*. In a way, they remain strongly connected to their history as seamen, since many inhabitants are still fishermen and young people even go to college to expand their knowledge in this field.

In the last decade, the community has undergone an extreme economic growth, mainly thanks to their tourism development. The explanation for this growth can be found in a strong community feeling: Jezera grew from the inside, because their local government and tourism board exist of a small group of proactive people, who have been willing to push the whole village forward. So basically they grew steadily, because of their own efforts. It has been mentioned by several respondents that the enthusiasm and network connections of Jezera’s tourism board director have been a strongly positive influence towards this development.

The villages of Murter and Jezera enjoy most of their income through tourism. In spite of this, their approach to tourism development has been somewhat different. When looking at the communities’ approaches to tourism development differentiation can be found in the resources they have at their disposal. Murter experiences advantages from having direct access to their own budget and having the authority to decide what to do with it, while Jezera has to share the profit from their tourism taxes and has to report their expenditures to Tisno. On the other hand, Murter is coping with a lack of administrative experience and incapacity of human resources, where Jezera can always count on the municipality of Tisno to take charge in decisions and problem solving. Whatever qualities Jezera is lacking, can be

complemented by Tisno, a municipality that has centuries of administrative experience. In a way, Tisno also provides Jezera with a buffer that keeps them at a distance from the game evolving around national politics. Murter, on the other hand, has enlarged its vulnerability by removing the layer of Tisno's protection and bring in macro influences.

Self-governance is not the only influence on tourism development. Differences in tourism development between the two communities can also depend on the level of privatization the enterprises in the community embrace. Although the first years after the war their situation remained undecided, in recent years basically all tourism companies in Murter have been privatized. This has resulted in numerous locally owned small enterprises and a few large enterprises that are owned by 'national foreigners', who come from larger towns on the mainland, like the capital city of Zagreb. Jezera's business environment on the other hand, has not (yet) privatized. Rather has gone through a 'pseudo-privatization process', turning the enterprise into a holding with shares of local people and of the state. In a way this has an influence on the independency of the community, since Jezera still has a high level of influence from the state, through their tourism holding. This way, the state can still manipulate or control the tourism development. This can be an advantage, but also a threat: tourism development can be stimulated, but also constrained or altered by decision of the national level. Murter on the other hand, has been able to enter the market economy, with its mainly privately owned tourism enterprises. This has made the tourism industry more vulnerable to national and international economic and market fluctuations, but this way they can also gain strength in building their own marketing and public relations and stimulate the growth of this important industry of their local economy.

Another influence on tourism development can be found in the key people leading the development of tourism, since their position highly influences the progression of ideas and the established network of contacts. In Murter, tourism is arranged through the local tourism board, an independent non-profit organization, closely linked to the municipality. This tourism board is overseen by a tourism council, composed of a delegate from local government and representatives from the private sector enterprises. Their budget is based on the municipal income from the tourist taxes on overnight stays. Respondents have explained that there is little to no control over the tourist taxes in Murter and that the values of economic individual protectionism among the local inhabitants have created an informal economy, in which for example accommodation owners decide to register their guests only partially.

Jezera knows a similar construction with a tourism council advising the tourism board. They also have the same source of income, but they receive an addition to their tourist tax incomes from the local municipality (Tisno). Several respondents mentioned that the reluctance to register all guests is less severe in Jezera. This is highlighted by the statement of the tourism boards of both communities that the communities have almost similar amounts of income from the tourist tax, while Jezera can only host 900 guests and Murter has enough beds for at least double that amount. Therefore it can be said that although Murter receives many more tourists yearly than the neighboring village Jezera, their municipal revenue from tourism taxes has a bigger gap, which falls within the grey area of the local economy. This gap will remain existent until there is stricter control or when the social norms transform. Many community members still fear that they may not have enough savings to get through rough times for two main reasons: 1. because of the short tourism season and 2. because of the war experience when tourism completely ceased to exist. In addition they do not realize the importance of paying the tourist tax for the general development of tourism in their community. Only a general trust and strengthening of a community feeling will lead towards the necessary social transformation.

The potential for key people to thrive in their job and lead their community is also dependent on the opportunities and constraints they experience from their surrounding. Both tourism board directors of Jezera and Murter possess the knowledge and strength to develop tourism. The tourism board of Jezera, having a stronger community trust and being able to

rely on Tisno municipality, has been very active and established a highly valuable network. They have been able to take a great challenge for their tourism development and they have won several tourism awards for their recent actions, to which money prizes were attached. Which could then immediately be reinvested in tourism development. The tourism board in Murter, on the other hand, has been highly influenced and held back by personal as well as larger political interests in their community. One strong factor of influence is the gender aspect of the individual's productivity, as the tourism board of Murter is guided by a women, whereas the Jezerian tourism board is guided by a man. These interests have in many instances constrained the proper functioning of the tourism board or even withheld them completely from carrying out their activities.

These constraints are caused by the politicalization of the local governmental functioning, mentioned in the previous paragraph. There is a strong divide between the ruling political parties, which influences any development in the community. To give an example of the impact of politicalization on the implementation of any applicable idea in the community, box 1 shows the struggles of creating an elderly home. This whole situation around the development of the first elderly home in Murter shows the complex connection within the local municipality, but also between local politics, state politics and the judiciary system. Many potential improvements to the town are altered, because of the animosities between the two leading political sides within the municipality, which are strengthened by their regional and national networks, and eventually the state and court have to interfere to settle the matter to reach a decision. In this way, Murter is constraining its own development. Great amounts of money are wasted on court cases between the sides.

**Box 1: The story of the elderly home**

After the first elections in Murter there were basically two sides in local politics. One was the HSS (Croatian Socialist Party) and the other one was the independent list (comprising of several smaller parties), which formed the Association of the Murterian Board. There are many animosities between these two sides and these basically block all the opportunities for quality development in the community. Whichever side proposes the quality development, the other side will do everything to block it, but in the end the community suffers.

The Murterian Board bought the building of an old school, which was destroyed in a fire, with the aim of turning it into an elderly home. It would be the first elderly home in the municipality. Along the implementation process the Board established that one piece of land from the school premises was not registered as a school property, but a municipality property. In other words, it was unregistered at the cadastre (land register). Basically, the municipality could claim it as their property. The Murterian Board needed all the official ownership documents to be able to register the construction of the elderly home officially. However, they could not register this piece of land, because it was not formerly claimed. Even though this piece of land obviously belonged to the school property, and it was just a matter of paperwork, the municipality denied the request to recognize it as such. So, on the municipality level (where the mayor is from the HSS) they intentionally blocked the whole effort to continue. Perhaps for a large part this was a question of politics, but in these kind of matters also individual collisions can have a large influence. Most likely there were cases of malpractice and 'friendship politics' involved in the decision of the municipality against the elderly home. Consequently, the whole case has been pending on the regional and even national courts for many years now. The first decision was in favor of the Murterian Board. Then the municipality filed a complaint. The second decision was in favor of the municipality, but in the end the Murterian Board found an irregularity of the judge who was leading the trial. So, the matter went to a higher court. Another decision came, in favor of the Murterian board. Eventually, there is one last possibility for another complaint and that would be the final decision. It has been predicted that the outcome would be most likely in favor of the Murterian board and the elderly home can finally be build. Now the question is: why were those five or six years of waiting at court necessary?

Simply, because of the political differences between the two sides within the municipality and the collisions of a few individuals.

In line with this, there is a group of people, who would like things to stay the way they are, especially if they themselves are benefiting from it. They have an interest in situations being unsolved and messy, because that way they can continue their practices. When there is a large grey area within the community that is not under any control, people can continue their dubious practices. In Murter the grey area provides space for the holding back of tourist taxes, by not registering all overnight stays. In general it can be subscribed to a lack or even a fear for community feeling and taking collective action. In Murter people live according to

the norm that you should avoid getting into conflict with others, because maybe one day in the future you will need their help. In addition, a small village such as Murter knows a high level of 'surveillance gaze'. This means that everybody is keeping an eye on everybody and is watching closely what the others do. If you have to live in such a highly controlled village, you do not want to do anything that could be perceived as against the local norms and values, because this could lead to your exclusion from the community. This social norm that is generally accepted by the local inhabitants of Murter brings a structural power imbalance over the development of the community. It is rather individually focused and constraints any collective benefits. Individuals benefit for example from not paying taxes over a certain number of their overnight guests, however, the community as a whole suffers from the insufficient budget of the tourism board. There is not enough money in the budget to improve the general appearance of the town or develop tourist services. As a consequence, the municipality cannot raise its level of quality and continues to attract low budget tourists. Overall, it is a certain group of people that can actually enjoy the benefits of this grey area, because they are in the position to ask for favors and they can influence others. Therefore, the continuous restructuring of the grey area can be considered another constraint to the development of the community.

### 5.1.5 Discussion & Conclusion

The implementation of the new constitution in 1990, brought opportunities for local independent units into the existing governmental structures. With the decision of creating their own municipality, the community of Murter posed resistance against Tisno, the leading municipality on the island since the French occupation. Murter especially felt the need to resist to the decisions that Tisno was taking for the division of the budget. They empowered their community, by making it possible to have their own budget and take their own decisions. However, they also brought some struggles and issues upon themselves that they did not know before. Therefore it is legitimate to ask if their independency brought them actually the power to stand on their own.

The separation from Tisno provided Murter with the self-governance they were longing for, but it has also enlarged the vulnerability of the community. Their search for independency has clearly created a double effect. On the one hand, the municipality has broken away from the rule of Tisno and gained own control over their local budget and development decisions. On the other hand, the bureaucratic structures of national politics have entered the municipality. The local government does not have the strength and capacity to survive, without the financial assistance of national government subsidies and political assistance from higher party representatives. Therefore, Murter has gained full self-governance and control over their development, but this form of independency is only relative when considering the remaining influences from the region and the state. As a result of these largely macro level influences, Murter is experiencing an increasing politicalization, which is resulting in the creation of space for corruption practices and nepotism. Many decisions and plans are made on a higher level than the municipality, creating a powerful government that holds the strings of the local municipal marionette. In principle, the local government administrators are obliged to follow the rules that are set out by their superiors from the party.

The comparison between the functioning of the tourism industries of Murter and Jezera has shown that being a self-governing municipality brings a mixture of advantages and disadvantage for tourism development. The advantage Murter was searching for, to have and decide on their own budget, has been accomplished. Though, the community has become more influenced by outside political forces, now that the layer of protection from Tisno has been withdrawn. They have become situated in the arena of higher level politics and they have to cope with the influences from above. It can therefore be questioned if they perhaps have become marionettes of the larger political play in certain ways, instead of gaining their independency.

In a way, the politicalization of Murter has been stimulated by the community splitting up from Tisno into a self-governing municipality. Continuously, this has strongly influenced and continues to influence the opportunities for key people to arise and develop. Though, it can be concluded that it is highly important to have some knowledgeable and skilled people, who are interested in the prosperity of the village, and to arrange that these key people can manage the community as a whole. They should not be constrained by political obstacles and they should be supported and assisted by the community as one unity. A politically friendly and opportunistic environment should be in place, for these people to succeed in their attempts. In addition, the individual personalities of certain key people clashes. This is something that cannot be avoided and takes place on most political levels. However, the influence of personal interests and ways of seeing should be minimized by the people themselves. Perhaps this is the most challenging aspect to change.

## **5.2 The Privatization of Marina Hramina**

### **5.2.1 Introduction**

The large scale self-governing enterprise Slanica, that developed in Murter during the socialist period and at the time comprised of all commercial units, like retailing, olive oil factory, etc., has slowly transformed into smaller private-owned elements. To get an impression of this privatization process I will give attention here to the lengthy and challenging proceedings of the privatization of Marina Hramina in Murter. Although it was one of the largest and best running units within the former enterprise during the socialist period, the marina went through a complicated time with many challenges, before now flourishing in operation again. The transition of Croatia's forms of governance and economy as well as the war made it difficult for the marina to remain active and keep up their business. It was mainly the loyalty of the staff members, that carried the marina through the rough times. Furthermore, with the arrival of private owners, new opportunities have arisen. Although the marina has regained its strength and has become a prosperous business again, it has lost touch with the community throughout the process of privatization. The inhabitants of Murter have differing opinions about the way the marina company has been privatized. I will conclude that, although the privatization has been mainly positive for the marina as a business, it has caused a growing divide between them and the community of Murter.

