

# The changing tides of Venice

*Future scenarios of the world's touristed city*



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Dissertation

*I hereby declare that this dissertation is wholly the work of Fabio Tat. Any other contributors or sources have either been referenced in the prescribed manner or are listed in the acknowledgements together with the nature and the scope of their contribution*

Tat, F.S. 'Student at the NHTV University of Professional Education

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## Preface

In the context of the master program 'Tourism Destination Management', I have written a dissertation about tourism development in the historic centre of Venice. The question that tourism experts raise is what the future of the historic centre will be. This, because the city almost collapses under the pressure of constant tourism streams. Since the tourism industry makes it practically impossible to live in the historic centre it is expected that within a few years the community of Venice is about to become extinct. Certainly with an expected growth of tourism arrivals. The scale on which the depopulation takes place is unique and makes it also the reason why the future of Venice is insecure. The future of Venice as a city but also the future as a tourism destination. What may happen to the city is discussed in this dissertation. The reason that I am intrigued by this matter is because it is a rather new topic in the context of tourism development but also because my family is from Venice. This related me more to the issues at stake and gave me advantages while conducting my research. It is however a research that would not have been possible to execute without the help of my supervisor, Lucette Roovers, who gave me the freedom to let me do my own research and gave me a better understanding of the subject I was investigating. Of course I want to thank everybody else, that made time available for me and which helped me in my search for answers to which no direct answers could be given.





## Executive summary

*Venice experiences an invasion of 15 million visitors a year and most of these converge in the historic centre. Current tourism arrivals are resulting in many problems such as: environmental degradation, heritage management problems, conservation issues and major impacts on, and implications for, the host community. This results in the fact that Venice is heading towards a day when it may become the first major city on the planet that is transformed from a once vibrant mercantile city into a historical theme park or a tourist resort. Not a built theme park or resort like Disneyland or Club Med, concocted on a drafting table, but one that emerges because it no longer has within its buildings and piazzas a living, viable host community and yet remains a major international tourist attraction. Where many think this is a worse case scenario, for the state of the city itself but also for her tourism appeal, there are others that do not see this as a problem. This is where the discussion about the future of Venice starts. A discussion which is mainly about the importance of having a host community in a (tourism) destination.*

Venice' policymakers' first reaction is to maintain a host community in order to keep Venice vibrant and energetic, important to attract tourists and to stop a further decline of the city (e.g. buildings, infrastructure, and facilities). It is however questionable if this is applicable onto the historic centre of Venice. Tourists visiting the historic centre are mostly staying one day, rushing to see the famous and historic places, not aware or interested in the local community. If the depopulation has a negative effect on the tourism appeal is therefore not certain. Certainly not because there are destination which are further in this depopulation process but are still able to remain up-to-date and attractive for tourists. That is why there is chosen to analyse such a destination (the island of Capri), as it can contribute to the discussion of 'community importance' and directly linked with this it may lead to insights that can be of use in the decision-making process concerning Venice' future.

### Goal and research questions.

That Venice is still faced with a doubtful future has to do with the fact that many stakeholders, with all their different visions, opinions and wishes, are involved in the decision-making process. The goal of this research is therefore

*'To monitor and analyse these different (internal and external experts) opinions about the importance of having a host community in a city destination, in general but specifically related to the case of Venice. These opinions form the fundament for the possible, probable and preferred future scenarios that will be developed. As final part of the research will be analysed what scenario will be the best for the city and its inhabitants to focus on'.*

In order to achieve the goal, this report is specified into different objectives and research questions, relating the following topics:





- *Analysis of tourism in Italy:* focuses on the tourism policy of the county and how they deal with destinations in transition.
- *Analysis of tourism (development) in Venice and Capri with related issues:* focuses on Venice' and Capri's approach towards tourism development and how the community's attitude towards tourism changed over time.
- *Comparison of Venice versus Capri:* focuses on the differences and resemblances between the two destinations and what can be learned from the case of Capri with regard to the importance of a host community and tourism development.
- *External and internal experts' vision on (future) tourism development in Venice:* focuses on the way they see the future of Venice.
- *Monitoring of all opinions and the development of the possible, probable and preferred scenario:* focuses on the development of different scenarios.
- *Analysis of the scenario's:* focuses on what scenario is preferred for the future of Venice.

### **The method of working**

In order to answer the different research questions there was chosen to start with desk research in the Netherlands. External experts were asked to give information about cities in transition and they were asked to give their opinion about how they see the possible, probable and preferred future of Venice. These external experts were approached first because the objective and critical input they gave was of use to approach the internal experts in a more profound way. The internal experts could be found in Venice. The internal experts visited in Venice were all part of the Venetian community. This, because the discussion is for a big part about them. Everyone was interviewed through a semi-structured interview technique. There is chosen for this interview technique because it results in a well-argued overall picture. Using the semi-structured interview technique made it also possible to anticipate on the answers that were given and it left space for the stakeholders' own opinion which lead to new insights. As the focus of this report has constantly been 'the community' of the historic centre it is obvious that this is also done in the three different scenarios. The community is given 'a voice'. The same counts for the external experts opinions. All opinions formed as input for the development of the different scenarios. The scenario's are build using the 3P's and can be used to provide frameworks for policy decisions, to help to identify dangers and opportunities for policies, to help to asses alternative policies and actions under different conditions and to try and to increase creativity and choice in policy making. Therefore, is as final result evaluated which scenario is best to focus on.

### **Scenarios**

The main target of the first scenario (possible future) is to make the historic centre a vibrant city again, with an own Venetian identity. Tourism should only be a small part of this. In order to





achieve this it is needed to reduce the tourism industry to a minimum and to create an atmosphere in which other industries can flourish. Venetians like the city as it is in the winter. Therefore is chosen to take the number of 'winter' tourists as parameter for the whole year. This makes the maximum number of tourists around the 4 million a year. The number of inhabitants must be brought back to standards as they once were: 200.000.

The second scenario (probable future) is focused on the development of the tourism industry. The main target of this scenario is that each year at least 20 million visitors come to see the most famous city of the world. It is believed that tourism is an opportunity for the city. An industry that makes it possible to boost the preservation and transmission of cultural and historical traditions. No measures are taken to stop the inhabitant decline since it is noticed that tourists do not come to Venice for them.

The third scenario (preferred) is a mix of the earlier described scenarios. The main target of this scenario is to reduce the number of visitors to 8 million visitors a year levelling the carrying capacity. Reducing the tourism industry will be of use to bring the number of residents back to the amount they once were, 200.000 this will serve the aim to find a balance between the tourism industry and the function of Venice as a city. In this way tourism can become an industry existing next to the public system, which has an own identity and which is able to absorb the tourism impacts

## Conclusion

Analysing the scenarios it can be concluded that the theme park option may not be the worst scenario that could happen to the historic centre. Certainly not from an economic perspective. But when knowing this, than also action has to be taken. The choice has to be made to let it become a theme park destination. In this way plans can be made how to deal with this situation. That on the long term, the city will lose its 'atmosphere' because there are no inhabitants does not have to be certain, as is seen in Capri. From this point of view one could say that, for the tourism product, which Venice is, the community is not important. From the perspective of the city however, this is different. Becoming a theme park city will have devastating effects on many parts of Venice. The 'theme park city' Venice will be reduced to the small islands which form the prime attractions. The former resident areas will become useless as these areas can not be maintained. The question is if this scenario is preferred when there is still the choice to choose for another option. Probably not. A mix of both scenario's (inhabitants and tourism) is in the end the best option. It is a scenario which brings the city back in a balance, and may result in the fact that Venice becomes Venice again. The scenario is according the policy of Italy and Venice and is preferred by the inhabitants. It is also the best scenario since it serves the inhabitants. The most important requirement to be a sustainable (tourism) destination.





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# 1 Introduction to the research

## 1.1 Research context

*For a thousand years Venice was one of the most enduring mercantile sea powers on the face of the earth. Today the brilliance and influence have long since faded, leaving a town of tarnished glories, out of time and out of place, so achingly beautiful it's hard not to look for the back of the set (lonely planet, 2006)*

Venice has changed its original function (trading power) already in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. During this time Venice was already well on its way to living off tourism alone. It was perhaps the first post-modern city, selling no product other than itself and its multiple images to the tens or even hundreds of thousands of free-spending foreigners who came there annually (Davis, 2004). Today the city experiences a type of invasion of some 15 million visitors a year and most of these converge on the main island of the Laguna Veneta with its 117 islands. Better known as the 'centro storico' (historic centre).

Current tourism arrivals in the 'centro storico' are resulting in many problems such as: environmental degradation, heritage management problems, conservation issues and major impacts on, and implications for, the host community. Today, the population of the 'centro storico' is less than 70,000, less than 4,000 are children. It is a community in decline, once having a population of some 200,000 (1900) (Kerper, 2002). Experts already predict that Venice is heading towards a day when it may become the first major city on the planet that is transformed from a once vibrant mercantile city into a historical theme park or a tourist resort: not a built theme park or resort like Disneyland or Club Med, concocted on a drafting table, but one that emerges because it no longer has within its buildings and piazzas a living, viable host community and yet remains a major international tourist attraction (Staiff, 2000). Where many think this is a worse case scenario there are others that do not see this as a problem. This is where the discussion about the future of Venice starts. A discussion which is mainly about the importance of having a host community in a (tourism) destination.

**The tourist as an inhabitant.....**  
*Venice is a city, not just visited, but actually inhabited by tourists. In real figures there are for every resident 242 tourists. The highest tourist-to-resident ratio in Europe on average. With visitors coming from every corner of the globe Venice might claim to be one of the great multiethnic cities of the postmodern world. Of course, all these transients do not really live there, at least not in the sense of residing there or paying taxes; yet in terms of human life and public activity, and certainly from the Venetian point of view, they are permanently there, all over town. Although each tourist may take up Venetian space for only a short while, in the aggregate they are there all the time: their transitory occupation might be called a flow, but for the Venetians it appears as a continual, solid mass (Davis, 2004)*





## 1.2 Research discussion

Especially in the last century the historic centre of Venice has become more and more dependent on tourism leading to the fact that this is the only industry they rely on upon now. It is however because of this tourism industry that the community is in decline.

### ***The tourist and the Venetian.....***

*Tourists and Venetians, then, meet and jostle and try to get by in what is still one of the most beautiful cities in the world. The tourists come, many of them, with an ideal and a cliché battling in their heads, and hope that the ideal, their fantasy of Venetian Romance, will somehow win out. At the same time, the Venetians, ever older and fewer, keep up their struggle to remain in the city where their ancestors have been born, but where they themselves are increasingly strangers, superfluous and often unwanted by the tourist monolith that has long since taken over (Davis, 2002)*

The city is in a transition process. Every year 1500 inhabitants are leaving the historic city centre for the main land, all because of tourism; direct 'I can't stand the tourists anymore' or indirect 'everything becomes too expensive' as residents of the historic centre say (Kerper, 2002). According to Doxey's irridex the residents would be in the Antagonism phase; irritations about tourists are openly expressed (Doxey, 1975). Therefore the policy makers have to make a decision. One could be to let current developments go on. This will result in the fact that the historic centre will become a theme park city in a couple of decades. Another situation could be that this is an undesired situation.

Some criticasters think that the point of turning the tide has already been passed. They state that the residential function of the city centre is closely related to that of the economic function. In Venice' case an economic function (tourism) which seems undesired and can not be changed quickly because it is the largest economy (van der Borg, 1991). That is why residents leave the city.

Venice' policymakers first reaction is to maintain a host community in order to keep Venice vibrant and energetic, important to attract tourists and to stop a further (e.g. buildings, infrastructure, facilities) decline of the city. Concerns that were already expressed by UNESCO in 1969 (van der Borg, 1991) but even now UNESCO is highly involved in 'safeguarding' Venice. This can be backed up with literature where the importance of a host community with regard to *tourism* is highly appreciated. 'Communities are a basic reason for tourists to travel' or 'communities shape the natural landscapes and culture which many tourists consume'. Most models of sustainable development include *an, or the* community as a cornerstone of the development process (Richards, 2000). But also with regard to *a further decline* of the city it is stated that a city 'needs a host community to maintain quality public and private spaces, vibrant central squares and a good environment for investments' (Buck, 2005).





It is however questionable if this is applicable onto the historic centre of Venice. Tourists visiting the historic centre are mostly staying one day, rushing to see the famous and historic places, not aware or interested in the local community (van der borg, 1991). If the depopulation has a negative effect on tourism is therefore not certain. It may therefore not be necessary to have a host community to be an attractive tourism destination.

Disneyland and Disneyworld are for example two of the most significant public spaces of the 20<sup>th</sup> century while it is just a fake kind of culture that is created, with no inhabitants, attracting still visitors that are eager to pay for it (Zukin, 1995). The architect of Disneyworld, Charles Moore states that 'the more openly fake or empty the buildings are, the more comfortable visitors are with them' (Zukin, 1995). If this is also the case with a real city is not known though.