The goal of this case study is to evaluate the relation between a company, a local community and the state and to illustrate the balance of actual power and perceived power. This case will demonstrate how important perceived power is, that it brings a great influence, while in reality this power only exists in the eyes of others.

### **5.2.2 Historical Development**

Jordan (2000a) states that the trend for nautical tourism in Croatia grew stronger in the 1980s. He explains nautical tourism as 'sailing and yachting on the basis of many well developed marinas'. The naturally rich coast of the warm Adriatic Sea provided one of the most attractive spots for this type of tourism in Europe (ibid.). Following this trend, Murter was the fourth location in Croatia where a marina was developed. It was constructed out of a shipyard, where the traditional, local wooden boats were built and repaired. Although it is not really clear who initiated the construction of the marina, it was built to cater for the upcoming nautical tourists. Murter offered the perfect location for nautical tourism, because it is the main gateway to the National Park Kornati – 'the heaven for yachts'.

Marina Hramina started its operations in 1979. From the start, it was included in the state-owned company of Slanica, which was the biggest public company in Murter. As a 'self-governing' company, Slanica absorbed all fundamental tourism facilities in Murter, from the hotel and the marina to the small neighborhood supermarkets. As the largest company in Murter, Slanica enjoyed a monopoly position. Although there was a private sector of small family-run businesses present in Murter, the socialist system of public ownership enforced them with legal constraints and disadvantages, provided political protectionism and with that

eroded any sense of public good, to ensure the absence of individual accountability. (Jordan 2000a, Ateljevic & Čorak 2006)

The marina staff has explained to me that the main profit of the marina was derived from contracts with yacht owners, to keep and maintain their boats all year round. The first 20 annual contracts were signed in 1980, and a steady growth of about 30% each following year was witnessed. One of the main reasons behind this was the large interest of tourists in the visiting the National Park Kornati, an island group off the coast of Murter that offers great opportunities for nautical tourism. This continuous growth brought the management of the marina to set big aims for further development, to become a 'real' marina, like Zadar and Poreč. However, the mother company Slanica did not match those aims, since their business was focused on endurance rather than profit and growth. The marina felt like an 'outsider', because of their different ambition, and little by little started to separate from the mother company. In 1983 it was still part of Slanica, but it was seen as a special part. It became a real marina and it operated under the name of Marina Hramina. The marina attracted a charter fleet in 1982, which developed simultaneously with the marina. To expand their business, a big crane with 50 tons capacity was bought, to cater for larger yachts. The high expenses of this crane, however, forced the Marina to buy it with a leasing arrangement.

The high annual growth rate continued until the break out of the war, which interrupted all their business activities. Only small numbers of guests were visiting during those years and about one third of the contractors remained. The charter fleet of Adria-Yacht Club was moved to a location in northern Croatia, because that part of the country was perceived safer. Some younger, male staff members took part in the army and some found another job, but most of the employees stayed loyal to the company throughout the war. It was a very hard time, which caused some development constraints for the marina. Firstly, the marina was degrading, because its materials were becoming worn-out due to ageing. Secondly, living standards fell dramatically and sources of revenue were very sparse. In wintertime the marina did not receive enough income to pay the salaries of the employees. As one respondent stated:

*"The staff was very happy with the few guests that visited; that gave the local people support to survive."*

Another issue was the leasing payment of the crane the marina bought just before the breakout of the war. The issue was temporarily solved with a bank loan, but the bank was in a position to request a high interest rate.

After the war, the marina continued working with the same management system. However, it did not function anymore, due to the transformation from a socialist economy towards a market economy. Therefore, the old management system of the marina was not useful anymore. Another difficulty was formed by the debts the marina had collected during the war years. They had to pay off these debts first, before they could invest in renewal. It has been expressed that during the first years after the war the marina staff felt desolate and helpless. "We didn't know what to do, we had such high debts and we could not manage to get out of that. Everything was so different, we could not find a way to deal with it." They did not know how to cope with the changes and how to improve the marina's management. Their desperation came to an end when the marina became privatized. The actual year of privatization could not be traced, however from the estimations of several respondents, I come to conclude that it happened in the year 2000.

### 5.2.3 Maneuver in the Grey Area

During the socialist era, all local enterprises in and around a town were bundled together into one 'self-governing' company (Jordan 2000a); a corporate group with a monopoly position in the community. On the island of Murter there were mostly tourism companies, so their corporate groups were mainly focused towards the tourism industry. In Murter most

restaurants, the local marina, the hotel, the auto camp and even some larger accommodation enterprises belonged to this corporate group. This composition has been developed under the socialist system and although socialism has transformed, the trickle down process of transition takes a slower pace (Starč & Sumpor 2003). The state has implemented a democratic system and is pursuing a market-oriented economy; they stimulate privatization of the large corporate groups. However, in numerous small villages this development did not proceed that straightforwardly. Since the general economic context for these corporations did transform, they had to adapt to preserve their existence. In many communities the corporations went through a process of 'pseudo-privatization', transforming the company into a holding that is functioning with a limited number of shareholders. The Marina Hramina was also temporarily set in the form of a holding. The state had a share, but also the employees received a share in this company, dependent on their time of employment.

Although it seems like these holdings are merely a temporary solution caused by a slow pace in privatization, this business form does bring forth several advantages as a step in the process towards complete privatization. The biggest difference between the corporate groups of the socialist era and the holdings can be found in their general orientation. In socialist times these large scale enterprises were not focused on profit specifically, rather they concentrated on endurance. In this modern era the companies had to adapt to a more profit-oriented atmosphere. An advantage of having such a tourism holding can be found in stability. All separate units find a balance in joint-business. Nowadays these holdings should be seen as a form of public-private partnership. Disadvantageous is that one small unit can make a great profit, but this has to be shared over the enterprise as a whole. Therefore, growth perspectives and profit building remain limited.

At the time of the war any type of business was disadvantaging. The nautical tourism market heavily decreased in Croatia and surrounding territories, due to the casualties of war. Even in locations where there were no attacks, a general feeling of unsafety kept most of the tourists away. Also in Murter few tourists visited the marina during the war. Although some contracts for maintenance remained in use, the marina did not make sufficient income to pay for all the fixed costs. In wintertime the marina did not receive enough revenue to pay the salaries of the employees. Since many locals worked in the marina, living standards of many families in and around Murter fell dramatically with the loss of their source of income. Next to the salaries of employees, another main financial struggle for Hramina during the conflict period was the leasing contract for the crane they bought just before the breakout of the war. The marina took a bank loan to temporarily solve the issue, but the bank was in a position to request a high interest rate due to the uncertainties of the war.

The first years after the war, the marina was turned into a holding. As one of the first marinas in the country, situated in a strategic location near the Kornati National Park, the marina could be an interesting company for private owners to take over. Why did it appear so unattractive to be privatized in the first years after the war? Some interviewees pointed me to the enormous debts the marina had gotten during the war years. Additionally, the marina has been built on land that was won from the sea. The whole surface area on which the marina has been built, used to be sea. Since all the sea belongs to the state, also the grounds of the marina are. The only way to use this land is through a concession with the government. For these reasons the marina was not an attractive enterprise to buy.

In the new Millennium, the marina finally underwent the privatization process. It has been assumed that the marina formed a play ball in the political privatization game. The aftermath of the war strongly influenced this part of the process. The limited transparency and parliamentary control allowed for corruption and nepotism practices to occur (Grdešić 1999: 120). At the time of the holding, the state had decided that 40% of the marina should belong to them and the remaining 60% was owned by little shareholders. Each of the employees received such a share. The state sold its 40% of the shares to the interested private group, who further bought little shares until they reached an ownership status of 51%. Holding the

majority of the shares, they then decided that the company had too many problems, with its many debts, and should not be continued. The old marina company was frozen and the new private owners restarted the business from scratch as a private company. Although these kind of proceedings were not criminal acts, they were not socially equitable or morally correct (Ibid.).

Among the local inhabitants, opinions on this privatization process are divided. Many of them work or used to work for the marina and may have previously owned a share in the company. One interviewee explained:

*“In the minds of our people that firm was a collective property.”*

They lost their shares in the process of privatization. This provoked feelings of unfairness and inequality. Where some local community members accept what has happened and see the benefits of privatization happening in the marina, others cannot cope with the way this privatization has happened and they blame corruption and obscurity in their political system for the disconnection between the community and one of the most successful local enterprises. One interviewee claimed that:

*“The war was actually a complete excuse for some people to steal from others and to get the government and chief rights. Can you imagine that some companies were given away for 1 Kuna (about €0,14) and then the owners could buy the property for 1 Kuna as well?”*

Though much can be said about the privatization, it may not be completely fair to state that companies were sold for ‘just’ 1 Kuna, because many of them had high debts. According to the Croatian Privatization Fund (HPF), more than half of the companies in the privatization process had debts exceeding the total value of the company by 35 percent (HPF website March 2008). Therefore, the symbolic price of 1 Kuna actually means 1 Kuna plus about 123 million Kuna in debt; the companies are sold at the value of their debts. According to the HPF it is impossible to ask for more than the market value for a business which is actually on the verge of bankruptcy. The HPF has even stated to the public:

*“Can you sell it at the price of a new BMW? If you can, we offer you a job!”*  
(2<sup>nd</sup> newsletter HPF).

As the marina in Murter was established for reasons other than economic viability, it faced serious financial problems, including high debts and the inability to pay salaries. It is difficult to evaluate whether the sales price of the enterprise was reasonable or not, but the public mistrust among Murterians brings forth a generally negative opinion. This mistrust was strengthened by the 2002 the State Audit that reviewed the first 100 privatized companies, including Slanica in Murter, and concluded illegalities or irregularities in the privatization process of 80 of these companies. Although the newspaper article in the Nacional (29.05.2002) does not specify which companies were privatized in an obscure way, there is a relatively high chance that Slanica in Murter was one of them. The Marina Hramina company was in bankruptcy when it was purchased, but the exact procedures cannot be traced. The mistrust among local inhabitants of the community, could not be taken away. One of my interviewees told me that “everything may have seemed clean, but this is a political game “. As stated by Druzic and Gel (2006) ‘the public has considered the imposition of the privatization model as deeply iniquitous. It has enabled capital (ownership) which was, in fact, the past (invested) labor of present and former generations, to be passed into the hands of self-elected elite by the no economic criteria of political affiliation.’ The limited transparency and parliamentary control allowed for favoritism and shady deals to occur, without being visible at the time. Nowadays, with the war behind them, citizens are reorienting their attention to a new set of issues and priorities (Grdešić 1999: 123). Many people are now realizing that most of the privatization has already happened, while they had other concerns for survival. Much of this has been proven hard to trace, but in some

instances corruption practices have been revealed, like the case around Darko Ostoja, the 'greatest hotel magnate in Croatia' (Nacional 22.08.2005).

The marina Hramina was bought by business people from Zagreb in the year 2000. They also accomplished a 33 year lasting concession for the land from the state. Whether the privatization of the marina happened through forms of political corruption does not matter anymore. What is important is that the new owners brought resources to lift the financial basis and provided new opportunities to the enterprise. The marina staff expressed that advantages have been: new financial input, paying off debts (like the bank loan for the crane), opportunities for upgrading (like renewing old buildings and buying new equipments), but also regaining a share of the nautical tourism market, and promoting and marketing the marina so that they became able to compete again.

#### Box 2: Issues with Hotel Colentum

The only hotel in the village of Murter is Hotel Colentum, situated along the bay of Slanica. The hotel has been constructed in the 1970s, but it has not grown with the changing demands of its market over the years. The outside appearance is very unattractive and on the inside the rooms are relatively basic. It is open from April until the end of September and closed during the winter months. Although the hotel looks heavily degraded, apparently it still attracts enough tourists.

Formerly a part of the state-owned company Slanica, Hotel Colentum has been privatized around the year 2000, together with the other elements of Slanica. The hotel is now owned by three people from Zagreb and among the Murterians no one seems to know who they are. How the hotel came in their possession is also unclear to the people in Murter, however inhabitants have expressed thoughts of corruption. Corruption practices have been mentioned when talking about the privatization process, as well as related to the current hotel activities. These kind of thoughts are used to find an explanation for the obscure practices and to try to understand how these can happen.

The hotel has 98 rooms and provides employment to a large staff. However, the people who work at the hotel are mostly from the mainland. There is no communication between the hotel and the municipality, because their connections are situated on higher levels, so everything is decided and arranged through regional and state government representatives. This has provoked some conflicting situations with the local government. The municipality claims that the hotel is not taking proper care of the environment around the hotel. Issues that have been pushed forward include: need for cutting the grass behind the hotel and need for toilet facilities for beach guests. Concerning this last issue, the municipality placed container toilets along the beach to answer to the many complaints they received from tourists, but the hotel complained that the municipality was interfering on their property and took the case to court. These kind of circumstances are increasing the divide between the community and the Hotel Colentum.

The marina has (re)gained a certain level of connection with Murter with the arrival of its private owners. This is opposed to what happened with the Hotel Colentum (Box 2), because the hotel only knows an enlarging divide. The local inhabitants have expressed that after the privatization they have been unsatisfied, now that 'their' hotel and marina are in the hands of 'foreign' owners. One interviewee spoke of the *"dirty political game"* that has been played here. This has created a divide with the enterprises on the one hand and the community on the other. The enterprises had become excluded from the community. The marina, however, has been able to partially restore the community's trust and acceptance. Next to the input of new resources, the new owners of the marina were able to restore a connection with the community, through job provision, using local food for supply, and involvement in local issues and development planning. One of the interviewees from the marina management staff has expressed that she thinks the municipality is satisfied with the good connection with the marina, because they pay regularly quite large amounts of tourist tax from their overnight stays. She also explained that the marina can have the most influence on local development through its position in the Tourism Association.

#### 5.2.4 Discussion & Conclusion

The marina has gone through many struggles towards becoming privatized. During the war time their market diminished and the revenue was not enough to pay for the salaries of the employees and the debts from pre-war loans. The management and staff remained loyal to their company and tried to keep it functioning. After the war, the business firstly underwent

pseudo-privatization and was turned into a holding with shares for the state and employees of the marina. For a few years the company was rather unattractive for private owners, because it had such high debts and was in a complicated situation with state land ownership. It became a play ball in the political privatization game, but was eventually privatized. Although this privatization may not have occurred transparently and malpractices may have taken place in the process, in general the company gained resources with the arrival of the new private owners. The position of the marina as a competitive private enterprise has been strengthened and the company is now flourishing in business again.

The opinions of the local population of Murter on the present status of the marina are divided. On the one hand, the privatized marina is accepted and included in the community, because they are hiring local staff. The marina forms an important employer, according to one of the interviewees they have about 70-80 local people full time in their staff. This recreates the connection that existed between the marina and the community since it started operating in 1979. It brings opportunities for Murter in the form of stable jobs. Next to this, the marina has some involvement in municipal activities and is represented in the Tourism Association. The marina has expressed that they are interested in what is going on in community, but putting their own profit and progress first. They do not feel the need to put something in the community, without knowing for sure they would get better of it themselves too. In this way, they are strongly business oriented.

On the other hand, the marina is also excluded from the community. Locals mistrust the proceedings of privatization and many of them lost their share in the enterprise throughout the process. They are even more unsatisfied now that the marina is no longer part of 'their' community, now that it is in the hands of 'foreign' owners. The enterprise has lost its connection to the community, and in addition most of the revenue is flowing away from the community towards Zagreb. The only exception to this is formed by the tourism taxes for overnight stays, since they are collected by the local tourism board. As a typical island community, the Murterians pose resistance to any 'outsider' influence, which explains their resistance towards the 'foreign' ownership in the form of exclusion. This exclusion occurs mostly in the social sphere of the community, since the marina and the municipality are still connected on business level. In conclusion, the community of Murter has generally accepted the marina as a privatized company, but as a reaction to the transitional 'pains' of the privatization, Murterians do not see the enterprise as part of their community (and with that their common responsibility) anymore.

## **5.3 The Road between Two Beaches**

### **5.3.1 Introduction**

One of the most complicated disputes on the island of Murter is considered to evolve around landownership. Issues of fragmentation and unclearness about the legal ownership are some legacies from the past. Next to this, history is also reinforced within the social consciousness of people in rural areas. They are experiencing a revival of traditional culture. In this paragraph I will explore development decisions of landowners around one of the most important areas for tourism in Murter: the road that runs in between two beaches. Murter is in the possession of three beaches. One of these is located within the town itself, but the other two are situated on a more quiet side of the island, with a view to the islands of the National Park Kornati. The area in between these beaches was divided in small parcels, owned by local inhabitants. In history, the land itself was not valued highly by the local population, but throughout time it developed as one of the most attractive locations for tourism development. In this specific case land ownership and land value are more extended issues, because the land along the coast became more valuable for tourism development and the community felt like an invasion of foreigners took over their land and tourism income. How the locals feel, since they 'lost' an important resource of their tourism industry, strongly affected this sub-case study.

### 5.3.2 Historical Development

In Croatia's centuries-old inheritance system, the land became divided into small parcels, and a social organization of agriculture arose, in which several brothers shared ownership rights of the parcels and often worked it together to be able to make a living (Leutloff-Grandits 2003: 152). This previously socialist management of Croatia reformulated the legal title sphere of land ownership and with that encouraged the further fragmentation of agricultural land to almost insignificant proportions (Kušen 1994 in Leutloff-Grandits 2003). Formal land titles were still kept, however, the land registers were not updated during socialism (Verdery 1996). As a consequence, the rural landscape, and thus the landscape on the island of Murter, exists of fragmented pieces with highly unclear ownership patterns. Parcels have turned into meaningless shapes and forms, which make it impossible to provide an adequate source of livelihood for the local people (Kušen 1994 in Leutloff-Grandits 2003). The area along the east coast of Murter can clearly be seen as representative of these historical influences and it is interesting to take a closer look at its continuous development.

The land along the coast between Slanica and Cigrađa was mainly used for agricultural purposes. The parcels lay relatively distant from the village and were therefore not attractive for housing purposes. Land owners used their parcels mainly for fruit cultivation, vineyards and olive trees, which formed at that time their main source of livelihood. The first road in this area was a small dirt road along the coast line, created by the local people. To reach their piece of land many owners had to travel through some private plots of other owners. This issue was solved by the landowners themselves by means of permitting to use the edges of their land parcels as a road to pass through. The size of the dirt road was about 1,5 meters wide, designed for people on foot and donkeys with weight.

At a certain point in time, around the 1960s – 1970s, these agricultural activities became less interesting. Competition from similar products from countries like Tunisia and Morocco resulted in a decreasing market for Dalmatian products. At the same time, Murter started to receive its first tourists and it soon became clear that this was an interesting new industry for the community. Although locals did not see much value in the coastal lands along the dirt road, tourists were attracted by this ideal location: a peaceful natural surrounding and in between two beaches. Together with the growth of maritime mass tourism and the decreasing value of Dalmatian agricultural products, people who lived in rural areas of Croatian islands and the coast line started to neglect traditional agricultural producing, their land became increasingly invaluable and many of them started to sell their land to people from the mainland, who were interested in owning a plot along the Dalmatian coastline for the purpose of weekend house building (Petrić 2003). Although, these developments were translated by some of the land owners into the construction of the first houses along this coast, to be able to rent rooms to tourists, many of the local land owners did not have any knowledge of tourism. They started to sell their land parcels to tourists.

Around the same time that locals started selling their land parcels along the coast between the two beaches, a water company came to the neighborhood to build a water system in 1987. This company destroyed most of the dirt road in their action, and after placing the water system they were responsible for recreating the road. The water company decided to give an amount of money to the municipality for the reconstruction of the road. In the meantime, traffic conditions had changed and many of the land owners would like a wider and more solid road. They joined forces in a neighborhood association, which took the lead in collecting money from the land owners for the improvement of the road. Not all land owners wanted to pay for this and it was difficult to force them. The neighborhood association found a solution in an agreement with the water company: nobody could be connected to the water, unless they paid their contribution to the road improvements. This stimulated most of the land owners to participate. The first asphalt road could be build, thanks to the contribution of the landowners and the money the municipality received from the water company.

The development of pipeline water made the area even more attractive for people from the urban areas to buy a piece of land. To them, the combination of a peaceful natural surrounding along the coast, with the assets (running water, electricity) present to maintain an urban lifestyle, was ideal for holiday purposes. Since the land was invaluable in the eyes of the local people, urban people could buy it for relatively very attractive prices. For a while, the local people from Murter did not pay much attention to the area between the beaches. They may not have consciously noticed the start of numerous housing constructions or they may not have seen any danger in it. However, as tourism in their community developed and turned out to be a prosperous new industry, and the beaches appeared one of the main attractions, the attention was drawn back to the coastal area around Slanica and Cigrađa. The land regained its value rapidly, but now with a different purpose to mind. Local inhabitants of Murter had to see how land they previously owned became more valuable than it ever was. Outsiders were gaining income from tourism receipts on land that is part of their community.



*Figure 3: Slanica beach in the summer.*



*Figure 4: Houses in the street along the coast.*

There are 146 houses in the street, but only 10 houses are inhabited by Murterians. All the other houses are owned by people from outside, which are in the local tongue considered 'foreigners', national foreigners from the mainland and larger cities and international foreigners from mainly Austria, Germany, Hungary and Russia. The majority of the (seasonal) residents are people from Zagreb. It has been estimated that about 100 houses in the street are owned by people from the urban areas around the capital city.

### 5.3.3 Legality Issues and Foreign Invasion

Looking at the complex ownership patterns, three main issues arise: proof of ownership, entrance of new owners from outside the community, and the implementation of new regulations. In this paragraph, I will take a closer look at each of these issues.

One of the main issues concerning land ownership evolves around the ownership license. Most of the land parcels on the islands of Murter and Kornati archipelago have been acquired by local families about two generations ago. At that time, gaining land ownership was a matter of spoken agreements, often finalized with a handshake. Nowadays, it is needed to have an ownership license and to be registered in the cadastre to be able to legally prove that a parcel is actually your land. Due to the historical inheritance system and the reluctance to keep official track of this system during the socialist period, many people are not exactly sure about the measures of their parcel and it is even often doubted who the owner is (box 3).

Box 3: Private land parcels for the elementary school

The property on which the first elementary school of Murter and Betina has been constructed, was obtained from pieces of land of about 100 different owners. It was a joint action of the community, in which the owners gave their piece of land for the use of the school. Most of these owners happily agreed in the use of their land for a school, to others it may not have been the purpose they intended for that land and they have restrained from an agreement.

There is no official documentation of the agreement between the landowners and the community for the construction of a school on their property. This has caused some issues in these modern times, where ownership is only officially legitimized with the right ownership papers. Now many former owners of the land parcels have discovered the power they have over the municipality, because this agreement has not been documented. Some owners now claim that they never intended their land parcel to be used for the elementary school and they have taken their cases to court. They start to claim their land back, or request a financial compensation. The municipality already had to pay some of them large amounts of money.

Next to that, it is in many cases also not documented who the owner of a piece of land is. They have no official ownership license. As a consequence, one piece of land may have ten people who claim to own it. Also these cases are taken to court, creating a very complicated power game between the different landowners and between the owners and the local government, which can often only be solved by a court decision.