The case of Venice stands however not on its own. There are destinations which went through a similar transition process as Venice did but are still capable to attract many visitors and to prevent it from its 'city decline'. To find a comparable destination as Venice there is looked at characteristics as land size, visitor/ inhabitant ratio, main industry and forecasted future as these are often used key indicators to compare destinations with (Asian development Bank, 2007, Mintel 2005). A comparable destination in this case is the island of Capri. An island which is similar in size as the historic centre of Venice (10,4 sq km<sup>2</sup> against 7,2 sq km<sup>2</sup>). In 2006 the island was visited by just around 550.000 visitors, making the inhabitants/ visitors ratio 1 against 78 (commune di Capri, 2007). Although this is far less as Venice's ratio (1 against 242) Capri's ratio still belongs to the highest in the world (Davis, 2004). Despite the fact that this is a result of Capri's relatively small number of inhabitants (7000 people) it's ratio can still be seen as remarkable, keeping in mind that it is only a small island in contrary to other destinations, that have more land surface and potential to accommodate and attract visitors. Most of the year round residents are Italian and work in some capacity of the tourism trade on the island. Most jobs are directly linked to the tourism industry which makes it the prime industry, the same as in Venice. There are a few non-Italian residents that occupy the island, most of which are wealthy plants from other areas. Real estate has become pricy because of tourism which keeps most people away from the area when looking for a full-time residence (traveller, 2002). The carrying capacity is highly exceeded leading to similar issues as Venice is dealing with (pollution, social pressure, high costs). Both destinations have the same forecasted future, which is that the inhabitants become extinct. In Capri due to the negative death/ born ratio (commune di Capri, 2007), not because of tourism. Also Capri has therefore to choose whether they want to become a theme park island or that they want to attract new inhabitants. They may need to do this earlier as Venice does since the community of Capri is smaller and can become extinct in a more rapid pace. In a way Capri is further in becoming a theme park destination. The choice for future





development has however not been made (yet) which leads to the fact that things continue as they 'always' did (more tourists come and less inhabitants are left). Something that is, instead of the case of Venice, not seen as a problem and this is what makes Capri so interesting. Although many houses are uninhabited and there is only a small community left, the island is still capable to attract and deal with a huge amount of visitors and prevent the island from its 'city decline'. How this is possible, why their approach is different and what the consequences are of the community decline is something that will be analysed as it can be used to contribute to the discussion of community importance and thus Venice's future.

Venice is however still faced with a doubtful future. Although there is literature about cities in transition and the importance of host communities, it is a new topic in the case of Venice. It never happened that on such a scale a city has transformed. What the future will bring can therefore not be precisely forecasted. This has also to do with the fact that there are also so many visions, opinions and wishes, from different stakeholders, for Venice's future. This research will therefore focus on this part: what may happen and is preferred or most likely to happen in the case of Venice. Also known as the possible, probable and preferred future in scenario building (Roovers, 2006). This will lead to new insights and the monitoring of existing ideas which can be of use in developing Venice's future strategy.

### 1.3 Aim of the research

The aim of this dissertation is to analyse and monitor different (internal and external experts) opinions about the importance of having a host community in a city destination, in general but specifically related to the case of Venice. These opinions form the fundament for what the possible, probable and preferred future scenarios will be for the destination. In order to achieve the goal, this report is specified into different objectives and research questions.

- 1) Analysis of tourism in Italy
  - What is Italy's background with regard to tourism?
  - What is Italy's tourism policy?
  - What are destinations in transition and how does Italy integrate this development in their policy and plans?
- 2) Analysis of tourism (development) in Venice with related issues
  - What is Venice's approach towards the development of tourism?
  - How did tourism develop and what is the host community attitude towards this development?
- 3) Analysis of tourism (development) in Capri with related issues





- What is Capri's approach towards the development of tourism?
- How did tourism develop and what is the host community attitude towards this development?
- 4) Analysis of Venice versus Capri
  - Are there differences and resemblances to identify why the community of Capri has a different attitude towards tourism than the community of Venice has?
  - What are the requirements for a destination to maintain its city and tourism appeal with none or only a small number of inhabitants?
  - What can be learned from the case of Capri with regard to the importance of a host community and tourism development?
- 5) External/ internal experts vision on (future) tourism development in Venice
  - What is thought about the type and numbers of tourists visiting Venice?
  - What are the impacts of tourism in Venice?
  - What is the importance of having a host community in the centre?
  - What do the internal and external experts see as the possible, probable and preferred future of Venice?
  - Is there still a way back? or is this not preferred?
- 6) Monitoring of all opinions and the development of the possible, probable and preferred scenario.
  - development of scenario's with as input the internal and external expert's opinions and the case study of Capri
- 7) Analysis of the scenario's
  - What scenario is preferred for the future of Venice?

## 1.4 Research methodology

The methodology used during this research can be separated into desk research and field research.

### *Desk research*

Desk research was mainly conducted in the Netherlands. Acquired data about Venice, Capri and





destinations in transition in the form of brochures, magazines, newspapers, books, readers, articles and journals were retrieved and analyzed. There is chosen to conduct desk research in the Netherlands because this gave already an impression about the issues at stake. In order to achieve a general view of the destination there is tried to retrieve as much information as possible. Whether the retrieved information was right or not could be find out during the field research. The desk research done in the Netherlands made it possible to become more open-minded, objective and critical towards the information gained during the field research in Venice.

Desk research has also been conducted in Venice. Reports, brochures, newspapers and articles retrieved at the destination were analyzed in order to acquire new information or to back-up the already founded information.

#### *Field research*

The field research is conducted in the Netherlands and in Venice. What is done is that different opinions about the future of Venice were gathered. In the first place the opinions from external experts that knew more about the topic of cities in transition and had an opinion about the possible, probable and preferred future. 8 external experts were approached. If new information was still coming up another expert was approached. These external experts are approached first because the objective and critical input they could give could be used to approach the internal experts in a more profound way. There is chosen to visit only Venice since this destination is the main topic of the dissertation. The island of Capri is only used as a case study. Desk research in the Netherlands and a research visit to Capri 2 years ago were enough to secure a thorough and useful research. In Venice 26 internal experts are approached. All part of the Venetian community as the discussion is for a big part about them. Everyone is interviewed through a semi-structured interview technique. There is chosen for this interview technique because it results in a well-argued overall picture. Using the semi-structured interview technique makes it possible to anticipate on the answers that are given and it leaves space for the stakeholders' own opinion which could lead to new insights. Everybody that is interviewed during this research is approached by 1 researcher. The interviews were however recorded by a voice recorder which made it possible to listen the interviews back one more time. Miss communication was therefore excluded and more attention could be given to body language during the interview. When it was not possible to speak experts in 'real life' the interview was conducted via e-mail. Again the semi-structured interview technique was used asking for the experts opinion about different subject related to Venice. The community was important because the research topic is about this stakeholder group. In order to achieve a representative view on the community's perspective it is necessary to explain what is meant with community. The official terminology the European association of social Anthropologist uses is also used in this research. This is a social group of any size whose members reside in a specific locality, share government and often have a common





cultural and historical heritage (Amit, 2002). The specific locality is in the case of Venice, the historic centre. This is not the whole city but a neighbourhood of the city, its CBD; Central Business district or to say better its RCD recreation central district (figure 3.1). The ones that are registered at the general registry office form the official community of the historic centre (Scaramuzzi, 2007). There is chosen for the 'boundary characteristic' to define the community. This is also preferred in the literature since a community is never simply the recognition of cultural similarity or social contiguity but a categorical identity that is premised on various forms of exclusion and construction of otherness (Amit, 2002). Especially in the case of the historic centre of Venice since the community does not exist anymore of residents with the same cultural similarity or social contiguity as there can be made a division in 'original full-time residents' that live in Venice for different generations but for example also the temporary citizens and (inter)national students. (Scaramuzzi, 2007). It are however all citizens within the boundaries of the historic centre and can therefore be defined as one community. This does not mean that within this community everything is the same. The distinction within this community involves several areas of social life. Sameness between members of a community involves political, cultural and economic circumstances (Amit, 2002). Stating that the commuters are part of the community as Davis indirectly suggests is therefore not applicable in this case. Primary because any individual only stays a short while and is not really living there, in the sense of residing there or paying taxes. But also because they are affected in a different way by political, cultural or economic factors as the 'true' inhabitants are. The visitors are therefore not a part of the community but are able to influence its composition (Chambers, 1997). The sameness of the community of the historic centre of Venice is that all residents are influenced by tourism because they are directly or indirectly working for this industry and their social life is affected by it. Ironic is that the community is in decline because of the negative impacts of the tourism industry. An industry the residents work for. That is why is chosen to divide the community into the professions that they are working in and that keep the tourism industry running. Recognised is that not everyone that works in the tourism industry of the historic centre is also a resident of the centre and thus part of the community. In order to achieve a representative image of the community's opinion toward the tourism industry these were excluded from the research. The categorisation of a community is already once used and developed in consultation with 2 experts (Platenkamp and Peeters). These layers were adapted to the situation of Venice.

- Health and security: hospitals, police, security guards
- Religion churches
- Education university
- Private sector shops, accommodations, restaurants/ bars, street vendors, guides, supermarkets, bakers
- Transportation fishermen, boatmen, gondolier and busses

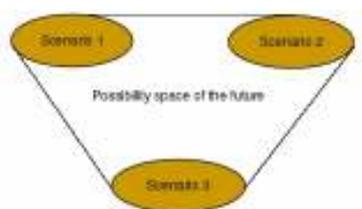




This categorisation covers the full time residents, the (inter)national students and most of the temporary residents indicated by the economic and social office of Venice (Scaramuzzi, 2007). Who were overseen as a result of this categorisation are the temporary residents, which are only for a short amount of time in Venice to spend their free time, instead of working for the tourism industry. This did not mean however that they were left out from the research.

People from all these community components were also interviewed by means of semi-structured qualitative interviews. Interviews were held on times and places that were most appropriate for the different stakeholders (e.g. gondolier in the morning). This is done because it left the stakeholders in their own setting, not feeling uncomfortable about the situation and therefore more eager to be interviewed.

The last phase was focused on turning the acquired data (through desk research and field research) into information so that different future scenarios can be developed. This is done using the 3P's.



- 1) The possible future: what may happen
- 2) The probable future: what is most likely to happen
- 3) The preferred future: what would we prefer to happen

These scenarios are usually used to provide frameworks for policy decisions, to help to identify dangers and opportunities for policies, to help to assess alternative policies and actions

under different conditions and to try and to increase creativity and choice in policy making. Although this research can contribute to these aspects it is not the aim to do so. This is in the first place to analyse and monitor the different opinions with regard to the future of Venice in order to develop different scenarios.

## 1.5 Report structure

This research report is structured as followed; first, the context of Italy is set by means of giving background information about the countries' current situation (geography, politics), as well as a focus on the tourism industry of Italy is presented (chapter 2). The historic centre of Venice is in this chapter introduced as main research area. This city is analysed in more detail as a tourism destination in chapter 3. It analyses the current tourism situation and planning and development approaches in Venice. Also the host community attitude towards tourism is analysed. In this respect, the main challenges of policy makers are described. Chapter 4 contains a case study of Capri. This case study is in chapter 5 compared with the situation of Venice and analyzed and used as a support to contextualise the research findings. In chapter 6 are, based on the research findings three different scenario's developed and evaluated. This evaluation forms the base for the recommendation presented in chapter 7.





## 2 Research Context, background Italy

*Italy is perceived as one of the world's premier tourism hotspots. Despite its broad appeal and strong position on the global tourism stage, a number of factors, namely the appreciation of the euro and a faltering economy, continue to hamper Italy's tourism recovery and growth. Therefore despite having all ingredients of being a prime tourism destination the country is faced with a slump in international tourist arrivals in the last five years. This chapter provides background information about Italy, as well as a focus on the tourism industry of the country. A link will be made with two of Italy's most popular tourist destinations; Venice and Capri and the way these destinations are affected by the developments in the country. What the literature mentions about the development process of these destinations is also presented in this chapter.*

### 2.1 Italy's background

Italy is located in Southern Europe. The country is inhabited by approximately 60 million people who live on a land surface of 301,230 sq km (Mintel, 2005). The Italian population consists almost entirely of native-born people of which 95% is Roman Catholic and of whom many identify themselves closely with a particular region of Italy. The country is divided into 20 regions with 18 on the mainland and two islands. Generally the surface can be divided into the more urban north (the area from the northern border to the southern part of Rome, which lies in the centre of the country) and the mostly rural south (everything below this line). The more prosperous, industrialized north contains most of Italy's larger cities and about two-thirds of the country's population; the primarily agricultural south has a smaller population base and a more limited economy (Encarta encyclopedia, 2007). The tourism industry has become more important for the contribution to Italy's GDP (Mintel, 2005) and in order to attract tourists Italy is promoted as a country that serves Uniqueness, with the rich and colourful history, culture and nature as the country's unique selling points (Enit, 2007). The country's heritage is vast. Describing Italy as an open-air art gallery in its own right is hardly an exaggeration. According to UNESCO, no other country in the world can vaunt the same treasures of culture and art as Italy, as half of the world's historic and artistic assets are within its boundaries (Enit, 2007). The landscape and terrain of Italy is also varied and diverse and recognised as important element to attract tourists. That is one of the reasons why 10% of Italian territory is under state protection.