One interviewee explained:

*“On a little piece of land you can have 16 people, who claim they are the owner and maybe 12 of them are dead, one of them is in Scotland and one of them is in Australia. Then you will have a big problem.”*

In many cases, it has been proven difficult to find out who is the rightful owner. This is not only because so many people claim the land as theirs, but additionally the last owner on paper (from before the socialist times) has often passed away, some claimers have died and some claimers have moved abroad. That makes it very challenging to trace all these people back to include them in a court case. Additionally, since ownership has not been registered during the socialist period, as an interviewee explained:

*“Some people come and start to build property on something that may not be theirs. It may be my property, but if I do not have the ownership papers, then I have a very big problem to prove that the land is actually mine.”*

One of his family members is in court with such a case. He also said:

*“If you buy property here, you have to be very careful. Sometimes the people may sell it twice or even three times!”*

Land parcels are not only highly fragmented, but also extremely spread over a large area. A few generations ago, some owners had to travel a few kilometers in between, especially at the time of harvesting, to pick their olives or grapes from all their parcels. With agriculture becoming a less important industry, many parcels have been neglected by their owners for years. Since their location has only been orally passed on to the new generations, it is becoming a shot in the air for many owners to determine the boundaries and find the exact plot that should be legitimately theirs. This has created a very complicated situation, where the court is sometimes the only body that can take a final decision in solving the many disputes that have arisen between neighboring owners.

Clearly, as the Spatial and Land Use Plan of the area along the coast visualize (see appendix 1 and 2), the road in between the beaches is highly fragmented into long, small parcels. People have bought, or tried to buy, parcels that lay around their own parcel, to gain a larger surface and make the land more valuable and useful for constructions. This is not going without a battle. The unclearness about size and location of some parcels has provoked disputes between people that claim to be the owner. It has become very difficult to prove which piece of land belongs to who and many conflicts are arising between families

and among families. Many times people or families are trying to get rights over a piece of land that may not even be theirs. They may not be aware of this, because they only vaguely remember what parcel their grandfather left them, or they may very well be aware of this, since some people try to use this unclear situation to gain from it. It are especially parcels that are situated in areas where building is permitted (through the spatial plan of the municipality) that the land is often fought over. This land has become very valuable with the development of tourism; many local people see opportunities in constructing new houses with tourist apartments.

A second issue around land ownership is provoked by the entrance of new owners from outside the community. The mainland (largely city-)people came new into the street throughout the last 10 to 15 years by buying apartments or parcels of land to construct the houses themselves. They have no sense of community feeling, because they do not feel attached to this area that to them is merely a holiday destination or a place to be able to retreat. This has resulted, for example, in their resistance towards paying any community taxes, because they do not permanently live there and see it only as a second home.

The local people of Murter on the other hand, experience these outsiders, locally termed 'foreigners', as invaders in their community. The strongly protective community environment, strengthened by influences of being an island culture, see everyone from the mainland as 'outsiders'. In the eyes of the community, these outsiders represent the privileged elite that has used predatory tactics to gain power over the back of the common people. As one interviewee described the 'outsiders':

*"First they steal money from people by not paying local taxes and building without a permit, and secondly they don't pay the tourist tax over their overnight guests. By not paying our institutions, they hold back improvements these institutions could have made in our village."*

Another interviewee complained:

*"Those 'foreigners' are taking away all the tourists that come to visit Murter and Kornati, by renting them rooms and organizing their own boat trips for their guests."*

The locals expect these outsiders to form a threat to the community and its sources of livelihood and they feel the need to protect themselves. As a local told me:

*"We do not want any 'foreigners' buying our property anymore, because they construct buildings too quickly. There is no infrastructure, they are only building. In my street they are constructing 6 new houses for apartments again."*

The Murter society felt the need to build up a local defense mechanism, but they have a strong sense of powerlessness, feeling caught in the complex web of (corrupt) power structures. They have to adopt to the national transitions, while they lack sense of self-responsibility, mistrust anything coming from the state, and experience numerous difficulties with the development of their community. This frustrating situation has led many local inhabitants to feel powerless, refraining from any action out of the ordinary and resulting in a general state of awaiting. In a way, the local people become jealous of anyone who does accomplish something in their community, whether it is an outsider or a local with a different mindset. As a consequence, they respond by claiming that person is corrupt. How else would it be possible to accomplish something that they feel is not in their power to reach?

It is true that many landowners have constructed their houses in the past without building permission, on land that may not yet have been completely legally theirs. The main reason mentioned are the high prices for these pieces of paper. One interviewee explained:

*“Costs for the permission of building one house, for example, can run up to €10.000.”*

Since the general control was rather weak, or in many cases not even present, numerous sites of illegal construction have not been prosecuted or stopped. It is a form of illegality to ignore the rules of law, but in most cases there was no use of bribing or other forms of actual corruption. It is more a game played within the grey area of local politics. Therefore, the arguments of corruption from the locals are often just a reason to understand how some people (mainly outsiders) can reach prosperity, while the majority of them cannot. An interviewee asked me:

*“How else is it possible for those ‘foreigners’ to come here, buy land, make a construction and earn a lot of money from tourism? They must have connections with people in Zagreb.”*

Another interviewee told me about a house that is being constructed in an official non-building zone:

*“If they give some bureaucrat some money, probably that will be possible. Nobody from the local level, but from Zagreb, they know how to do that.”*

Local people cannot be blamed for this mindset; it is a consequence of their socialist past and the repression of the war years. However, it is only in their own power to take charge of their lives and learn to act self-responsibly. A few locals have developed more independently as a result of their individual character or opportunities that presented on their way, but the majority is yet to follow. One of these locals with a success story told me:

*“People are friends from everybody here, but people are also jealous. If you do things differently and you succeed, you become the enemy in the eyes of the others.”*

These few locals now consequentially end up at the edges of society. They feel excluded from their own community.

More recently, a new issue has developed around the implementation of a new law system. In this system new regulations put stronger restrictions on the construction of houses, together with better control and stricter measures. Some of these regulations involve that the houses have to be built minimal 70 meters from the sea, there has to be 6 meters in between the constructions, a parcel has to consist of a minimum of 40 square meters to be able to build a house and then only 50% of the plot can be constructed. The first line of houses along the road is built mostly within 70 meters from the sea and many houses have less than 6 meters in between. This cannot be changed anymore, but these new regulations will make sure it is less likely to happen again in the future.

#### 5.3.4 Discussion & Conclusion

Land ownership is an important issue that has arisen with the processes of transition. In socialist times land had no specific value and ownership has not been registered. This has caused unclearness and conflicting situations in the period of transition, where land has become a valuable asset again. All over Croatia, the land parcels are highly fragmented and boundaries are often unclear or unknown. In many cases there are several people claiming to own the same piece of land and only a court can bring a solution to the quarreling families.

Approaching this issue of land ownership at a specific location in Murter, it becomes clear that the debate is more extensive than arguments of ownership alone. The land has lost its traditional value for agriculture over time, however it has gained a new value for tourism development. Two streams of power relations can be distinguished: between the locals and the ‘foreigners’ and between the local municipality and the higher state institutions.

The first power play occurs between local people and outsiders that have entered the community. Many local people have sold their land along the coast to elite from the mainland and even to people from other countries. These newcomers were interested in owning some of that and, because they saw great potential for tourism development and they built themselves a holiday home. The Murterians did not see the value of the land until it was already mostly in the hands of outsiders. Now they have to witness how those 'others', those 'foreigners' are enjoying the location and even earn money in tourism by renting their apartments. In search for a reason, an argument, why those outsiders are succeeding in developing tourism and making money off property that belongs to 'their' community, while they are going through many misfortunes and have several issues on their path to improve and develop tourism, local people point towards illegal resources and actions. They claim that the outsiders are using corruption practices to accomplish things they believe they are not capable of themselves. This is a way for local people to explain their own feeling of powerlessness and to blame others for causing or at least strengthening this inability. Of course there are some dubious actions and shady deals happening, but they are passing through the largely grey area in the local economy and are strengthened and supported by the informal networks.

The second conflict of power happens between the municipality and higher level state institutions (regional and national). The influence of the municipality on tourism development is constrained and minimized by the power the regional government and state institutions to affect events and persons in the community. The municipality is attempting to cope with these macro influences, by establishing and maintaining close contact with the higher level institutions. In line with this, people in Murter have the attitude to maintain good contact with the network they have, because this could be important for them to accomplish something or get something done. It is very common in Murter to avoid getting into conflict with someone by demanding something. People rather choose not to go into conflict with somebody, because everybody would like to keep the situation as it is now and because there is always somebody asking for a favor or something. They all want to remain friendly towards one another, because who knows that next time you might need a favor from that person in the future. This way, they preserve the importance of informal social networks.

## **5.4 Hegemony and Individual Resistance**

### **5.4.1 Introduction**

Veijola & Valtonen (2007) consider the notion of gender as institutionalized performances; standardizing values that are attributed to gender relations. They argue that standardized performances of femininity often place restrictions on individual women, because reproduction of dominant gender relations results in the expectation of a certain behavior. As concluded by Ateljevic & Corak (2003), critical issues of gender, ethnicity and family relations as sources of power structures and dominant ideologies remain to be fully explored in the Balkan region. With the collapse of communism, a new world seemed to open for the people in Central Eastern Europe, however, the possibilities presented and the costs extracted have been experienced differently by men and women (Gal & Kligman 2000:3). Contributing to this exploration, I have analyzed the specific case of a Murter woman, who has found the strength to pose resistance to inherent socio-cultural structures of the community. With this sub-case study I aim to show the relations of power between society and the individual, approaching gender structures as one basis of this relation.

### **5.4.2 Hegemonic Gender Relations**

Within the society of Murter traditional culture has been revived through socialism and the war, while on the other hand influences of modernization and Europeanization are slowly finding their way into the local society. Both streams of influences have an impact on the local norms and values, however, gender relations are mostly informed by the traditional positioning.

## Traditionalization

Historically, the local (and even regional) culture of Murter is embraced with patriarchal structures that strongly affect norms and values. Patriarchy shapes individuals on the basis of their gender in certain ways (Veijola & Valtonen 2007). One of the ways in which this is strongly expressed is through a strong machismo appearance, similar to the Italian macho culture (Ateljevic & Hall 2007), which the Dalmatian region has likely inherited from their past connections with the Venetian empire. This patriarchal-based culture is reinforced through the processes of transition. First of all, the war to peace transformation has reinforced the masculinity in society and reproduced values of patriarchy. Secondly, the change from socialist system to democratic politics and an open economy led to drastic reduction of jobs and social measures for women, creating gender inequalities. Thirdly, these reproduced cultural differences between the tasks for men and women strongly influenced the development of the tourism industry. I will further explain each of these influences.

Patriarchal gender structures have deepened with nationalism (Ateljevic & Hall 2007). During the communist times, when Croatia knew a centrally planned economy, women were ideologically considered equal to their male counterparts and that led into a range of measures that were aimed at retaining women in employment (Ferge 1997, Vojinić 2006, Nestić 2007). These measures, though, did not necessarily include equal treatment in the labor market, since women were the main caretakers of their households, and they were constrained from committing themselves fully to their jobs and careers (Vojinić 2006). Also, women tended to be employed in service sector jobs. Although socialism claimed to promote equity between gender and classes, the historically complex divide of gender and ethnicity was strengthened by the mistrust of people in the socialist state and their increasing dependency on family relations. The patriarchal gender structures only grew stronger with the state of war, because the ethnic conflicts encouraged the creation and maintenance of sharp boundaries between the ethnic groups and modified social roles, including gendered family roles, as a safety mechanism to deal with the threats (Coser in Kunovic & Deitelbaum 2004). Where machismo was more of a sentiment among people during socialism, the war provoked the 'very real endangering of men' (Ateljevic & Hall 2007), strengthening their macho position. This encouraged a revival of traditional values. One female interviewee explained:

*"During war-time the men from our community fought to protect us. They are our heroes."*

Another interviewee explained how soldiers were able to get things done, how they took care of the women.