**Figure 2.1: Map of Italy**



Source: Italian government tourism board, 2007

### 2.2 Tourism in Italy

Italy has remained, during the last fifty years, among the five most visited countries (Parente, 2005). Calculating the economic benefits of tourism activities, by consolidating any direct and





indirect revenue generated by tourism businesses, Italy's current travel and tourism GDP stands at €159.6 billion, a figure equivalent to 4.5% of the world's total tourism GDP and 13.2% of the EU's (Mintel, 2005). ISTAT (Italian government's statistical agency) reports that 37.1 million tourists entered Italy in 2005, which represents 4.9% of the total travel market (Parente, 2005). Although these figures seem positive, Italy's tourism industry is not doing that well as expected since Italy achieved an average year-on-year growth rate of 2.7% between 1999 and 2002. 1.2 percentage points less than the euro zone average. In the third quarter of 2005, the GDP rose marginally (0.7%) resulting in a cumulative loss of just over €3 billion. (Mintel, 2005)

Although visitor numbers are still growing, the pace of the growth is slower, compared to other countries (figure 2.2) and compared to historical data (Mintel, 2005).

The National Tourism Board recognises this but accounts this slow growth also to a number of factors which are out of control, including the global slump in international tourist arrivals in 2001-03 owing to events such as 9/11 and SARS. The introduction of the euro in 2002, and its subsequent

inflationary effect on prices, which led to sustained losses from Italy's top 5 markets (Germany, USA, UK, France and Japan). The competition from emerging destinations and the fact that more Italians travelled abroad instead of staying in Italy resulted in the outcome of zero growth in expenditures in 2005 and have influenced the flow and balance of tourism payments to Italy in the last five years in a negative way (Mintel, 2005). Although competitors were confronted with similar issues they were less influenced by it. According to a Euromonitor research in 2006, Italy's prices rose more than the prices of its competitors. This could be related to an uncertain political period in Italy (Mintel, 2005). Especially as far as seaside resorts are concerned, Italy's higher prices resulted in tourists preferring other Mediterranean destinations, such as Croatia, Slovenia, Spain or Greece, all offering lower prices. Also emerging destinations, such as Egypt, Turkey, Morocco and Tunisia, attracted a high flow of tourists thanks to their more attractive prices. Nonetheless, Italy will remain a force to be reckoned with. According to Mintel's International Tourism Forecasts, Italian trips abroad will rise by 34.4% over 2005-15, whilst inbound arrivals will increase by 48.8%. In order to be prepared for this and to remain a competitive tourism destination a new tourism policy is introduced in 2005.

**Figure 2.2: World's top tourism destinations by arrivals in mill.**

Country	1995	2000	2005	Market share 2005	% Growth (1995-2005)
France	60	77,2	75,1	9,9	25,2
Spain	34,9	47,9	53,6	7,1	53,5
USA	43,5	51,2	46,1	6,1	6
China	20	31,2	41,8	5,5	109
Italy	31,1	41,2	37,1	4,9	19,1

Source: WTO. 2005





## 2.3 Tourism policy in Italy

The Italian government recognises the tourism industry as a strategic sector for Italy's economic growth (Parente, 2005). The country's status as a mature destination and its lack of a unitary global marketing programme were seen as main causes to its weakened competitive position and was reason to shift the development strategy in early 2005 (Mintel, 2005). The Italian National Tourist Office, Ente Nazionale Italiano per il Turismo (ENIT) is because of this since May 2005 by law an autonomous national body responsible for steering and co-ordinating national tourism policies, as well as specifying guidelines. This agency has set up the following goal;

*'Italy's goal is to maintain, and possibly increase its share of world tourism by offering good quality hospitality at competitive prices and, in particular, by improving access to and promotion of southern resorts and cultural sites.'*

Essentially, ENIT intends to steer Italy away from mass tourism, shifting its focus to niche segments instead. Working side by side with this change in tactics is the move to develop the tourism infrastructure of Italy, particularly in the South (Mintel, 2005). Above mentioned goal have therefore the following objectives

1. To emphasize Italy's cultural heritage: recently Italy's historical and artistic heritage was classified as a potential economic resource. The Italian government has therefore begun to capitalize on its cultural and historic heritage; in particular it has focused on major renovations of cultural sites. Most tourists know of the traditional sites such as the Coliseum, Venice, Tower of Pisa, and Florence. However, there are many other sites less known by tourists, especially in the southern part of Italy. These sites have the possibility of contributing to major growth in the tourism sector.
2. To create a higher quality resort chain: many regions have a shortage of hotels and lack prestigious holiday villages. Higher quality hotels are to be built to integrate with those already existing, and re-route family tourism from boarding houses to holiday villages.
3. To increase investment to boost the quality of infrastructure in southern Italy: tourism development in Italy depends on the improvement of its transportation network. Ports, motorways and facilities have to be kept up to date.
4. To encourage year round tourism





5. To promote tourism in southern Italy within international tourism sectors: to ensure a steady growth, Italy needs to increase foreign tourism arrivals. Especially the south needs to attract more tourists since the annual volume of tourism to southern Italy is around 15% of the national total. Northern tourism regions already attract the maximum number of tourists and it is not preferred to have more tourists in this region.

Although this goal and these objectives count for whole Italy it becomes obvious that it is particularly the south (beneath Rome) what is chosen as priority area to develop (Mintel, 2005). This may have its effect on the destinations; Venice (located in the North) and Capri (located in the South). Nowhere in the plans is however dealt with destinations in transition, or what the consequences are if inhabitants are leaving destinations because of the transition to a tourism economy. In what way this process evolves, what characteristics it has and what a destination in transition exactly means is described in the next paragraph.

## 2.4 Destinations in transition

Many cities in the world have been confronted with a depopulation of (parts of) the city in the last 50 years (Ashworth, 2007). Most relevant reason why this happens is that the city's industries are changing or are relocated. The inhabitants have to move in order to stay employed and to have a better future. What can happen is that the (almost) uninhabited cities, or parts of the city, become more popular for tourists and changes its function towards a tourism oriented one. This happens especially with cities that have a significant history and great heritage so that they become a cultural heritage site. The changes of the destinations economy, function or depopulation are characteristics of cities in transition (Ashworth, 2007). One of the most striking aspects in this transition process is the increasing attention that is given to the role of culture, cultural development and the quality of life of the inhabitants. (Buck, 2005). It depends on what one defines as culture but usually the inhabitants of a city are part of it and have a great influence on the way a city changes (Buck, 2005). Without inhabitants a city can not be called a city (Platenkamp, 2007). With regard to tourism a city in transition changes its original function towards a more cultural industry. Residents help destinations to develop this cultural industry and are important in the creation of an image in which destination become places 'to be seen', 'cool places' which are attractive to commercial, corporate and residential developers and of course tourists. There is however a lack of 'hard evidence' that local participation is still contributing to a social cohesion, needed to create a positive image of the destination for visitors to spend their money and free time, when the image of a destination has already been formed (Buck, 2005). This suggests indirectly that, in order to attract visitors, a community becomes less important when the image of a destination has been established. This results in the fact that





visitors, visiting the site, want to see a confirmation of the image that they have in their mind.

That it may not be 'real' or 'authentic' anymore seems beyond the point (Davis, 2004). What happens is that tourism in the urban centre changes but that also the attitude of the citizens towards tourism changes, usually in a negative way as the residents may feel neglected or not appreciated, which can strengthen the depopulation (Verheijden, 2007). The destination that transformed to the tourism industry will, as more people leave the city, eventually become more dependent from the tourism sector (Ashworth, 2007). So even when a city changes its function towards a tourism oriented one it will occur that this city keeps changing, something what is expected to happen in Venice



too, as can be seen on the picture, published by a local newspaper. How this dynamic relation evolves is described by the 'theory of the life-cycle of tourism destinations'. Cities that are able to reach the critical mass in terms of tourist attractiveness take off and reach maturity. Then, when the costs imposed by tourism activities taking place in the area begin to outweigh the benefits, tourism but also the community, if unmanaged, may eventually decline. Each of those stages is associated with a specific spatial distribution of costs and benefits from tourism and with a well-defined composition of the visitors' flows (van der Borg, 1998). Growth in tourism demand will positively affect income and employment levels of a relevant part of the population. At the same time, increasing numbers of visitors will generate negative effects, or 'costs' borne by the physical and cultural environment, the local population and the visitors themselves (Russo, 1998). By comparing benefits and costs in each heritage city, it is possible to determine whether tourist flows are either insufficiently voluminous or excessive. In reality, the assessment of the benefits and the costs of tourism is difficult, because there are several parties involved, perceiving benefits and costs in a different manner. The share of day-trippers in the visitors' flow is of decisive importance, because they impose a huge amount of costs on the town while contributing for very little part to their coverage (van der Borg, 1998). However a huge amount of day-trippers can also be the reason to preserve certain areas or to restore some sites. It are thus not only negative aspects that can be linked with day-trippers as many do (Ashworth, 2007). Literature states that in general, pro-active policies, aiming in advance to ensure the conditions for the sustainability of each forthcoming stage and at minimising the conflicts between hosts and guests, are required to maintain a stable path of tourism development. When they are missing, the danger of an





unsustainable tourism development is high. Especially when the number of visitors exceeds the number of inhabitants. It is seen as the most pessimistic scenario of tourist development (van der Borg, 2007). Tourism activities eventually decline due to the increasing costs and the decay in quality. The urban economy, at that stage transformed in a tourist mono-culture, is damaged beyond repair and it may trigger a process of crowding out. (van der Borg, 2007). This process tends to expel the less lucrative urban functions and replace them with tourist activities. What may happen to the cultural heritage destination is that the principles of the Disney theme parks dominate more and more sectors of society, the so-called 'Disneyfication' or 'Touristification' of a destination. It is presented as comprising four aspects: theming, dedifferentiation of consumption, merchandising, and emotional labor (Bryman, 2004). The term is in general to describe the stripping down of character and creativity, to create an inoffensive neutral product (destination) in which similarity is preferable to originality. Disneyfication can be applied to all sections of modern day society where this filtering and uniformity can take place. In terms of physical places, be it streets, villages or whole cities (Bryman, 2004). What happens is that cities start to exist as caricatures of themselves, who continually relive a reality they once had, meaning that they continually seek to confirm the image they have. An element or result of this Disneyfication is a loss of the destinations citizens. Whether this Disneyfication is a bad development or not will differ per destination. It is however a rather new topic with regard to tourism planning and development. In the next chapters will therefore be analysed in what way Venice and Capri developed as a tourist destination and how far they are in becoming a theme park destination. The red line through this analysis is the importance of having a community. Are they needed to be an attractive tourist destination? Or is the theory right in suggesting that, in order to attract visitors, a community becomes less important when the image of a destination has been established. An image which is partly created by the residents.





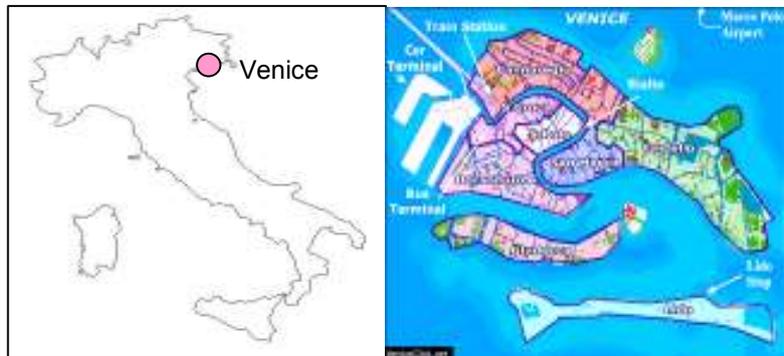
### 3 Tourism planning & development in Venice

*In this chapter is the tourism planning and development process of Venice described. Analyzed is in what way the transition process of the city took place and in what way the opinion of the Venetians changed over time. This is done until the situation right now. This will in the next chapter be compared with the development process of Capri, as can be said that this is already a theme park destination. There will be analyzed what the differences and resemblances between the destinations are in order to discover what Venice can learn from Capri and why Venice' case is different as Capri's. This can be used as input on how Venice will evolve over time. This is also the starting point from which internal and external experts see the future of Venice.*

#### 3.1 Venice

Venice is the capital of the region Veneto which is located in the North of Italy. Venice has a land surface of 189,4 km<sup>2</sup> which is divided into 2 parts: islands and the mainland. The largest part of the community is situated on the main land, which consists of the industry cities 'Mestre' and 'Marghera'. This part has 176.000 inhabitants. (Boulton, 2004). The

Figure 3.1: Map of historic centre of Venice



The 118 islands form the historic centre and are inhabited by 62.000 people on 7.2 square km<sup>2</sup> (Kerper, 2002). Most islands are connected with each other through 400 bridges (Veenstra, 2005). This part can be seen in figure 3.1 and is the research area of this study. This part of Venice is chosen as research area because it is this historical part which experiences a type of invasion of some 15 million visitors a year (van der Borg, 2007)

#### 3.2 Where tourism is situated

In general tourism in Venice is situated in three zones (appendix 1). One around the Rialto Bridge, the other around Galleria dell' Accademia and the third is the San Marco Square. Together these zones form the triangle of prime attractions (Davis, 2004). It is estimated that 85% of all the tourists coming to Venice spend virtually all their time on land walking in Piazza San Marco or on these little streets within the triangle (Davis, 2004). The Rialto was for centuries the commercial heart of Venice vast mercantile empire. Now it combines monumentality with the twin appeals shopping and hanging out. The galleria dell' Accademia still enjoys a special status as the principal repository of art from the Venetian school of painting. The heart of tourist Venice is Saint Mark's Square and it is true that everyone visiting Venice goes to San Marco. The residents





of Venice see the square as a tourist tidal basin. By breakfast time the first tour groups show up. By eleven the square is awash with foreigners and this will remain so for the next six or seven hours. At peak periods, one might easily encounter ten to fifteen thousand visitors making their way around this space at any one time. Only with the setting of the sun do the thousands begin to disperse (Davis, 2004).

### 3.3 Approaches to tourism development in Venice

At the end of the seventies, changes in the structure of the Italian economy and renovated interest in urban planning brought a wide-range reflection about the options at hand for the development of Venice. This because the city was since this time confronted with a decline in the quality of its tourism product (Russo, 2000). From these years the policy was focused on the regulation of tourism flows through zoning and restrictions in order to prevent conflicts between inhabitants and tourists (Russo, 2000). Although different measures were taken (price discrimination, restriction in hotel development and the place of developments) the city was not prepared for the intensive growth of tourism arrivals that occurred. Calculated was that Venice could absorb a total number of about 22,500 visitors. These limits were surpassed in 1987 for 156 days in the year (Costa, 1990); the number of yearly violations has been increasing since then, despite any attempt to smooth the tourist peaks through regulation and planning. The negative aspects of tourism became more obvious from the 90s on, which lead to a policy which tries to de-motivate tourists to come to Venice. Especially the day-trippers and excursionist are seen as problematic. The mayor of Venice describes this problem like this.

*'When I look out of the window of my office I see 15 million tourists coming to the city every year. 11 million of these visitors are day visitors, bringing there own food and drinks, buying nothing at all, not even a coffee while they spend there day in this 'free attraction park'. What happens is that there are no incomes but that the city is affected with all the bad aspects of tourism. It already provokes irritation among the resident population who are leaving the historic centre rapidly.'* (Focus 2006).

### 3.4 How tourism developed

Until 1797, when Venice ceased to exist as the *Serenissima Repubblica*, this was a city that existed primarily for practical purposes, not touristic ones. It was built where and how it was simply to provide its residents with a secure place to live their social, political, and commercial lives. In earlier ages, visitors came here mostly for the same reasons that outsiders always come to cities, for profit, politics, or refuge (Davis, 2004).

It was however already in 1600, by which time Venice was already well down the slope of its long decline, that visitors from England and France, particularly, came to Venice for what we call in this time tourism purposes but the city is recorded as having had official tour guides since 1204, and as early as the 15th century official guides were to be found at key city sites,





interpreting and changing money for foreign tourists (Quinn, 2006). Lured largely by those things that were relatively scarce elsewhere in Europe, a particular sense of style (the people, centre of Italian Opera and the Carnivale), above all, but also vice: gambling, and prostitution. Venice became the continent's brothel, but also, thanks to its limited scale and unique waterways, Europe's first sort of theme park (Davis, 2004). By the time the collapse of the Serenissima Repubblica came in 1797, Venice was already well on its way to living off tourism alone. In the 18th century Venice became associated with decadence, and it became a vital travel destination for the European Aristocratic and youthful men on their 'Grand Tour' (Staiff, 2000). Venice became above all a literary venture. Tourists sought to plant themselves on the same spot that had once inspired Shakespeare, Goethe, Shelley, Byron, or Browning, and then read aloud the

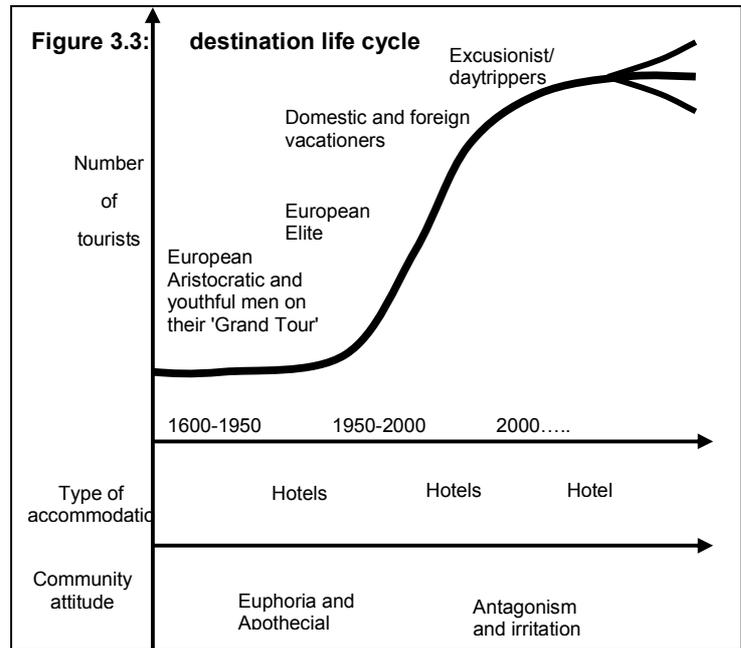
**Figure 3.2: number of tourists**

Year	Number of tourists
1950	500.000
1995	7.500.000
1999	12.000.000
2002	13.000.000
2005	15.000.000

Source: Quinn, 2006

Packaged tours, built on the modest but pervasive resources of middle-class Germans, French, and British, taking advantage of new rail links through the Alps, were soon flooding Venice with foreigners. Special trains could dump as many as ten thousand of these visitors a day into the city. Before long, Venetians were beginning to tailor the holidays, often of ancient vintage, just to suit the expectations and desires of these new visitors (Davis, 2004). Flows into Venice reached unprecedented proportions. In 1952 more than 500,000 tourists spent 1.2 million bed nights in the historic city-centre. In the decades after it,

appropriate lines. As such, one might say that Venice perhaps was the first post-modern city selling no product other than itself and its multiple images to the free-spending foreigners who came there annually. By the mid-19th century, it had become for most people a tourism destination (Quinn, 2006). The time that tourism was an activity reserved to the economic elite began to change for Venice around 1950. A new form of tourism was soon there to buy their product.



Mill&Morrisson 2002





Venice rapidly developed in a mass tourism destination, as the number of tourists point out in figure 3.2. In what way the tourism life cycle evolved is visualised in figure 3.3. Today's Venice is still endlessly recreated in a feedback loop of tourist desire and demand, and even if the historic atmosphere of the city has by now mostly given way to commercial tropes of gondoliers and Carnival masks, the city still satisfies with remarkable success the needs of those who visit it (Davis, 2004). 80% of the 15 million visitors are day-trippers that visit Venice as part of a tour (Quinn, 2006). These figures represent an exceeding of the city's carrying capacity by some seven million tourists annually (Quinn, 2006). While the 'centro storico' can deal with 22,500 visitors a day the centre is on peak days already visited by 150,000 tourists. The overnight tourist versus resident ratio can reach a peak of 50:1 in the historic core. When excursionists are included, this ratio increases to 242:1. (Quinn, 2006). This imbalance is resulting in diverse issues such as: environmental degradation, heritage management problems, conservation issues and major impacts on, and implications for, the host community. In what way the host community is seeing the current tourism situation is described in the next paragraph, as well as the way this attitude evolved over time.

### 3.5 Host community attitude towards tourism

Because it might be crucial to have a host community in order to remain a vibrant city and tourism destination it is essential to analyse the host community attitude towards tourism. Most important in the case of Venice because the community is in decline. The concept of a community itself is however not unproblematic. Main question that arises is who is the community? This can be defined in spatial, social and economic terms (Richards, 2000). In this case is chosen for the spatial definition; everybody that lives within the borders of the historic centre. This categorisation is chosen since it leaves nothing to the imagination as with the others there is room left for discussion about who is part of the community in social or economic terms (Platenkamp, 2007). As mentioned in paragraph 3.4 tourism has since long time played an important role in the historic centre of Venice. It was an attraction long before the term was ever invented. The choice to choose for tourism as main industry was a 'choice' of the Venetians themselves, who during the 1800s were exploited and then abandoned by a series of outsider governments. (Paris, Vienna, Rome). Cut off by their traditional sources of wealth, Venice was left with little to fall back on beyond their own proven ability to sell themselves and their city to foreigners (Davis, 2004). If is taken a look at Doxeys irritation index it is presumed that inhabitants can currently be placed in the Euphoria and Apothecial phase. Inhabitants welcomed the tourists since tourism was bringing new economic benefits to the city. Venetians were in a later stage (18<sup>th</sup> century) trying to achieve the maximum benefits by tailoring the holidays. A characteristic of the Apathical phase in which the host-guest relation becomes more commercial. It is until the 20<sup>th</sup> century that the community attitude towards tourism remained in these phases. From the time that travelling





became more accessible for everybody (1950s), the moment that Venice was associated with decadence only visited by the higher aristocratic was over. This had an immediate effect on the population of the historic centre. Demographic statistics point to the persistent haemorrhaging of the city's population since 1950 (186,000 then to 62,000 now), as people have moved onto the



mainland, consequent from the overwhelming predominance of tourism and its 'crowding out' effect on the local economy (Quinn, 2006). Only 3 original industries are left in the historic centre. Glass blowing, lace stitching and gondola building. However all master professions are becoming extinct and the products are being exploited for the tourism industry (Esposito, 2007). The demographic, social, and economic changes have



prompted researchers to conclude that historic Venice has in fact been overwhelmed by tourism and that it is now malfunctioning in the extreme (Quinn, 2006). Rising house costs, the difficulties of finding employment outside, but also in, tourism and depreciation in the quality of life because of congestion and over-crowding in public spaces, transport, and other services, have brought the attitude towards tourism in the last phase of the development process, antagonism (Ribaldi, 2007). Even three of Venice most important 'community' events have all been absorbed by the tourism industry; like the carnival, Vogalonga (boat race) and the 'festa del redentore' (festival of Christ the redeemer). Events which were all initiated by the community but as soon as the events gained popularity they were 'taken over' by the tourists and the events became international festivals. Currently hardly any Venetian participates in these festivals anymore. The Venetians have nothing for themselves anymore (Banderin, 2007).





**The local voice.....frustration, impatience and irritation**

Venice is faced with tourists who consider it appropriate to wear bathing attire in the city, to picnic on the steps of churches, and to block pedestrian routes to get a good photograph (Ribaldi, 2007). 'Excursionists' are considered most negatively in this regard, also called 'murdi e fuggi' (bite and flee). Venetians feel they have become part of a minority culture or folklore group, living in a sort of Disneyland. Inhabitants see the behaviour of tourists as inappropriate and it is interpreted as 'a lack of respect for those who live here'. This results in daily life frustration (Kerper, 2002). Venetians say that they can not use the vaporetti (public transportation boats) because they are 'always full of tourists', 'over-crowded' and subject to delays because of the pressure on the system. Inhabitants 'have to take an earlier one to get to work on time'. Walking instead is similarly problematic. Venetians consider 'it is necessary to avoid certain zones', 'to know alternative routes' and to 'look for short cuts'. Certain parts of the city are acknowledged as being 'no go areas'. It is however felt that it is becoming 'more difficult to avoid the tourists', who, problematically, slow local people down. As one put it, 'Venetians must adopt the rhythm of tourists'. Negotiating tourists on the streets and pathways means that locals must walk 'zigzag', weaving in and out of tourist groups in a way that slow them down. Walking through the city, Venetians do not want to be photographed chatting to their neighbours, or delayed carrying home their shopping. Yet this happens regularly. Tourism is blamed for increasing the price of goods and services, for elevating property prices, and for generating waste. It is seen as a bigger threat for the city than the risk from periodic flooding.

(Source: Kerper, 2002)

This does not mean that the tourism industry does not bring any positive aspects. As many locals blame the tourists for exploiting their city, much, if not most of the selling out of Venice is being done by the Venetians themselves with economic benefits as result (Grandi, 2007). The heritage Venice gives to the world is available thanks to local and national care but also thanks to tourism fame and visitors money. Tourism money makes it for example possible to restore old buildings and to create a positive image for the city. Visitor audience is absolutely necessary to develop and maintain a living and performing culture, today (Scaramuzzi, 2007). Argued is also that the historic centre still exist because of tourism and its day-trippers (Ashworth, 2007). It is stated that greater beneficiaries of tourism will perceive higher levels of positive impacts. In the context of this theory, it is assumed that more engagement with tourists leads to more benefits from the industry (Andereck, 2005). This depends however on the nature of residents' interactions with tourists. In the case of Venice those who have had objectionable encounters with tourists may actually perceive greater costs than those who have had no, or affirmative, encounters with tourists. More generally, moving beyond mobility-related performances, respondents' reporting of this situation communicated a general sense of dissatisfaction with the tourist presence in the city. It is not any individual that is disliked but it is the volume of tourists that provokes irritation (Gianni, 2007) 'too many tourists means you can't move' (Ribaldi, 2007)

Research (Brougham and Butler 1981; Lankford and Howard 1994), suggested that residents who were born in their study area, and those who had lived there for a long time, were





somewhat less favourable toward tourism (Adereck, 2005). Venetians do not agree with the type of tourism that is prevalent in the historic centre. 'Venice shouldn't have mass tourism because it destroys the city' and 'the city should select its tourists', to stop the flow of the 'mordi and fugi' excursionist (Quinn, 2006). As many Venetians agree..... Venice is arriving at a crucial moment for the future of Venice. This is also underlined by several interviews, conducted in 2007 in which there is a wish to reduce the number of day-trippers (Romano, 2007) The strange thing is, everybody realizes it is a crucial moment to make a choice for the future but there is no will and no ability to create a consensus (Kerper, 2002).