*"My uncle was the only one who could get my sister from Murter to the hospital in Sibenik when she was in labor. He was a soldier and he took care of her. None of us could get off of the island. He was the only one that could cross the lines of the army and protect her from the enemy."*

The collapse of the socialist system led to a widespread restructuring of management and organization of the labor market. Many enterprises were privatized and they started to drastically reduce their number of employees and ceased social measures for women (Meatcalfe & Afanassieva 2005). A decreasing in job opportunities in general, together with the war-related revival of traditional gender values, placed women back in the position of family caretaker. This reinforced the ideology of viewing women as wives and mothers (Hall 2001). One woman stated about the women in Murter:

*"They are still housewives, working somewhere or not, they are still housewives. They are doing many things while their husbands are in the centre or watching TV or drinking something with their friends. And they will continue to live like that...they know that maybe this is not the best for them, but they won't stop it."*

She further explained why these women do not try to change:

*“They are not so educated, they are not so self-confident and they do not have so many opportunities. To live alone you need money, you need to have a job and you need to be everything to the children.”*

These traditional values for women are typical for most rural communities in Dalmatia, but also rural communities on the continental part show similar characteristics.

Continuously, these traditional performances are being reproduced in the local tourism industry (Ibid.), where there are distinct roles for men and women. ‘The so-called modalities of feminine mobility in a typical women’s situation in patriarchy are maintained by tourism work at large’ (Veijola & Valtonen 2007). In Murter many families rent apartments to tourists and it is the woman that takes care of the renting, cleaning and cooking for the guests, while the men usually have a job outside of the home. The woman takes on the apartment rental job next to her work in the house and for the family. It is seen as an addition to her house duties. Continuously, if women work outside of the house in the tourism sector, they mostly occupy the so-called ‘women’s work’ positions, like waitress and room attendants, or lower level managerial jobs, like head housekeeping. In her research on the position of women in managerial positions in tourism in Croatia, Holjevic (2006) has shown that women are more frequently employed as the managers of administrative departments, while all positions of hotel manager were exclusively filled by men.

### **Modernization**

Next to this traditionalization, there is also a movement to be distinguished towards change in the local society of Murter. Informed by larger outside influences, like tourism, media and the approaching of the EU, societies in Croatia are opening up to changes towards modernization and Europeanization. These phenomena introduce different sets of norms and values that collide with some of the traditional rules and create a continuous reevaluation of these rules. Both modernization and Europeanization are global tendencies that have entered the Croatian society since the end of the socialist period and have gained in strength after the war.

These larger influences have a stronger impact on life in the cities (like Zagreb), while the trickle down effect towards smaller rural communities (like Murter) takes a bit more time. One interviewee explained that there are already great differences between Zagreb and a smaller city like Sibenik, because in Zagreb the percentage of women working, having the right to talk or having some other source of power, is much more emphasized. In general it can be said that, the smaller the community, the smaller the changes towards modernization of gender relations. Though, even in Murter there are small changes noticeable, for example many young women have a job outside their house and some of them even work outside the community in a larger city, like Sibenik. One woman explained that she and her husband both have a full time job, but in the winter her husband has less work.

*“In the winter it is easier, because my husband only works in the morning and he is home the whole afternoon with our son.”*

This is a change in the gendered task division, because there is now space for the man to take care of the children. To highlight some other changes, one interviewee said:

*“I think that women can do everything. Someone just thinks that we cannot. When there are things to be done in the house, that are jobs for the men. But I can also do that, I know I can do it. I want to learn, because I have to beg my husband or someone for it and wait for hours or days until it is done. Sometimes it is something very simple and I know I can do it.”*

In the society of a small community like Murter, I can distinguish between the majority of women that remains within the traditional patterns, a relatively large group of especially younger women that search for change within the boundaries of their society, and a small group of 'forerunners' that tries to break through the structures and aims to open new doors for the position and opportunities for women. This last group of people has decided to stand up to the normative masculine expectations of society in Murter. They feel constrained by the unwritten rules that are prescribed by traditional values and therefore they feel the need to break through these. For people from the older generations it is more difficult to accept change. As one young interviewee said:

*"Adults are formed as they are; it is hard for them to change".*

In line with this thought, some interviewees spoke about the perspectives of their parents on gender relations. One interviewee explained about her mother:

*"She is a little old-fashioned and she thinks men have to behave manly."*

Another interviewee spoke of her father:

*"He thinks that a woman has to be a good for her kids and her husband, to be at home. And the man...that is his opinion...the man can do what he wants, he can move around and have more than one woman if he wants...it is normal for him, because he told me that it is also like that in the animal life, that the male animals have more wives than one."*

They refer to the macho behavior of men. However, the majority of women in Murter lives somewhere in the middle of these two extremes. They accept the traditional norms and values, but open up to small changes. One woman told me that:

*"Women in Murter are emancipating; they don't listen to their husband always".*

She noticed that there was a change in the attitude of women towards their husbands. They take a more independent position in their marriage and get a job outside of their home. On the other hand they are constrained by fear. In one interview a woman explained how there are many unhappy marriages in small rural communities, like Murter, but the women are not so educated and do not have much self-confidence to break the marriage and stand on their own.

A small group of women in Murter chose a different path in their lives. Those few 'forerunners' reject the hegemonic ideal image by arranging their lives differently than how it is expected by their society. They are the first to open new doors and allow a different lifestyle to be revealed. In general these women have strong characters and are influenced by the environments in which they lived throughout their youth. One interviewee told me:

*"There are a few persons (women) in Murter who are different than the others. Most of them graduated from some higher education, they have lived in bigger cities like Zadar, Zagreb, Split, and then they came back. I am pretty sure that being outside of our small town and seeing other perspectives changed these people towards being different".*

#### 5.4.3 The Case of Individual Resistance

Zeljana was born as the daughter of a local fisherman and a local housewife. She grew up as a local Murterian. Though, early in her life she noticed that she was a little bit different from most of the other people in Murter. Already as a child she noticed that she had different thoughts and opinions than other children from her age group. As she described herself:

*"I always had something like stubbornness and I wanted to do things that might not be good for me."*

The decisions she made in the first part of her life were not so different from the norms of Murterian society. She explained that she was always trying to balance between what her parents would want for her and what she thought was good for her herself. It was expected from her to get married, to have children and to have a family. These expectations came from society and were enforced by her parents. She describes her father as “a really strong person” that made a “harsh impact” on her life. When she thinks about her childhood, she mostly remembers her father:

*“I was always proud of my father and I thought he was the cleverest man in the world”.*

She saw her father as her role model and took his opinions as her own. She lived her life to make him proud of her. Her mother stayed more in the background:

*“I remember my mother, she was always somewhere near, but what I have learned in life and formed my character is what I learned from my father”.*

Throughout her youth, Zeljana put all her effort in living up to her father’s expectations and it was not until the end of her twenties that she stopped to take a look at her life. She described this moment as that she “grew a little bit” and she realized that her father’s perspective of life was not what she thought and wanted herself.

Zeljana strongly felt that there was a generation gap between her and her parents.

*“It is normal, generations are changing, for my children too.”*

At this turning point in her life, Zeljana discovered that she had her own strong margins and values, differently from her father, because she was living in a different time. She struggled for a while, because she was unhappy, but she also did not want to disappoint her father. She made many decisions to do things a little bit differently than socially expected, but always leveling with the expectations of her parents. However, she was not happy with the life she had chosen so far and she had to follow her instincts. So, when she looked behind at what she accomplished, something snapped and she decided to change everything.

*“It was not an easy decision, but it was the only thing I could do.”*

Directly after her graduation, Zeljana managed to become selected as director of the Tourism Board of Murter. This was a very special development in her life, because first of all she was just recently graduated and it was quite a privilege to entitle such an important position within the municipality, and secondly she is a woman and it was not very common for women to be accepted for higher positions in governments. When Zeljana made some drastic changes in her personal life, she did not expect these to influence her job. She tried her best to keep things separated, but when your head is filled with private issues you do not have your full concentration. She was able to keep her position because her boss understood her situation and allowed her some time to recover. However, she could not escape from the ‘surveillance gaze’ within the community. People noticed her behavior, knew about her private situation and reflected this on her professional life. They disapproved for her to be in that position in the Tourism Board, because she could not perform well under these circumstances. Perhaps it was partially due to her minimizing performance at the time, but next to that it also concerned a relatively important position within the community government and there were many people who would have liked to take over from her. People in the community made use of the gender values to form arguments. They claimed that as a woman her personal life would influence her job. Perhaps if she would have been a man, the community would not have linked her private situation so much to her professional life. One interviewee stated:

*“The last year and a half Zeljana has had private problems, which affected her business, her professional life.”*

After Zeljana made the choice to change her life, she has encountered resistance from the community in which he lives. She does not represent or ‘embody’ the ideal Murter inhabitant, so she was ‘excluded’ from the community.

*“People in Murter they all go to the church, catholic church. Maybe they don’t live by those rules, but they all go to the church and they all live in the marriages like that, doesn’t matter how they are. And when somebody changes that, if something, it may be primitive, but they think maybe we should all punish that girl, then maybe nobody else will do that.”*

This was more difficult to live with than Zeljana expected. She thought that she was strong enough on her own and that she did not need the approval of others, but:

*“You are not so strong as you would like to be, because you feel alone and there is nobody that can say that it will be ok”.*

While she was watched and judged by the whole community, it was partially her job that gave Zeljana the strength to continue to follow her decisions and live on her own:

*“Not many women decide to choose for that, because...for this situation here, I earn a good money and it is even hard for me. So think about how it would be for a woman with less money or even if she doesn’t work, so she cannot...”*

In an interview Zeljana revealed her character. The first word that came to her mind was ‘brave’. Zeljana feels like she is a very strong person that constantly finds challenges for herself and her surrounding. She relates this to her stubbornness:

*“Sometimes I do things in my life only because I am stubborn. If a person tells me you cannot do that, that is not good for you, then I will do it.”*

She does not think far ahead and she lets her feelings and emotions lead her. She is the kind of person that acts in the moment. When she decided to radically change her life, she divorced from her husband, but she also moved into an apartment on her own with her two daughters. She explained to me how in the local culture you ought to move back to with your parents when you divorce. The community expects that a woman when she divorces, moves back to her parents’ house. However, this is not what Zeljana wanted to choose, because she highly valued her freedom. At first she wanted to rent an apartment in the community, but those apartments are owned by locals and are usually situated on one of the floors in their house. She explained to me that if she would have rented something with one of the locals, those people would have felt pressure from the society. They would be judged for offering a home to Zeljana, while they should send her back to her parents. Zeljana did not want to bring this social pressure to any family in the community and therefore she decided to buy an apartment from a Hungarian developer, who bought a piece of land in Murter and constructed holiday apartments to sell to tourists. Although Zeljana accomplished to not get any of her community members involved in her personal struggles, it also did not bring her any benefits or soothing circumstances. She only received rejection from the community, because every choice she made, is against the norms of local society.

*“There was a time when I felt like the garbage to many people. But now I feel that a lot of people respect me, because they all thought I could not manage. It was a mission for me, but it did not brake me, because it made me even stronger. I can see and hear from other people that they have respect for that.”*

The struggles of her personal life strongly affected Zeljana in her job. Throughout the communist period it was promoted that women would work outside the house; it was even enforced that they would have a job (Ferge 1997, Vojinić 2006, Nestić 2007). During the transition many companies reduced their number of employees, resulting in a shrinking employment market (Hall 2001). It has become more challenging for Croatians to find a job, both for men and women and in all age categories (Meatcalfe & Afanassieva 2005). Though, in general, it has been expressed that it is easier for men to enter a certain 'higher' position than for a woman. Director of a Tourism Board is a highly valued position within a municipality. Therefore, Zeljana has been lucky that she got the opportunity only shortly after graduating for her tourism degree. Many people within the community envy her for this and they have watched her very carefully over the years. Already becoming a mother had an effect on her work:

*"You can never be 100% for the job, because you sit there, but part of your mind drifts off to your children, especially when they are small. I think people without children can be more dedicated to their work and projects."*

When she decided to make some radical changes in her personal life, this influenced her in her job even more.