### 3.6 Overview

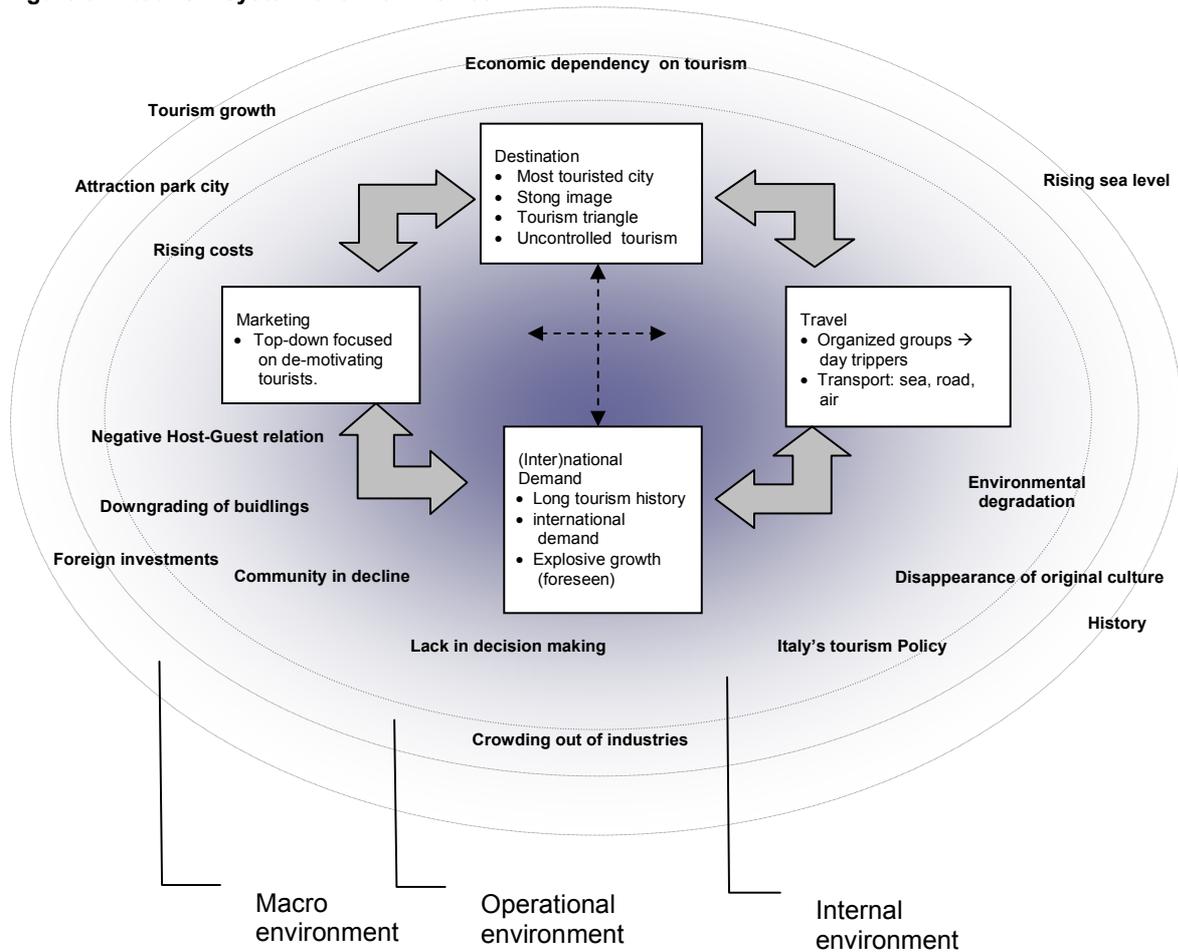
A summary of this chapter is visualised in figure 3.4 and the goal of this scheme is to give in an eye-wink an impression about what is going on in Venice. Since the scheme is a mix of the model of Liu and Mill and Morrison it is useful to explain the working of the scheme as the overview can be better understood after it. It is however not the aim to analyse the outcomes of these models in detail as this will be done in a later stage (chapter 5). A short explanation of the models working is however on its place. The external factors that influence tourism development in Venice resembles (partly) the model of Liu. In this model is the environment, at any given time, is a result of the interplay of many complex and continually changing forces and inevitably affect the tourism system positively or negatively (Liu, 1994). The environment of the tourism industry may be portioned into three distinct but interlocking levels: the internal environment, the operating environment and the macro environment. The macro level is that level of the tourism system's external environment made up of variables that are normally broad in scope and usually have less immediate effects on tourism in the destination and often influence tourism development through affecting its operating environment. The macro environmental factors have in this model been categorised into economic, socio-cultural, demographic, political geographical and technological. The operating environment is that level of the tourism system's external environment made up of components that normally have relatively specific and immediate implications for the operation and development of the system. The basic elements of the operating environment include the tourists, the suppliers required for the industry, the competing industries and competing destinations. The internal environment is the level which normally has immediate and specific implications for managing the tourism industry. The main components of this environment may include policy-making, planning, strategies and procedures (Liu, 1994). In figure 3.4 are the macro, operating and internal environment visualised. Since Liu described the tourism system not in detail, and presents this system as rather 'static', there is chosen to combine this model with the model of Mill & Morrison. This model shows the interaction and interdependency among destinations and markets, linked through travel and marketing (Mill & Morrison, 2002). It is a frequently used model and in this report the model is applied to the





actual tourism system in Venice. In Venice this situation can be seen as a dynamic process where every external factor (macro, operating and internal environment) affects in a certain way the output the elements demand, destination, marketing and travel. The goal of this scheme is to visualise this as a summary of this chapter and not to go in-depth into the results of this scheme.

**Figure 3.4: tourism system overview Venice**





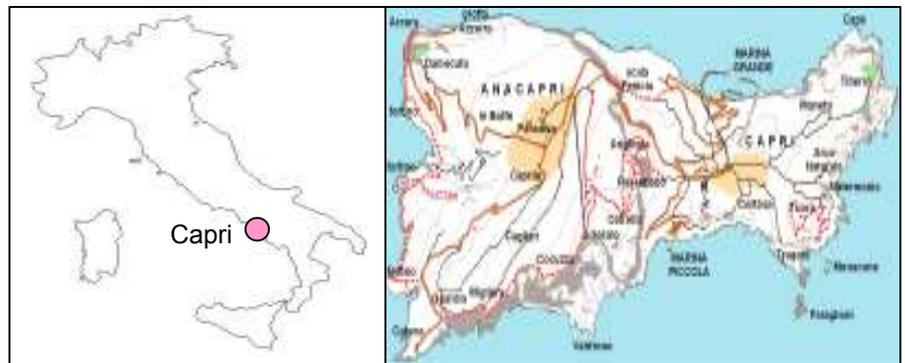
## 4 Tourism planning and development in Capri

*In this chapter the tourism planning and development process of Capri is described. Analyzed is in what way the transition process of the destination took place and in what way the opinion of the inhabitants changed over time. This is done until the actual situation. This makes it possible to analyse what the differences and resemblances between Venice and Capri are. This can be of input in the analysis of how Venice will evolve over time. This is also the starting point from which internal and external experts see the future of Venice. Information in this chapter is all retrieved from desk research gathered in the Netherlands.*

### 4.1 Capri

Capri is an island of the coast of Southern Italy, in the Bay of Naples. Celebrated because of her 'beauty spots' the island has been an attractive destination since the Roman Republic. The surface of the island is 10,4 square kilometre and consists of 2 ancient villages, Capri and Anacapri which are inhabited by approximately 7000 people (commune di Capri, 2007).

**Figure 4.1: Map of Capri**



The city of Capri is the main centre of population. It has two adjoining harbors, Marina Piccola and Marina Grande, which is the main port of the island. The town of Anacapri is located high on the hills north from the City of Capri. Both villages are connected with each other via a single road (D'aniello, 2000). Modern transportation in the cities is not possible since the roads are too small. The island of Capri can be seen in figure 4.1 and is the research area of this study.

### 4.2 Where tourism is situated

Going to Capri one arrives in Marina Grande, the island's main port which is humming with activity. From this point minibuses, taxis, including vintage convertibles called bathtub taxis, hover between several key locations, including the two main towns of Capri and Anacapri (Furst, 2003). Much of the pleasure on Capri lies in not having a car. Although several main streets connect key points on the island, most other lanes, narrow and twisting, are necessarily traffic free, except for occasional motorized carts ferrying heavy goods. With trails crisscrossing the hills, and a maze of lanes, this is a walkers island (Furst, 2003). All visitors arrive in the town Capri at 'Piazza Umberto I', the island's most celebrated gathering place and known simply as La





Piazzetta (Toth, 2001). This square is overrun with daily visitors and it sometimes gets so crowded with people that it is hard to tell where one café begins and another ends (Fiori, 2003). The piazza is also the starting point of Capri's shopping streets. The windows of its boutiques, often built into an old Roman wall, glittered with Gucci, Ferragamo and other designer confections. Many shops tend to cater more to quantity than quality, and the town of Capri has gone the expected way (Begley, 2007). It's the other end of the island that's unexpectedly in bloom, and quality has a new home. Since traffic in Capri is not possible everywhere, most has to be reached on foot. In the hills above the village of Capri is Anacapri, the quieter part of the island, where more and more wealthy Italians stay; restoring 'little castles' or building houses. Visitors stay short in Anacapri as they are on their way to the ruins of Villa Jovis (Tiberius residency) or to see the three offshore boulders called Faraglioni rocks. Rising from the water to over 100 meters, they're Capri's single most recognizable symbol. Capri's other prime attraction is the Blue Grotto. A sea cave famous because of its size and blue tones (Appendix 2).

#### 4.3 Approaches to tourism development in Capri

The island of Capri recognises the importance of tourism but is also aware of the negative consequences it has. Tourism officials of the island worked together with the World Tourism Organisation in order to develop tourism in a sustainable way. That WTO indicates Capri as an important destination is because it is one of the leading tourism destinations in the Mediterranean region (WTO, 2005). The Mediterranean region is very fragile and expects a growth of tourism arrivals of 73% in the coming 10 years (WTO, 2005). If the same growth figure is to be expected in Capri the island will be confronted with almost 1 million visitors. Capri is already confronted with the negative aspects of tourism, despite the implementation of different projects especially concerning waste consumption. A growth of tourism arrivals is something what is undesired, as is expressed by the 2 mayors of Capri and Anacapri who send a letter to the prefect of Naples with the following content *'As high season on the island gets under way, with an estimated 18,000 tourists expected to flood the streets each day to see sights such as the Blue Grotto and the Faraglioni Rocks the idyllic territory 'is in danger of exploding'*. (Phillips, 2005). It is however the aim of Naples to attract more visitors to the community, using the islands of Capri and Ischia as promotion tool (Mintel, 2005). Also the national policy is focused on attracting more visitors to the South as is described in paragraph 2.3. There seems therefore a discrepancy in the different tourism development goals.

#### 4.4 How tourism developed

That Capri has been a popular destination for over a thousand years can be concluded because of the archaeological and historical research being done (on the island). Ruins of different villas are found on the island dating from Roman times (D'aniello, 2000). These were from the first person





to really appreciate Capri, the Emperor Augustus. So taken was he with the island's beauty that he traded the nearby fertile Ischia for it with the city of Naples. 'Pleasure palaces' were built for Augustus who adopted this island as his favourite retreat (Lister, 1988). Also Tiberius, the man who took control of Rome after Augustus took residency in Capri. Tiberius, found it even more to his liking. He lived on Capri for the last 10 years of his reign, dividing his time among 12 villas as he avoided most of the cares and dangers back in Rome (Lister, 1988). In later ages the island was conquered by different rulers, until the fall of Napoleon who used the island as a strategic outpost.

After the forming of Italy, the island's cultural reawakening began in around 1800. It is this time that Capri's fame as an exclusive destination started since it was 'discovered' by the travellers participating in the Grand Tour. It was at this time that the island's first hotel opened: the Hotel Pagano. Intellectuals, writers, painters, poets, artists and the wealthy unemployed all travelled to the island, drawn to Capri by its exquisite beauty and seduced by the hospitable spirit of the islanders. But it was until after the Russian-Japanese war of 1905 and the great exodus of Russian intellectuals, that Capri really established itself as a literary and political refuge. Capri acquired a reputation as a centre of great cultural ferment, in addition to its fame for its spectacular natural landscapes (commune di Capri, 2007). This reputation attracted the wealthy Jet-set of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and Capri started too slowly to equip itself with tourist facilities.

**Capri: take it and leave it....**

*'Famous for its wonderful natural beauty, deep-rooted history, mild climate and bright landscape, the island of Capri is a favourite destination for international tourists. The island's reputation as a playground for the rich and famous kept the 'hoi polloi' away for a time, but that is changing. Today, the biggest scandal on the island is the hordes of day trippers who disembark from the ferries at daybreak, descend on the shops and restaurants, the ancient ruins, private and public beaches, and then vanish at nightfall back from whence they came, leaving the island shocked behind'. (Fiori, 2003 and Burgess 2007)*

The island became better accessible for more visitors and with the change that travelling was not only reserved to the economic elite anymore the island was faced, from the 80s on, with a rapid growth in tourism arrivals. In 2006 the island was visited by just around 550.000 visitors, making the inhabitants/ visitors ratio 1 against 78 (commune di Capri, 2007).