*"At the moment I realized I was not satisfied with my life, I was even unsatisfied with my job."*

She realized however, that she needed this job. Without a stable income she could not go through the other changes in her life. As concluded by Vojinić (2006), women with higher education are more willing to work, rather than to choose not to work, because for them the opportunity cost of not working is higher. For Zeljana this need to work was even stronger, because she had to take care of herself and two children.

Zeljana could not hide her struggling from her surrounding. The community was already keeping an eye on her and now that her personal life was in disorder, they watched her even more carefully. As one interviewee said:

*"The director of the tourism board used to support our organization, but the last years she has had some private problems that affected her business, her professional life".*

In a small rural community such as Murter, where all people know each other, professional life and private life are not strictly separated. Many times these two will be influenced by the other. Perhaps as a consequence of her disordered personal life, many inhabitants of Murter have judged Zeljana for not doing her job correctly. As one interviewee clarified:

*"Zeljana is a professional. She is paid to do the best, but she doesn't do it. I am not satisfied with her."*

Although her personal life may have strongly affected her professional life for a while, when Zeljana made some drastic changes to her circumstances, this has not been the only constraint she had to deal with. The inhabitants of Murter have related every mistake she made to her personal problems. However, in a position like tourism board director, Zeljana also has to cope with political influences from the municipality and the regional and national tourism boards. Within the municipality, she is sometimes pushed and sometimes constrained by community members that have political power or are acquainted with powerful networks. Although on the one hand Zeljana stated that *"nobody has influence on tourism development in Murter"*, her explanation of the different positions says otherwise. Zeljana explained that in her profession she is under pressure of the local Tourism Association. In this association there are representatives of the private sector, the

municipality and the region. It is this group of (9) people that has a say in the yearly plan of the Tourism Board.

*“I make a plan for the year, but they decide if it needs to be changed or adapted.”*

If during the year a situation occurs (for example a new event that needs to be promoted) that asks for changes in the plan, Zeljana has to inform the council and agree together on what to do. The municipality can have a little bit more influence on tourism development. They have a say in the Tourism Association through two local government representatives. They can also stimulate the continuation of certain development projects, mainly through the connection they have with the regional and state government institutions. Zeljana explained there are two parallel lines to consider: one is the local-regional-national government and the other is considered Para-government, formed by the local-regional-national Tourism Board. As a local tourism board Zeljana and her co-workers have their own budget and, in consultation with the Tourism Association, they can take their own decisions around this budget. They have to report to the regional and national Tourism Board, but there is no explanation or justification needed. On the other hand, the local tourism board has relatively little budget for larger scale tourism development projects. These projects have to be financed by the local government (municipality). In this way, through the projects, the government institutions can have a relatively large influence on tourism development. Additionally, the government creates and maintains the laws and regulations that the local Tourism Board has to follow.

#### 5.4.4 Discussion & Conclusion

As concluded by Metcalfe and Afanassieva (2005) the processes of transition have provoked remasculinization of the public and private spheres of society in Croatia. This has created gendered hierarchies and gendered power relations. Murter has experienced a revival of traditional culture, strengthened by the socialist past that eroded the sense of individual responsibility and with the dangers of the war period. Therefore, the decisions that Zeljana made, to divorce and buy a private apartment, are not accepted by the local society. Zeljana has appalled her community members, because she has taken decisions in her life that run against the traditional norms of local society. She experienced strong rejection and even resistance to her actions from the locals. ‘Changed social conditions may cause a shock in areas where individual initiative is not valued, or where collective spirit prevails and which relies on rich resources, constant help and economic or political assistance’ (Horvat 1999). The community is not used to an individual person going so strongly against the rules of their society and they are especially shocked that it is done by a woman. They cannot adapt to these radical differences, but perhaps they are a start in introducing different ideas and understanding that these do not have to be rejected so strongly. Perhaps it will provoke a gentle change from the traditional values towards a more modern mentality.

With the revival of traditional standards, the fact that women have a job seems quite controversial. Women having a more ‘highly’ valued job is even more debatable. Zeljana has been able to capture a relatively high position in the municipality. This has placed her in a vulnerable position, with the community watching her closely. Small communities like Murter know an intense ‘surveillance gaze’, meaning the community members keep an eye on each other and any action that does not fit within the norms and values of the community culture is judged immediately. Throughout her career Zeljana has been judged on every action she undertook, whether in her professional life or her private life. These lives are intertwined in the minds of people in such a small, rural community. They see private and professional life as one. Especially of women, because women are seen as more emotional people. On the other hand, Zeljana is situated in a position that is informed by personal and political forces that surround her. For example, she cannot take any decisions for the Tourism Board without the support of the Tourism Association. In many situations personal interests lead people to certain actions or individual personalities clash, creating uncomfortable work situations. However, this is not often visible for the community, because they see Zeljana as the

representation for actions and decisions of the Tourism Board. This way, she is accounted for the actions that might have been strongly influenced or even enforced by others.

This 'surveillance gaze', the mistrust in unfamiliarities, the situations of malpractice and corruption in politics and the traditional gender relations have been reinforced by the transition the country is undergoing. Traditional values of the island society are reevaluated and regain importance in response to the influences of outside forces throughout history. The individual character of some people within the community, together with a certain level of knowledge, bring them to differentiate themselves. Though diversifying oneself from a society that is based on mostly traditional norms and values and where people are watching one another closely can be challenging. Therefore, it is mostly individuals that have access to certain resources that can maintain such a position. Zeljana has the strength and knowledge to be an independent woman, but it has helped her that she has sufficient income to take care of her family on her own and that certain key people within the government understand her situation and have allowed her the space for her personal development process.

In general I can conclude that, despite these forerunning women taking the lead towards changing the traditional norms and values of the society in Murter, it largely remains informed by the patriarchal machismo culture. Being a man is a source of power in this societal structure and movements towards change approach very slowly. The experiences of women who have taken the lead in a different lifestyle show that it has not been easy. They have often felt misunderstood and isolated from the community. It is still difficult to be appreciated on the same level as a man. A Murterian woman with a doctoral degree, who has accomplished many things in her life, received as a compliment from a man in Murter:

*"Imagine where you could have been if you were a man".*

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## 6. Conclusions

This thesis has examined how processes of transition that Croatia is undergoing since 1996 strongly influence power relations that flourish in tourism development on community level. I identified 6 transitional issues: the privatization process, the grey economy, political corruption, independency, land ownership and gender relations, and I analyzed these 6 transitional 'pains' within the local context of Murter, an island village on the Adriatic coast of Croatia. I aimed at disentangling contemporary relations of power and the influences of the transition processes on the local level, by in depth examination of four distinct case studies. In doing so this paper also contributes to the emerging body of knowledge concerning the influence of power relations in tourism development. It has taken power-in-tourism research one step further towards exploring social-cultural notions, exposing the complexity of multiple realities and revealing entangled capacities of individuals and collectives.

### 6.1 Mediating Relations of Power: Tradition versus Modernity

There is a triangular relationship between the processes of transition, power relations and tourism development. The specific qualities of the transition that have embraced society and development in Croatia since the end of their communist system have induced 6 transitional 'pains'. Examples of these qualities are Croatia's moving from war situation to peace situation, from collectivism towards individualism, from a centralized system towards a decentralized system, a socialist economy towards an open market-economy, and the increasing value of privatization. However, these movements do not always occur fluently and steadily; often they provoke opposing values and clashing interests, resulting in a non-linearly process. These transitional 'pains' have consequently influenced the structural relations between people within the complex realities of local societies and have challenged power balances. In this thesis I have considered power to be a capacity that is created by relations among people (and between people and things). Approaching power as a relational capacity, an effect that is mediated and that can be influenced by certain attributes of individuals and groups, it can be found in constant movement; circulating, changing and re-evaluating relations between people. The specific qualities of the transition that have induced transitional pains, strongly initiate such movements. Relations of power between individuals or groups of people can be changed in one moment, while another moment in time they are re-evaluated and brought back to their traditional state, to perhaps become challenged towards change again later on. These transitional 'pains' have consequently influenced the structural relations between people within the complex realities of local society, by challenging the continuously moving power balances.

Clearly, a dual change has provoked the reevaluation and strengthening of traditional norms and values, and simultaneously constructed new political, economic and cultural processes, especially towards the modernization and Europeanization of Croatia. This dual change has already been pointed out by the results of other scientists (Grdešić 1999, Hall et al. 2006, Ateljevic & Hall 2007). It represents a continuous process of confrontation between inherited values and new or revived values. The basics of the dual change are formed by one set of modern values, like individualism, Europeanization and secularism, and another set of traditional values, like a collective national identity, religious belief, informal social networks and conservative (patriarchal) values in life. This way, two streams of influences are formed that occur simultaneously. Both traditionalization as well as modernization have an impact on the local norms and values of the society in Murter and create movements towards change. Since these streams are in many ways almost opposing one another, this creates an interesting interplay.

### 6.2 Scientific Approach to Modernity-Tradition Interplay

It is here in this interplay where the constant debating between values of tradition and modernity takes place and continuously reevaluates and reshapes the structures of

contemporary society. However, this interplay should not be considered a distinct field of debate specifically for Croatia. It is a 'game' that is continuously played in any country or locality in the world and takes place in whatever phase of development the country finds itself in, caused by a radical shift (transition) in system or society. This game can be revealed at various levels of scale, from the broad international level down to the local level, and similarities can be mentioned for its general rules.

Now, the debating within this interplay has on large scale been dominated by studies from the global level. On the international level this debate between tradition and modernity has scientifically been approached as the phenomenon of globalization. There is always a set of traditional values that relate back to the country's or region's history and opposing to this there is always a set of modern values, created and influenced by novelties and innovations. Depending on the existing structures of a country or region and its specific shape in time and space, these opposing values provide input to the debates on power relations and jointly shape the boundaries of the location's development.

The interplay is informed by specifics of time, space, culture, nature and history and develops therefore differently in distinct places. Zooming in on smaller geographical levels, the qualities of the interplay become more distinct. The smaller the level of scale studied, the more specific information can be revealed. This study focused on the specific locality Murter and approached 4 particular cases in this locality. By doing so, local debates can continuously be linked with other levels of analysis, like Dalmatia, Croatia, EU, etc., revealing patterns of influence and disentangling movement in relations of power.

### **6.3 Evaluation of the Case Studies**

The four case studies this research has focused on (the municipality of Murter, the marina Hramina, the road between the two beaches, and the individual woman) exemplify how modernity and tradition interact and how transition processes and the 6 transitional 'pains' are played out at the local level. Analyzing the dual interplay between tradition and modernity originated from the debate between structure and people, which has revealed specific rationalities of the location under study. Existing structures have been compared with continuously evolving agency of the people that move within those structures and this has uncovered how they are mutually influential. People sometimes are aware of their knowledge and influence, but often their actions and reactions happen subconsciously. They instinctively follow the traditional or modern stream of thought. As an island community, which has long lived an isolated existence, the people tend to follow one stream collectively.

So, in some instances the society's 'choice' for either one of the streams is taken automatically, like in the case of the remasculinization of public and private spheres of society. This masculine value is recalled from history, as a reaction to the societal insecurity and fear, due to the dangers and unpredictability of the war period and strengthened by the socialist past that eroded the sense of individual responsibility. The processes of transition have brought new insecurities to the island. As a reaction, people instantly grasp back to traditional values of collectivity, informality, religion and a patriarchic lifestyle. This traditional value is needed so strongly to bring the people a feeling of familiarity, security and safety, that it immediately becomes rooted at the heart of society again. In such case any opposing actions are perceived shocking among society and pose resistance and rejection against the opposing person(s). This has been shown in the case study of the individual woman, who dared to make different choices in her life. She found herself in the challenging situation of swimming against the current, while everyone else kept following the mainstream. She became excluded from the collective community and it has taken her many years and great personal strength to regain some of her original acceptance. Although in the case of the individual woman, she encountered resistance due to the remasculinization, an equal strength of resistance is posed by the local population against anything unfamiliar acted out by any person, man or woman, local or non-local. A similar case was experienced by a local entrepreneur, a man, who became just a little bit more successful in life than his neighbors.

This provoked a feeling of misunderstanding, resentment and even suspicion from his fellow community members. Though the community knows a feeling of kinship, people also easily become jealous, especially of things they cannot comprehend. If you do things differently and you succeed, you can become an 'enemy' in the eyes of the others. The revival of traditional values has established such a strong basis in the local society again; that the closed community feeling is strengthened and anything different is perceived as incomprehensible, annoying and even shocking. In these cases, change towards acceptance of a more modern mentality will proceed extremely slowly or may perhaps even hold off completely. Perchance, seeing that those different approaches to life and work have positive outcomes and bring more benefit will gradually lead the society towards a certain level of acceptance of these diverse attitudes.

Another example of such a debate in which the local residents are leaning more towards the traditional 'side' of the interplay can be found in local politics. Though the political context of the country has been reshaped towards a democracy since 1991, Croatia was not able to prevent a grey area to arise (or perhaps it remained in existence) in politics, where certain malpractices and corruption activities could take place. Since Croatia's independency, state power has been decentralized, mainly through handing down financial control to regional and local government units. This should have increased self governance of the communities and given local societies the strength to regulate their own developments. However, the obscurity of the beginning of the transition process and distractions of the ongoing war, provided room to maneuver for the elite to manifest themselves in a strong and powerful position. They used predatory projects to subtract resources, such as factories, marinas and hotels, from the state and remained powerful. Additionally, they have politically kept up their strength through their influence in political parties. As a consequence, the decentralization of state power did not have the intended effect. On the contrary, in many cases local governments turned into marionettes of elite groups.

Consequently, many decisions taken on the local level have been strongly influenced from above. Rural local people often see themselves as powerless against elites, the politics of the state and even larger outside influences. Their culture and society are still partially imprinted with socialist norms and values, which tells them that they should not have an individual value or opinion and accept all that comes from above. This feeling is strengthened again by the insecurities that the processes of transition continue to bring. To be able to reveal the aspects of corruption in local politics, it would be necessary that the local society recognizes the difference between public role and private interest of government officials. Though, the traditional values of the community allow for government officials to use forms of nepotism and malpractice, without this being seen as corrupt practices. As a consequence, traditionalization of local values, due to the incomprehension and fear of change of the local people and their state of powerlessness, brings society to continue to accept these forms of mismanagement.

In the discussion around the transitional issues of privatization the opinions among people are so divided, coming from traditional and modern values, that heavy unrest is provoked and certain relations of power are challenged. The influence of the before mentioned political instabilities does not only affect local governance, but also has an impact on the entrepreneurial environment. The process of privatization of formerly state-owned (tourism) enterprises, like the marina Hramina, took place in this non-transparent political setting. As a consequence of this transition phase, it became a tool for the national elite to gain power over valuable resources. Many enterprises in the surrounding of Murter (as well as generally in the rest of the country) have fallen into ownership of people from outside the community, mostly people from in and around the capital city Zagreb. As a consequence, the enterprises and the community have lost the traditional connection with one another. In the communist era all larger properties and enterprises belonged to the community as 'common property', owned by the state. Inhabitants of the community felt closely connected to and through those enterprises, because they provided work and income for the community and

they formed a location where the community got together. The whole national system of enterprises used a strategy of survival rather than profit at that time. It was more important to provide all the community members with a job and to keep the enterprises running, than to actually have a strategic and profitable business. After the process of privatization had been initiated, the strategy of the enterprises changed. They have to compete on a national and sometimes even international market, provoking a more business oriented attitude. As a consequence, the entrepreneurs now have to look for business opportunities beyond the community to remain in a profitable and competitive position. The enterprises are attracting employees from a larger region, providing less employment opportunities for the Murterians. Additionally, a great amount of money earned in the community is flowing right back out as a consequence of leakages. So, these days the community does not profit much from the well-established companies on their grounds and the local inhabitants unsurprisingly lose their connection with these enterprises. They no longer feel they have anything to bring into these originally local businesses. Local inhabitants of Murter feel less and less related to the enterprises, but they also transform their feeling of 'loss' into an indifferent attitude towards the enterprises. The enterprises are excluded from their concerns and they merely see them as 'present' in their community. This loss of connection and indifference in the attitude of locals towards the enterprises, but also of the enterprises towards the local community, brings a divergence in the village. The former close connection between life in the community and the flourishing business of the marina has been broken and separated them into two distinct groups that perhaps tolerate one another, but do not attempt to help the other in any way. Inevitably, this pushes forward new relations between the separate 'groups', creating a more complicated web of power relations in the locality.

In relation to this revival of traditional values of collectivity, informality, religion and a patriarchic lifestyle, local bonds among people are strengthened, while anything or anyone from outside is initially mistrusted. Although it is originally a characteristic of an island community, historically due to their isolation, also nowadays people in Murter grasp back to the values of a closed community. A clear line is drawn between 'us' and 'not us'. In the case of the road between the two beaches, local inhabitants cannot grasp the success of tourism businesses of the 'outsiders'. They feel surprised by the economic revival of 'their' land, which became invaluable in their eyes as it lost agricultural value. Now they regret not having found these other opportunities for the land themselves. Perhaps they have not seen the tourism potential of their coastline or perhaps they did not know how to approach these new developments, but somehow they feel betrayed by those 'outsiders'. The instability and insecurity the inhabitants of Murter have lived with throughout their past has created suspicion and mistrust in people from 'outside' and basically anything that does not fit in their local system of norms and values. The political and economical transition has placed the community in a more vulnerable position. Where before the system provided them with a structured lifestyle, they now have to take care of themselves. As a local defense mechanism against 'the outside' they built a strategy within their society in which everything they cannot comprehend is blamed on corruption and malpractices. Even though they may not know for sure if malpractices have been used by these outsiders and even though they may use some informal ways to accomplish something themselves, it has become the easiest way to explain the prosperity of the 'others'. It becomes a natural reaction to blame the success of the outsiders to forms of malpractice and corruption, as a reaction of not having to look in the mirror and face why many locals themselves do not succeed. However, most of the local people perceive themselves as a powerless group that has to watch the 'others' having business and prosperity. By maintaining an attitude of exclusion and resistance towards the 'outsiders' and their practices, the local inhabitants of Murter may restrain themselves from learning and improving their own tourism entrepreneurial approach. By not opening up to 'modern' entrepreneurial ideas, allowing themselves to learn from this and finding ways to cooperate with them, the Murterians build a boundary around themselves for developing a flourishing tourism industry.

In some instances traditional values rise again, but somehow the context in which these values thrived has changed, due to influences of the socialist times in between the former use of these traditions and their contemporary revival. These changes constantly challenge the resumed traditional structures, provoking irritations and conflicting situations. An example of such a situation of challenge can be found in the discussions surrounding the ownership issues of unregistered, fragmented parcels of land. Since the beginning of Croatia's transition process, land ownership has been reintroduced as a valuable asset. Although this has historically been a traditional value of society, the socialist times eroded individual responsibility and sense of personal ownership. Therefore, ownership no longer has the exact same value to everyone as it used to have traditionally. Although land is generally still a valuable asset, the traditional value is challenged by significant modern aspects that are introduced into the community. Where one group reverts back to the traditional value of land, the other group follows the changing environment that comes in, through tourism and the media among other sources, and converts to more modern values of lifestyle assets. To some people inherited land is still a valuable asset, while others rather trade it for objects of modern luxury (e.g. a car, clothing, traveling). This creates divergence of cultural values and with that disunity among the people of Murter upon the importance of land ownership.

Next to this, the socialist neglect of private property registration has left a trail of unclearness that provokes contemporary ownership issues among the people. In the discussions over land ownership the values of close community ties are slowly interrupted by feelings of jealousy, competition and suspicion. For those who value the ownership of a piece of land, whether for traditional farming or more modern alternative purposes (housing, tourism, etc.), these changes in the context challenge their mutual relations. The ownership rights have been orally passed on from generation to generation. Since great areas of land have not been used anymore by the younger generations, due to the degrading of agricultural activities and the rising of other economic opportunities, they have lost track of the exact location of their parcels. It may have been told by their parents or grandparents that the land runs from this tree to that river, but the tree may not be there anymore. How to know for sure that this land is theirs? On the other hand, a group of people has arisen that starts to claim land they know is not actually theirs, but with all the unclearness they hope to get claim on a piece of land. This occurrence challenges the relations between community members. Friends and neighbors, and in many cases even family members, become enemies in the fight over a valuable piece of farm land. The court often needs to step in to consider reevaluation of the land ownership patterns. However, they can most often not trace back who the official owner is or should be. As a consequence, the court selects those claimers who could in one way or another have right to own that land and continuously divides the land parcel in equal pieces for each one of the 'rightful' claimers. Because of this, the often already fragmented lands become even more fragmented, with pieces of land so small that agriculture could not be profitable anymore.

Next to these traditional revivals, there is also a change noticeable within the structural context towards modernization. Local realities are informed by larger processes of modernization, through tourism and media among other sources, and the attractive approach of Croatia's entrance into the European Union. This has introduced some modern values, such as the importance of tangible assets, having an individual personality, and living according to a distinct modern lifestyle. An example of this can be found in the slow movement towards acceptance of certain values of individuality. To a certain level individuality has been accepted in the society of Murter. People are allowed to make their own choices within a certain frame; within the culturally accepted values and norms. These values and norms have slowly been broadened by the exposure to so-called western values of the North, through television and by the visits of tourists. Especially among the younger generations a change is visible towards the growing importance of choosing an individual lifestyle with brand clothing and a certain attitude. On the other hand, traditional values of collectivism are decreasing, like the diminishing value of collective property. However, the acceptance of individuality still knows a limit. Especially along the lines of gender relations

and family relations the traditional patriarchal norms still rule over specific behavior and individual choices for women. Within the small island community there is a high level of social control; everyone is watching everyone and whenever someone steps out of the box he or she will notice that they crossed the limit of society's norms. In cases of persistency, when a person keeps following the out of the ordinary, he or she will be excluded from society, like described by the case study of the career woman, who chooses to live alone with her 2 children.

Increasing acceptance and development of individualism can also be noticed on the level of politics and economy. In the war years the powerful elite used the economical transformation towards a market economy to gain and maintain a powerful position within privatizing companies and with this provoked mistrust among the local population, who did not believe in the non-transparent process of privatization. The slow rise of appreciation for independency and the longing for local self-governance and individuality surfaced a slight understanding for private ownership. The opening up of the national economy towards a market economy that participates and competes on an international level has been one of the main elements in the economic acceptance and even preference for private ownership of companies. The relatively weak economy of Croatia, due to the 180 degree shift the country had to make coming from a communist economic system, puts the country in a vulnerable position on the world market. Although this situation is difficult and challenging to Croatia in many ways, the country will most likely not turn back to any of their previous economic values and hopefully follow a steady line in becoming a stable market economy.

Politically Croatia shifted from a socialist system to a democratic one. This has created space for forms of decentralization; decentralizing certain powers from the national towards the regional and local levels. As a consequence, many communities have taken the opportunity to become self-governing and start their own local government. This could be explained as the development of a form of independency on political level. However, as the case study of the local government of Murter showed, it can be debated whether it is a movement towards independency or if the community actually becomes more dependent. As the community of Murter feels they have gained independency, because they receive their own local government budget and are free to take their own decisions as long as they are in line with the law system of the country, they have actually placed themselves in a more vulnerable political position. To get anything started on higher levels of governance, like to get a project proposal through for instance, the political situation in the community is extremely important. If the mayor and his or her councilors do not belong to the country's ruling political party (or support one of the ruling party's collaborates) it becomes a challenge to get any project proposal or request for finance through. Additionally, the community has become a play ball of the political system, where key players of the local government are turned into marionettes of the national political game.