**4.5 Host community attitude towards tourism**

Before the host community attitude of Capri towards tourism is described the question that arises is who this community is? This can be defined in spatial, social and economic terms (Richards, 2000). Also in the case of Capri there is chosen to use the spatial component. This encompasses everybody that lives on the island. Currently approximately 7000 people are living in 2 villages, Anacapri and Capri (commune di Capri, 2007). The inhabitants of Capri and Anacapri watched





the island evolve from a favored holiday destination of intellectuals and wealthy (Italian) families to an international celebrity hot spot in the 50s until the 80s.

Separated by a natural barrier, the people of Capri and Anacapri are historic rivals (Lister, 1988). They therefore always competed for the attention of tourists. Anacapri has the Blue Grotto as its main attraction. Capri to the east has most of the hotels, shops, Villa Jovis and the Farglioni rocks, as main attractions (Lister, 1988). The Caprese, whose livelihood is depended on tourism, welcomed their visitors warmly.

By the 80s, when Capri became a stopping-off spot for day trippers on package tours, the streets became more crowded than they have ever been with celebs and jet-setting tourists. Still the attitude towards tourism is positive seen the island is chosen in 2007 to be Italy's prime destination when it concerns the hospitality of people participating in the tourism industry (Mattino, 2007). Also the fact that many people visit the island gives a certain pride to the inhabitants. The latest influx has brought a change however. The island's carrying capacity is highly exceeded, leading to pollution, social pressure and high costs. Designer boutiques such as Gucci, Tod's and Dolce & Gabbana now line the streets where local shops once operated (Sasvari, 2001). Just recent, a new famous brand mega-store has opened doors, right where visitors spill out of the bus (funicular) that brings them up to Capri Town from the Marina Grande (port)

#### **Changing Capri.....**

*Adriana and her three daughters, Francesca, Luciana and Christina, still run the store that Adriana's mother opened in 1906. 'All the ladies passing through Capri who wanted a dress came to my mother,' says Adriana, adding, 'All the world passed through here.' This year, three, four new designer boutiques opened doors. Her tailors still custom-make her famous Capri's, but, she says, 'In the 60s everybody in Capri made everything by hand, we are almost the last in Capri that do that'. Francesca believes her family's business has to change with the times if it is to survive. Adriana however claps her hands gleefully 'like a little kid'. Francesca looks at her mother with a fond smile. 'That time, it was very beautiful,' she says. 'But it is history'. Adriana turns away with a shrug.*  
*(Sasvari, 2001)*

Although there is spoken about one island, there is a difference in attitude and behaviour towards tourism between the 2 villages Capri and Anacapri. Literature seems to be on one line in stating that

*'Anacapri avoided the fate of the town called Capri, at the other end of the island, where a fountain of tourist money has resulted in a kind of businesslike cynicism. The delicate shyness you find today in Anacapri is an attitude that carries with it, unseen and unspoken, a certain acceptance of and pride in the past. People who work in shops, restaurants, boats, drugstores anywhere at all, in or near Anacapri seem to command respect by virtue of not asking for it' (Feibleman 2005).*





That the inhabitants of Anacapri are less influenced by the tourism industry as Capri is, could be due to the fact that Capri village lies in the belly of the island. For eight hours of the day thousands of tourists from the mainland visit this village. Anacapri sits above all this activity, some 500 meters above sea level (Porter, 2005). The only link between the two villages is a narrow road that clings to the cliff face. A proportion of the trippers who arrive on the island in the morning make it up to Anacapri, stand in lifeless groups being lectured by tour guides, who quickly carry on as they have to see more highlights of the island (Porter, 2005).

Although the island of Capri is chosen to be Italy's prime destination in guiding and hospitality both towns are concerned about the current and future tourism flows. There have already been several strikes in which inhabitants of both towns agreed to close the harbor for tourists since the safety could not be guaranteed anymore. (Il mattino, 2007). Already ten thousand tourists are left behind each day in harbors on the mainland as there is no place for them anymore to step on a boat to Ischia or Capri (Il mattino, 2007). The mayor of Capri wants to ban trippers. The package holiday companies and the ferry lines vigorously oppose such a move, dressing up their profit-motive as democracy. The problem is that Capri is a very small island, with limited water and sewerage disposal, and it cannot cope with large numbers of people arriving (Winterson, 2001). Even the church responded to the emerging problems with a ban on tourist weddings for a 'substantial' but sufficient period (BBC, 2007). Because of all the day trippers hardly any incomes are generated by the inhabitants. The plan is therefore to ask an entrance fee to every visitor. In this way the problems on the islands can be solved.

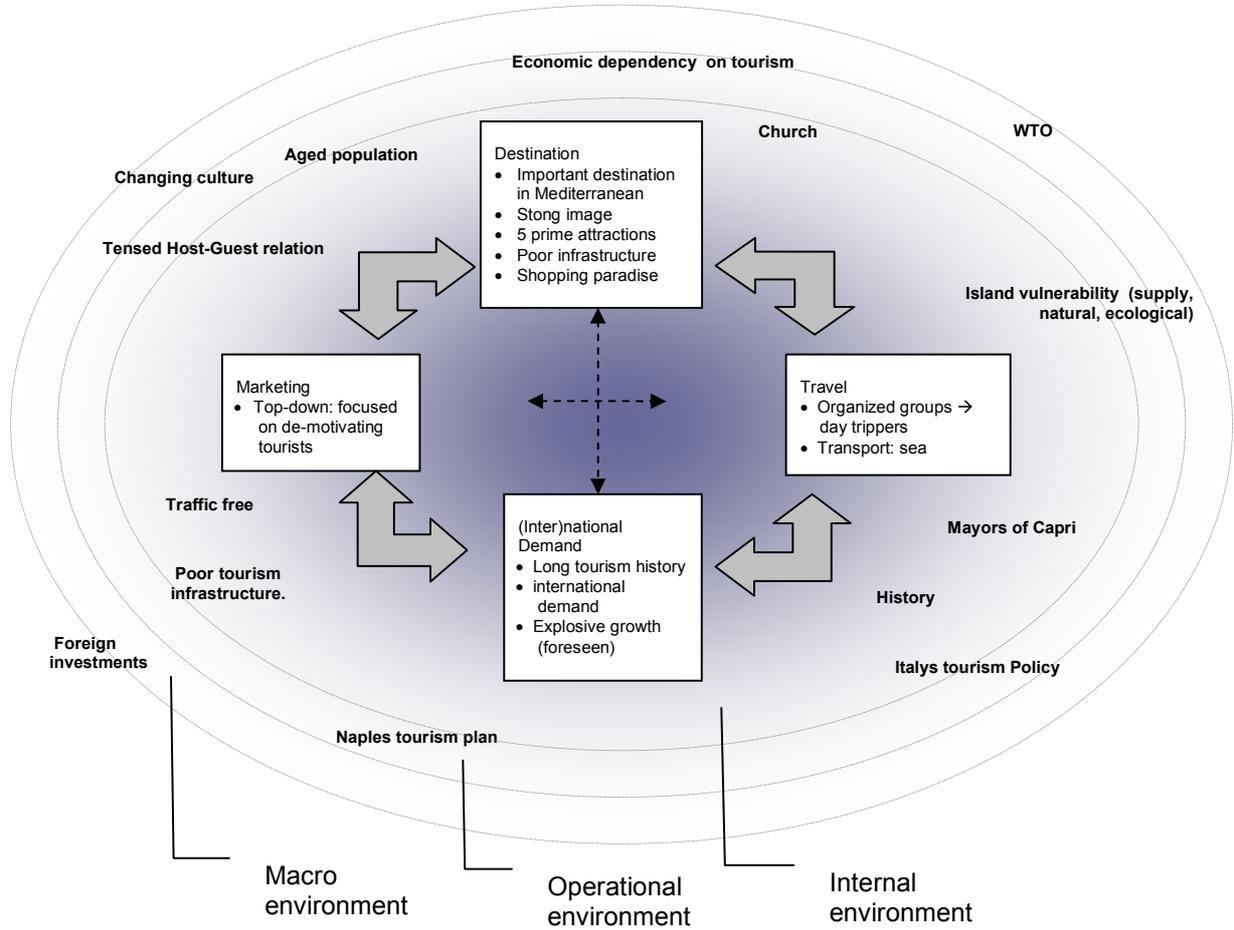
#### 4.6 Overview

A summary of this chapter is visualised in figure 4.2. This model is developed in the same way as the model used in chapter 3 (figure 3.4) in which the tourism situation of Venice was summarised and serves the same aim. To give in an eye-wink an impression about what is going on in the destination, not to explain the outcomes of the models in detail. Also in this scheme the external factors that influence tourism development in Capri resemble (partly) the model of Liu. Again there is chosen to combine this model with the model of Mill & Morrison. Also in Capri this situation can be seen as a dynamic process where every external factor affects in a certain way the output the elements demand, destination, marketing and travel.





Figure 4.2: tourism system overview Capri





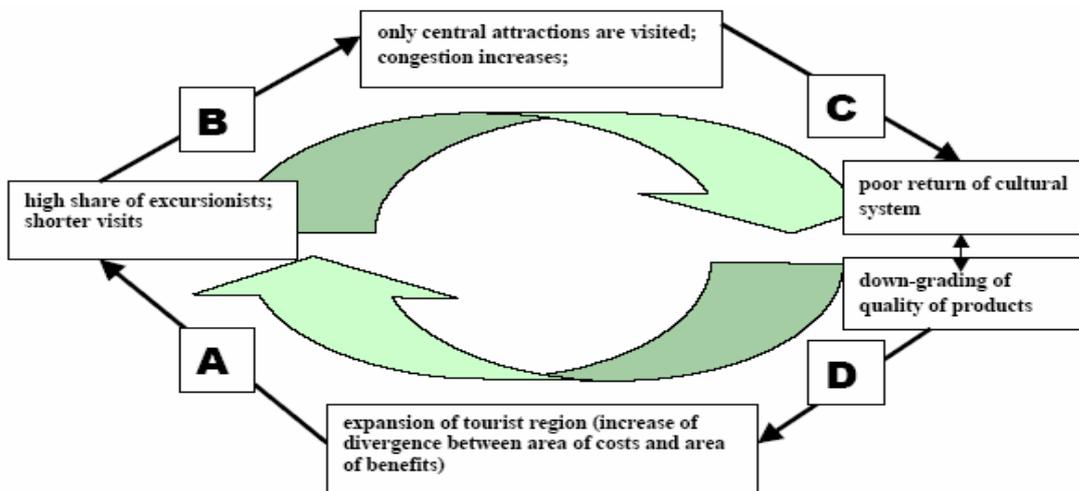
## 5 Venice and Capri

Tourism has a great potential to affect the lives of community residents. Literature mentions increased employment, investments, and profitable local businesses as positive impacts but also indicated negative effects such as an increase in the cost of living and negative effect on socio-cultural factors such as habits, daily routines, social lives, beliefs, and values. These factors may, in turn, lead to psychological tension with as final result can lead to a decline in numbers of residents (Andereck, 2005). In order to examine in what way the case of Venice and Capri are confronted with this, the vicious circle of tourism development in heritage destinations is used (figure 5.1). In this way it is possible to summarize in which way the destinations evolved and what the differences and resemblances are between the two destinations. A link can be made with the literature about disneyisation in order to say something about the importance of a community in a tourism destination.

### 5.1 Venice versus Capri

In the previous chapters is described how Venice and Capri developed as a tourism destination and how the community attitude towards tourism changed overtime until the situation as it is right now. At this moment both destinations are confronted with the same issues and challenges and analysing the development process both destinations went through, makes it clear, that they are part of a vicious circle, presented in figure 5.1. With this figure it is possible to compare both destinations and to analyse how far both destinations are in becoming a theme park destination and if this is problematic or not.

Figure 5.1 vicious circle of tourism development in heritage destinations



Source: Russo, 2000





### A: Expansion of tourist region

As tourism grew in Venice and Capri, the attractive power of the destination became larger. The share of day-trippers among the overall number of visitors increased. An increasing number of visitors spend a high share of their budget outside the central area, but they continued to impose costs. This is the issue the mayor of Venice describes in paragraph 3.2. and the mayor of Capri wants to solve by asking for entrance fees. Moreover, visitors who commute have less time for retrieving all information about the cultural and the complementary products. Consequently they tend to be less aware of the qualitative content of the tourist goods and less reachable by traditional information tools (guides, signals, press). Something what also occurs in Venice (Russo, 2000). Only 1 out of 4 visitors comes to Venice to visit something in particular; the same percentage ever pays to get in a cultural institution during their visit. On the whole, far less visitors are able to enjoy the cultural heritage than the city could offer, and the quality of the tourists' experience is eroded by various impediments and time lost in queues (Russo, 2000). The same happens in Capri where, as described in paragraph 4.4, only a few day-trippers make it up to Anacapri, who quickly carry on as they have to see more highlights of the island (Porter, 2005). However, it is not just the quality of the primary tourist product of Venice to slump in the last years: the decline in the quality of commercial outlets to meet a less sophisticated demand is even more unabridged. The result of such process of reorientation is a dramatic simplification of the economic base of the city. This is particularly evident in the retail and catering sector which are starting to feel the breath of cheap competitors (Esposito, 2007). The theming characteristic of the Disneyfication process can be subscribed to this simplification of the economic base. Shops in Venice all sell carnival masks or glass blown products. Elements where Venice is famous for. The same happens in Capri to some extent. It are in this case however not the cheap competitors which are flourishing but exclusive shops which are opening boutiques where local shops once operated (Sasvari, 2001).