In some debates people may even be hesitant towards which direction to follow, because both the traditional value as well as the modern value looks appealing. Consequentially they remain indecisive of what would be the best way to go and they allow both values to exist alongside one another. This creates situations in which both values intertwine, but when it counteracts or hinders someone they may use one value and blame it on the other. Throughout history, informal networks have been an important aspect of social and professional life in Murter. The inhabitants relied on one another in times of insecurity. It was their local defense mechanism against vulnerability. Especially in times of the previously socialist management of Yugoslavia and the following repression of the war years, people could only survive and maintain a form of 'self' and 'community' by relying on their informal networks. Dependency eroded any sense of individual accountability and public trust. As a consequence of this sense of powerlessness, rural communities are reinforcing traditional structures and patriarchal gender relations. The importance of informal social networks is reevaluated and finds itself an important place in society again.

## 6.4 Future Perspectives

So, how will this story continue? An interesting continuation of the tradition-modernity debate is to make some assumptions about future developments of the area. What will the future for Croatia and Murter look like? The country will continue to know a cycle of overlapping flows of debate between 'the traditional' and 'the modern' forming a complex and constantly evolving web of relations. This is a phenomenon which can be distinguished on several levels all over the world and Croatia is no exception. The debate in Croatia, however, will maintain its own individual character, informed by the specific situation of transition processes. At the moment, more than ten years after the ending of the communist era, this process of transition still plays an important role. Since many transitionally informed issues have not been resolved till today, it is very likely that these remain influential factors steering the tradition-modernity debate. On the one hand, traditional values will continue to hold a strong position in the country. The suppression of the communist era has left deep scars into society, which informs the re-evaluation of traditional values as a way to grasp back to a familiar way of life. On the other hand, the Europeanization, occurring through the growth of the European Union and Croatia becoming closer towards entering into the EU, will contribute to modernization gaining influence in the country. Already the potential entrance of Croatia into the EU is a highly debated topic on the streets. People seem to have strong opinions about why the country should or should not enter the EU. Europeanization discussions bring in mostly aspects of modernity, though in the discussion both traditional values and modern values seem to be able to find an overlap: it is an expression of traditional machismo that men want to, or need to, have a strong opinion about these modernization issues.

The community of Murter will maintain a certain level of traditionalism, especially in the area of inclusion and exclusion. Being a community on an island, Murter largely remains in an isolated position and this will continue to be an important factor in its cultural development. The island will likely experience the entrance of modern values with resistance. The Murterians will maintain a strong community feeling, based on informal relations and trust. Therefore traditional values of the community will continue to hold an important position in development decisions and the local norms of inclusion and exclusion: what or who is accepted and what or who is not. It will also strongly continue to influence how the community deals with the influence of transition processes. Though traditional values will remain, the entrance of modern ideas cannot be altered completely and developments towards change will occur in a slow pace. The conscious and subconscious re-evaluation of traditional values will gradually lead the island society towards a certain level of acceptance of more modern values.

The confrontation and interaction between tradition and modernity could also lead to new and exciting possibilities and development on the island. Slowly but surely the local population will challenge itself towards changes and relations of power will circulate to different positions. This will bring new opportunities to the community, especially in the realm of tourism. The local people will be challenged to find ways to regain control over their tourism industry and become creative in new initiatives. Some Murterians have already found new opportunities by for example distinguishing their tourism business from others or by expanding their marketing over the internet. As the community is in control over its own municipal budget and can take development decisions up till a certain level, they could jointly find a direction they want to take with their tourism industry. This could be found in the re-evaluation of traditional relations, for example restoring the bond between the community and the marina Hramina could lead to a continuation of the prosperous development of marine tourism. Also new relations can have a fruitful outcome, like the cooperation between the Murterians and the 'outsiders' with their tourism businesses along the coast. Next to that, new input can be found in the development of activities on the island that could extend the length of stay of the tourists.

## 6.5 Final Conclusion

In conclusion to this discussion I can say that the distinct features or qualities of the transition-related phenomena inform the shaping of the social and cultural context of norms and values of a specific location, like Murter. Also through their influences on the social-cultural context the phenomena influence relations of power between people. This way the specific qualities of a phenomenon diversify the situation between different localities (communities, but also regions and countries) and with that provide for distinction in the translation of relations of power between people of a specific locality. Furthermore, the social-cultural context of a location also has an influence on how the phenomena are perceived. This is for example dependent on the level of collectivism-individualism or tradition-modernity in the locality. Also the relations of power among people of a certain location do not only inform their socio-cultural context, but in addition have an impact on how the people experience and translate phenomena. In short, a mutual stream of influences can be found between the phenomena, the socio-cultural context of a location and the relations of power between the people of that location, as has been shown through the sub-case studies.

This clearly points back towards the theory that power is a continuously moving relational concept, which is influenced by certain attributes of individuals and groups. The conscious or unconscious decisions of people to accept or resist to certain power relations, and more specifically their reaction towards changes in existing relations of power, heavily depends on their cultural background, their personal characteristics and the influences of their environment.

This research showed that the specific characteristics of a transition country have a strong influence on the reevaluation and reshaping of power relations in tourism development within a specific locality. The disentangled interplay between traditionalization and modernization shows interesting debates that take place in every nation in the world, but the developments of the debates are to be found specific for each locality. In relation, this research has revealed that specific aspects of history and existing structures, in combination with cultural values and norms of society, have a strong influence on the proceedings of the transition process and are consequentially also driving forces in the modernization-traditionalization debates.

The structure of this research has provoked and revealed numerous questions new to the power-in-tourism discussion. These include: What is the meaning of power in different contexts? How should power be conceptualized in tourism studies? How can power be influenced, challenged and changed? What is the position of agency in movements in power relations? Is agency aware of relations of power, or are there also subconscious relations to be revealed? What causes the consciousness or subconsciousness of agency in a certain situation? How do you empirically engage these power theories? What is the position of power relations in tourism developments? How are relations of power translated in specific locations and how do these relations influence the development of local society and tourism? Time and resource limitations leave many of these areas still unanswered. Continuously, these questions could guide the research agenda on power relations in tourism development.

In recommendation to continuous research I would suggest to further explore the theoretical avenues of power relations in tourism. Power has been proven a highly contestable concept with a plurality of power theories behind it. Several scientists, like Lukes, have mentioned that the meaning of the word 'power' depends on the context of its application. We should therefore be very clear in how we use the term. There is a need to strengthen the connection between power in tourism research and the underlying conceptualizations and theorizations of power behind such research.

Furthermore, as Foucault has already suggested, we must disentangle the patterns that constitute relationships of power. We should focus scientific research on critical accounts of

the dual interplay between structure and people, and search beyond the structures for agency. Methodologically this would imply that studies have to be performed within a certain context or location, thereby allowing for specific rationalities to be unveiled. Structures are compared with responding agency of people that move within those structures and discover how they are mutually influential. Every site of power is simultaneously also a site of resistance and therefore are processes of tourism development increasingly subject to forms of resistance. We should be aware of the personal, social and cultural circumstances of agency and we should incorporate if and how influence, knowledge, skills, fears, and other capacities to resist or to follow are used in pervading power structures.

In addition to this, we should be aware that people may be (sub)conscious of their position in relations and the (un)awareness of their power to influence the situation. People and structures act within a dual interplay, which is influenced by enabling and constraining factors from both sides. However, people may not be conscious of their own actions and of the impact of their decisions. Even if people are not conscious of existing structures, they still function within those structures and automatically reproduce them by taking them into account when they act. Structures are in this sense no static resources, since they are constantly changed and reproduced by agency of people. Scientific research should therefore focus on disentangling the (sub)conscious relations between people and allowing structures to be seen as continuously evolving features.

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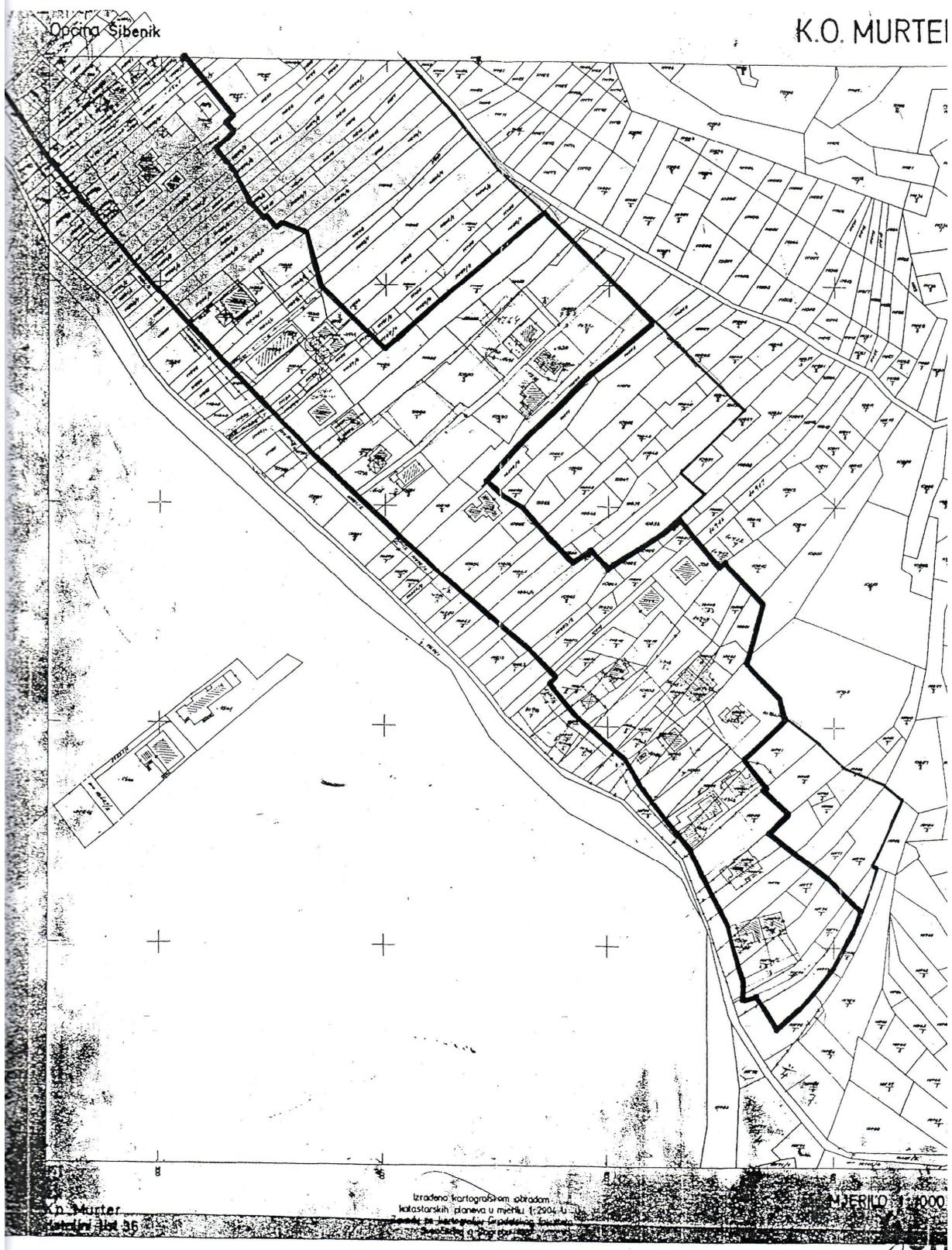
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# Appendix 1

Scan of the Spatial Plan for the street between the beaches of Slanica (north) and Cigrađa (south).



## Appendix 2

Detail of the Land Use Plan of Murter, representing the street between the beaches of Slanica (north) and Cigrađa (south).