### B: High share of excursionist; shorter visits

In part B of the vicious circle day trips produce more congestion than overnight stays, and in this stage their share on the total number of visits increases. The incapacity of Venice to benefit from tourism in proportion with the growth of tourism is at the bases of the next phase of the vicious circle (Russo, 2000). That the inhabitants of Venice are not in full potential benefiting from tourism is underlined by the fact that only a relatively small number of those living and employed in Venice earn their living directly from tourism (Quinn, 2006). 28% describes themselves as being economically dependent on it. This is somewhat different in the case of Capri. In this destination every job is direct or indirect related with tourism (commune di Capri, 2007). This is however not strange looking at the number of inhabitants of Capri.





### C: Only central attractions are visited

The excessive concentration of the visits negatively affects the performance of the tourism attractions. Because visitors on the whole are less sensible to quality, the suppliers of tourist goods in the city centre will be able to decrease the quality content of their products while maintaining their market share. They may lose some 'sophisticated' customers, but they appeal to visitors less concerned with quality and much more sensible to prices (Russo, 2000). This dedifferentiation of consumption is a characteristic of the Disneyisation process. In the end, in a typical process of adverse selection, only low-price/low-quality suppliers are left in the market. High quality products are replaced with cheap and standardised ones. Venetians seem aware of this decline but are often not knowledgeable or capable in how to sustain their business.

#### **Lace making, since 1400 a famous Venetian industry.....**

*On the island are only ten master lace makers left. About 400 hundred women are however making lace following simple designs and using thick dread. The result is very different from the authentic Burano Lace. Nobody can't blame them when you consider that one tablecloth takes 720 hours to make and people are only paid 1 euro an hour. The youngsters are not interested to take over the business. Everything becomes even more difficult by the presence of cheap factory-made lace from China and Korea.*

The Caprese are dealing with the same issue. Not knowing how their traditional family business can compete against the new 'rich' boutiques. Although these boutiques are not the low price/low quality product suppliers which are left in the market they are able to sell mass-produced standardised products. Something what can also be seen as a lower quality as it does not represent the exclusivity of traditional hand made products. The visitor-driven reorientation of the supply however ends up in an decrease in the welfare of the residents, who suffer the most by the decrease in quality of the products sold (in Venice) or the mass-producing suppliers (in Capri) as their own origin, but labour intensive industry, can not compete with the new industries. A factor that may explain the persistent outflow of residents from the centre of Venice (Russo, 2000). A second consequence is that, face to the decline in quality of the Venetian tourist supply and the standardised products in Capri, an increasing number of potential tourists will be pushed to become commuters or, in general, to neglect the 'cultural' motivation to see Venice or Capri. Both destinations are confronted with this seen the percentage of day-trippers visiting the sites, without being interested in the cultural aspect of the destinations (Davis, 2004).

### D: Down grading of products.

In the fourth and last phase of the vicious cycle the tourism product is getting increasingly banal, and congestion making it more costly for visitors to choose the central facilities as accommodation, the convenience for them to consume non-central facilities increases as well (Russo, 2000). The visitors evaluate the cost of distance against the prices and the quality of the





complementary facilities. An increasing number of them will then choose a peripheral location, thus feeding further the operation of the vicious circle. Something what is also happening in Venice. Hotel prices on the mainland decrease constantly. A room in a four-star hotel in Padua costs about one third than in Venice. Such enormous difference in tourist prices explains the emergence of this curious character, the 'false' day-tripper, whose aim is to visit Venice but prefers to spend the night in its environs (van der Borg, 1991). The same happens with the thousands of day-trippers that visit Capri every day. Spending their night in Naples or Sorrento in order to visit Capri the following day.

## 5.2 Research findings and analysis

Venice and Capri are caught in an interesting moment of setting their priority on tourism development and/ or local preservation, as it seems that these aspects, at least in Venice can't go together. This can be confirmed by the fact that an often heard frustration in Venice is that 'every decision is made in favour of the tourism industry while nothing is done to make the life of the inhabitant somewhat easier' (Coro, 2007). The opinions about what has to be chosen (tourism development, preservation of the community or both?) differ. This is however with the focus on a future prospect. But opinions already differ about the current tourism state of the historic centre. Where many experts say that the carrying capacity of Venice is exceeded almost every day and that it is too crowded in Venice (Russo, 2007) others say that this is nonsense (Ashworth, 2007). There is however no real truth. It is crowded if one stays on the main tourist routes. But as soon as is chosen to take another route, 'no' tourists will be seen anymore. From this point of view it can even be stated that Venice is a good example of how to control visitors. At least in clustering them in a part of the centre (85% of the tourists, stays within the triangle shown in appendix 1). Not in spreading them over time, as almost everyone visits the city during the summer months (van der Borg, 2007). From this perspective it can be said that the city could attract much more tourists (Ashworth, 2007). When being in Venice it doesn't seem as chaotic, dirty or smelly as one might expect with that many people in such a small area. But when is taken a closer look it can be seen that all garbage cans are too full, with the consequence that everything falls out, many tourists sit on places where they don't belong and don't seem to be embarrassed to walk in bath clothing through the city (Auri, 2007). It are these aspects that cause irritations by the inhabitants. It happens often that they don't feel respected by the tourists because it is of them that they hardly can't use the public facilities anymore, there is pollution, are not able to have spaces or events for themselves and they are the reason that prices rise (Ribaldi, 2007). The irritations are now even openly expressed, with, for example flyers on doors. Although this is a logical consequence and it can be said that these problems are the result of too many tourists, it can also be argued that there is a lack of facilities and proper tourism routes through the city, which if there were, would at least take away some pressure on the city and its inhabitants. The community is aware of this. It is





therefore not the case that any individual tourist is disliked but it is just the volume of all the tourists that makes it difficult to live in the historic centre (Gianni, 2007). Don't feeling respected is not a reason to leave a city where their family lived for generations. It is mainly because living becomes too costly, only affordable for the rich. The Venetian is therefore forced to leave the city (Salvatore, 2007). If the number of tourist arrivals keeps growing, what is likely to happen, and no measures are taken to help the community in their daily life than the community is realistic, saying that the historic centre will become a theme park, with no inhabitants anymore (Auri, 2007). A scenario that will not last for long according the general opinion of the Venetian. A community is needed for 'untouchable' aspects, for example the atmosphere, that make Venice, Venice (Alberto, 2007). But also for practical purposes as maintenance of buildings or political representation they are needed (Russo, 2007). For tourism? is a point of



discussion. What can be said is that in Venice the inhabitant is no priority for the tourists, at least for the short term (Alberto, 2007). For them, the destination seems nothing more than a kind of theme park. The gondola for example was at one time the only way how Venetians travelled around their city's famous canals. Now it is virtually impossible to get a gondolier that takes a spontaneous tour through the canals. A gondola ride is no longer an authentic Venetian experience but the tourists don't seem to mind. A gondola ride is an obligation that tourists have to fulfil if their visit to Venice is to be complete and successful. If they do that, they're happy. Tourists also largely accept the destination as a giant strip mall and are happy to find all the tourist trinkets available to buy on every side, even though most of this 'tourist ware' is actually made elsewhere (Davis, 2004). People are attracted by a certain image of the site and are seeking of a confirmation of this image. The local community is not important in this case (Ashworth, 2007). Usually the ones that work in the tourism industry are eager to confirm the image. Attracted by the strong image the destination has, tourists seem not to realise that the destination has a local life, a living community with daily tasks and concerns (Davis, 2004). In this respect they are not needed (Ashworth, 2007). On the long term however everybody is in one line, stating that the city may become unattractive for tourists because it has no inhabitants anymore that keep the city 'up-to-date' and create a certain atmosphere in the centre. The city may eventually fall into a persistent urban depression, loose its identity and eventually also it's positive image as the tourism product becomes too banal (van der Borg, 2007) It is however up to the destination to prevent this from happening. And that this is possible is shown in the case study of Capri. A destination that developed in a similar way as Venice but despite it





has hardly a community anymore it still remains a popular destination instead of a deserted place. Having a small community seems therefore not necessarily mean that it has disastrous effects on the city itself or the attractiveness on tourists. Having no inhabitants in both destinations is hardly impossible as there will always be people living in the destination to serve the tourism industry. It is however the point of having no 'origin' inhabitants anymore that may lead to the loss of identity. That is why Venetians are against the depopulation. Most of the original Venetian culture has already been swept aside, replaced by a tourist monoculture. The nature of a tourist monoculture is that it drives away all the other businesses (Davis, 2004). In Capri however this process is used to preserve the 'origin' industries and the tourism industry is embraced for it. The tourism industry gave the island an exclusive image, while the image of Venice, although still positive, is a bit retrieved. It is seen that, although in Capri, the tourist arrivals rose significantly the Capri community was able to absorb the impact. Here, tourism co-opts instead of, as Venetians state; overwhelms their local culture. Everybody is involved in the tourism industry and is in one way or the other making profit out of it. It is even because of the tourists that some business still exists. Some experts state that this is the same in Venice (Ashworth, 2007) but that some do not realise it yet or don't say it out loud. It seems in this context however not remarkable that, although inhabitants at this moment blame the tourism industry for all the negative impacts on the city (pollution, damage, irritation) they don't want to close the city for tourists. The tourism industry must not completely disappear, so that only inhabitants are left in the city (Ferro, 2007). Although it has not been directly said, the tourism industry certainly is bringing also profits to the Venetians and maybe preserves even some industries. It are the inhabitants that keep the industry booming, as their businesses are direct or indirect supporting the tourism industry. It is all about making money (Ribaldi, 2007). Preferred scenario that came through, out of all of the interviews, is a mix of both. A destination with less tourists and also another type of tourists. The ones that are interested in the city, stay more than one day and respect the inhabitants (Verheijden, 2007). Preferred in this scenario is that the mix between inhabitants and visitors becomes normal again. This means that the number of visitors does not exceed the number of residents during a day (van der Borg, 2007). The dependency on tourism must be reduced and there should be created an atmosphere in which also other industries have the chance to flourish. This is also in line with Italy's tourism policy which aims to lower the volume of tourists in the North and attract them to the South. Venetians and experts are however pessimistic about the likelihood of this scenario as politicians 'will never act or minimise the tourism industry' (Gavagnin, 2007). It is however the question if it are only the politicians that are in control of this as most Venetians can make a hold to the industry if they would really want to. What may happen in the future is described in the next chapter, in which different scenarios are presented.





## 6 Scenario's

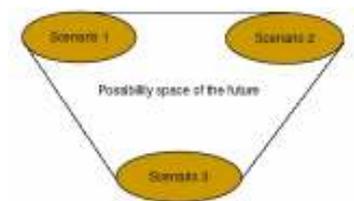
In this chapter are three different scenarios for the future of Venice developed. The input for these scenarios is all 34 interviews that were executed with internal and external experts. Also the results from the case study of Capri are used to come to these scenario's, which may provide frameworks for policy decisions, to help to identify dangers and opportunities for policies, to help to asses alternative policies and actions under different conditions and to try to increase creativity and choice in policy making. Next is explained how these scenario's can contribute to all these aspects.

### 6.1 Background

Until the 70's future studies were mainly based on traditional extrapolation. Then scenario techniques started to be used. The strength of these scenario's is that they don't have the intention to predict the future but to assist in the decision making process (especially for the long term). Although predictions of the future have a good chance to be true, especially extrapolation techniques do not take into account that numerous external factors can influence the prediction in a negative or positive way. Scenario's leave some space open for this speculation. This is because the variety of the three scenarios help to identify the 'possibility space' as is visualised in figure 6.1. The three scenarios designed in this research report are based on the following essentials:

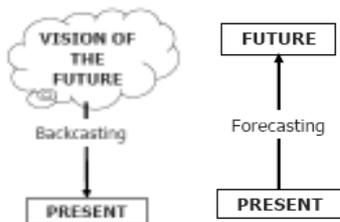
- The possible future: What may happen (scenario 1)
- The probable future: What is most likely to happen (scenario 2)
- The preferred future: What would we like to happen (scenario 3)

Figure 6.1: scenario's



These scenarios give also insight in what the consequences will be when a possible scenario is

Figure 6.2: Backcasting/ forecasting



about to come true or when is chosen for a specific scenario. This is also called the difference between backcasting and forecasting, visualized in figure 6.2. It means that one can set the aim to achieve a certain scenario (scenario 3). This means that a vision of the future must be realized. The methods to reach this scenario will be indicated (backcasting). Forecasting means that scenarios are designed, based on certain predictions: 'if this will happen, how will the future look

like' (scenario 1 and 2). Something which is hardly possible to do exactly right, especially in a sensitive industry as tourism but it can result in some insights for the future. In the 34 interviews, internal and external experts was therefore directly asked in what way they see the future of the





historic centre of Venice. Based on the interviews that were held the future scenarios are composed. As the focus of this report has constantly been 'the community' of the historic centre it is obvious that this will also be the focus in the three different scenarios. The community is given 'a voice'. This doesn't mean that goals and strategies of the government are set aside or that external influences are ignored. They are part of the community's voice.

## 6.2 Scenario 1: Bye Bye tourists

*Venice, also known as the most serene city is threatened to loose its inhabitants and thus its soul because of tourism. It is not only a threat as it already can be called a disaster (van der Borg, 2007). The centre exists in spite of tourism. Every option for alternative development (service sector and creative industry) is pushed aside by the tourism industry. As these things will be lost it is time to say, bye, bye Venice (Russo, 2007). In order to prevent this from happening an option could be, to reduce the tourism arrivals in the most extreme way possible, by 'closing' the city (Verheijden, 2007).*

### 6.2.1 Target

The main target of this scenario is to maintain the current 60.000 inhabitants in Venice and to bring this back to the normal standards as they once were, 200.000 (Kerper, 2002). It is the aim to make the historic centre a vibrant city again, with an own Venetian identity. Tourism should only be a small part of this. In order to achieve this it is needed to reduce the tourism industry to a minimum and to create an atmosphere in which other industries can flourish (Verheijden, 2007). Since is known that the city can't be closed as most of it is public space, the target is set to reduce the number of tourists to a reasonable number. Venetians like the city as it is in the winter. At this moment it is nice and quiet, with more inhabitants than there are tourists (Auri, 2007). Therefore is chosen to take the number of 'winter' tourists as parameter for the whole year. This makes the maximum number of tourists around the 4 million a year (Turismo Venezia, 2007).

### 6.2.2 Brief description

The negative aspects of the tourism industry have become more and more visible the last decades. Pollution, noise, irritations of the residents towards tourists but also between tourists, overcrowded streets and damage to historic buildings are only a few examples (Gavagnin, 2007). The police can not handle the tourism streams and the safety can not be guaranteed anymore (Nico', 2007). This already leads to different conflicts, as the irritations are openly expressed. Realised is that the historic centre is a ticking time bomb and it can be expected that on a certain point the limits of the city are reached. It could be that something bad will happen. On such a scale that people not only realise that measures against the tourism industry have to be taken but that they also will act immediately (Marconi, 2007). Waiting until this time is reached is an option. The other option is to prevent this from happening. In both ways it is the case to reduce the tourism arrivals in a drastic way. Mainly because it is the tourism industry that forces families





and firms to leave the city. The city's economic base has shrunk drastically, the quality of the facilities and of the living and business environment is diminished, and, as a consequence, the attractiveness of the inner city has even further decreased. The only way to turn this urban depression around, and to save Venice from its fall, it is needed to have a community in the historic centre (van der Borg, 2007). They are the most important good of the city and by bringing them back to the historic centre, and by minimising the tourists, Venice can become a city again. (Marconi, 2007). The historic centre has already started in setting a limit in the number of 'beds'. Another measure that has already been taken is that only a restricted number of tour busses and cars can enter the historic centre. The same counts for sea captains which are restricted in where and when they can secure cruise ships. These measures had however the consequence that more day-trippers came to the Venice (Kouwenberg, 2005). What at this moment can be done is a rise in tourism taxes and asking for an entrance fee. This will simply put off visitors, rather than actually benefit the tourism industry of Venice. Something what is the intention. The incomes can be used to make the city livable again (decrease of house prices, less pollution, restoration of buildings). It is possible to oblige tourists to buy the Venice Card. A card which allows people free entrance to museums and free public transportation but, in the future may also count as an entrance ticket (van der Borg, 2002). By only selling a restricted numbers of cards it is possible to structure the tourism streams. Something what has already been done within the historic centre as 85% of the visitors stays within the tourist triangle. Something what can be of use to make a separation between the 'tourist' and 'inhabitant' area. This will avoid potential conflict situations (Verheijden, 2007). Other industries need to be attracted to the historic centre. These industries can be given protection or a subsidize to establish their company in the historic centre. Examples of this are the glass blowing and lace making industries. These industries get protection and are able to revive (Esposito, 2007). Tourism plays also a part in this. With other industries in the centre, employment and income will increase. People may feel attracted by this and will consider living in the historic centre again.

### 6.2.3 Challenges

In this scenario there is chosen to reduce the tourism arrivals to 4 million visitors (15 million now). This is already a challenge since it is expected that the tourism arrivals to Venice will grow in the future. Because the city can not be closed tourists can not be forced to stay away. The question therefore remains how it is possible to minimise the number of tourists and to change the city's 'function' so that other industries can be attracted. In this scenario is chosen to introduce a rise of tourism taxes. It is however a challenge to introduce a tourism tax which only affects the tourists as usually the inhabitants will also be affected by it. It is also the question if the taxes will result in a decrease of day-trippers. They are the least affected by it as is known that they don't buy products in the historic centre. The ones that are affected by it are the tourists that stay longer





than one day. Tourists that are wished by the city and contribute to the city's welfare. The challenge therefore is to introduce a tax that penalises the day-trippers while the ones that stay overnight are 'rewarded' (van der Borg, 2005). Then there is the challenge to rise taxes for companies that offer tourism services. It is already difficult to determine what a tourism service is and therefore also almost impossible to ask a specific tax for it. It will also lead to conflict situations with the private sector that will not agree in reducing the tourism industry. The same counts for the neighbouring villages, regions and even countries which profit from the fact that they can organise excursions to the historic centre. With the introduction of the Venice Card it is however possible to control these tourism streams (van der Borg, 2005). But only when it is executed in an effective way. Meaning that the tourists or operators will be obliged to buy such a card before entering the city, instead of that they have the choice to buy it, as it is now. This will be an important step to de-motivate tourists to come to Venice when the card is sold out. It seems also a challenge to change the cities function. Everything in the historic centre is developed in such a way to serve the tourists. This can already be seen if is taken a look at the tourist infrastructure. Every path is headed towards the main attractions, every sign plate in the city indicates how to walk to these attractions and the shops in the streets are all aimed to serve the tourists (Tesaro, 2007). This is however something what can be of use in this scenario. The tourists are concentrated in one area, just as all the other shops and services. With the tourism infrastructure tourists, can be guided, in a controlled way, through the city. In this way it is possible to minimise the negative effects on the host community (Verheijden, 2007). It will also be a challenge to attract new industries, as the historic centre is not the most accessible area for an industry. With protection and subsidises there is at least an opportunity. This can however not be done immediately as it will be a process of many years which may lead to opposition. The challenge is to make this a gradual, not noticeable process. Otherwise it could occur that the city is confronted with, for example, many 'empty' buildings, something what is not positive for the city.

#### 6.2.4 Sustainability

Sustainability contains three elements; socio-cultural, environmental and economic. The focus will therefore be on these aspects.

- What caused this scenario is that the growth of tourism was such that the quality and accessibility of attractions were compromised by excess demand. Society and eventually even tourism itself suffered and change was no longer acceptable (van der Borg, 2007). The local society has come into conflict with its visitors, competing for the facilities and space they are both using. In this case, tourism, instead of delivering growth, threatened the society's continuity (van der Borg, 2007). In order to prevent this it seems logical to reduce the number of tourist arrivals. The





limit for 4 million visitors may however result in the fact that there are too few visitors, and the opportunities that tourism offers are not fully used while tourism will stay a net cost for the destination as a whole (van der Borg, 2007). It is also not certain if other industries can be attracted to the historic centre. This results in insecurity, can for example the same employment be offered as their was with tourism as main industry? Attracting other industries will make the economy however less vulnerable. Being dependent on one industry, can put major stress upon this business as well as the people involved to perform well. Something what is seen in Venice. Diversifying the economy will make the historic centre and the community less vulnerable as they are able to choose for themselves how to make their living. The city potential is also maximized with more industries. Even the seasonal character has disappeared. This all increases the resistance against negative impacts (Verheijden, 2007). For example the leakage problem, caused by the tourism industry. Especially in Venice an issue as the tourist demand standards of equipment, food, and other products can not be produced or supplied by the historic centre itself. Foods and drinks must for example be imported. Much of the income from tourism expenditures leaves the centre therefore again to pay for these imports (Esposito, 2007). Something what will disappear with a mix of other industries in the city and a minimized tourism industry. This will also lead to a decrease in costs, as an increasing demand for basic services and goods from tourists, caused prices to rise negatively, affecting local residents whose income did not increase proportionately. Tourism development and the related rise in real estate has in Venice lead to dramatically increase building costs and land values. Not only did this make it more difficult for local people, it also resulted in dominance by outsiders in land markets and in migration that erodes economic opportunities for the locals, eventually disempowering residents (Russo, 2007). With a decrease of the tourism industry these aspects will be minimised.

- From an environmental point of view it will be better for Venice when there will be less tourists (Gianni, 2007). With a maximum of 4 million tourists it will stay within the calculated carrying capacity number. This will lead to a decrease in the use of local resources as tourism can create great pressure on aspects like energy, food, and other raw materials that may already be in short supply. Tourism causes also noise and air pollution created by the tourists and the transportation possibilities (Ferro, 2007). Minimizing the tourism industry will therefore be better for the environment. In this scenario is also sketched that more inhabitants will be present in the historic centre. They are concerned about the city and take care of their garbage, anyway more than the millions of tourists (Chiave, 2007). It will thus also be better if almost all tourism activities and the tourists will disappear. It is an





industry causing almost all the pollution in the historic centre (boats, hotels, tourists etc.)(Ribaldi, 2007). It is however a fact that other industries will be attracted to the historic centre. This will also cause pollution. It is therefore up to the city officials to replace the tourism industry for more environmental friendly ones. Ones that belong to the city and stimulate preservation of the city (culture) and the environment, such as lace making and glass blowing.

- In a socio-cultural sense it will be better to have more inhabitants in Venice. Especially younger people as their are now only 4000 children. Students are also important in this because they can soon work on the future of Venice and may fill the gap of the middle aged people which almost all left the city (Verheijden, 2007). In this way the balance in the community can return to normal standards again, able to absorb the influences of the tourism industry. It becomes than also a community that can built upon a new future, without the concern that they soon will become extinct as it is now or is in conflict with tourists every day (Platenkamp. 2007). Tourists often, out of ignorance or carelessness, fail to respect local customs and moral values. When they do, they bring about irritation and stereotyping. Tourism has also turned the local culture into a commodity. Religious rituals, traditional ethnic rites and festivals are reduced and sanitized to conform to tourist expectations (Davis, 2004). With the minimization of the tourism industry it is possible to let the origin culture return again. Something what is according the communities opinion and will as a consequence also stop the crowding out effect.

### 6.2.5 Feasibility

The most difficult aspect to achieve in this scenario is to reduce the number of visitors towards 4 million. It is going back 30 or 40 years back in time when Venice had this amount of visitors (Quinn, 2006). With the tourism industry expected to double in the next 20 years it can be forecasted that only more people wish to visit Venice, despite the effort to de-motivate people to come to Venice (Marconi, 2007). The Venice Card plays an important role in limiting the number of visitors as it is impossible to put a fence around Venice or to prevent people for coming to the city, which can be done by airplane, car, ship and train. The idea to put extra tourist tax on several prices and ask an entrance fee will also scare many people of. But that many, that only 4 million are left, can be doubted. Stricter rules may be needed to achieve this aim. Everything has to be done to make it impossible for people to enter the historic centre. Closing the bridge towards Venice or closing the places where boats attach to land on several days are often heard options. Hard to implement but something what makes it feasible to reduce the number of visitors in a drastic way. It is also feasible to re-attract a community. But only when there is a good economic





structure. Giving the local community a stronger voice in the development process will make them supportive towards these (new) industries (Jamieson, 2006). It gives them also more trust in the future. They know now that their voice is heard instead that they are passively overrun by developments that are not wished. The confidence in the future may attract new inhabitants. Certainly when employment can be guaranteed. The economic base is already their. The historic centre has a port, universities and, although small, still other industries (fishing, shipbuilding, glass blowing). With reducing the tourism industry it is possible for these industries to flourish. The employment will increase, prices lower and inhabitants are able to return again. Venice may become a real city again (Verheijden, 2007).

### 6.3 Scenario 2: Venice, a 24 hours Disneyland!

*Venice . . . a folding picture-postcard of itself. Although it is still technically a city (it has a government, as well as city services, some residents, and even a university), visitors often fail to see or intuit this. Instead, they come to Venice looking for confirmation of the image that they formed of the historic centre, the vision of the most romantic city in the World (Davis, 2004). They are not concerned about the inhabitants who leave the historic centre by thousands a year. The city is transforming from a once vibrant city into a real theme park city. A process which is not seen as a problem as no measures are taken against it.*

#### 6.3.1 Target

The main target of this scenario is that each year at least 20 million visitors come to see the most famous city of the world. It is believed that tourism is an opportunity for the city (Ashworth, 2007). An industry that makes it possible to boost the preservation and transmission of cultural and historical traditions. Events and festivals of which local residents have once been the primary participants and spectators can for example be rejuvenated (Ashworth, 2007). The same counts for the local heritage, which because of the contribution of the tourism industry, can be protected or preserved (Ashworth, 2007). It is however because of this tourism industry that Venice will, within a few years, become the first major city on the planet that is transformed from a once vibrant mercantile city into a historical theme park. One that emerges because it no longer has within its buildings and piazzas a living, viable host community and yet remains a major international tourist attraction (Staiff, 2000). That there will no inhabitants left anymore in the city doesn't matter as is noticed that tourists do not come to Venice for them (Alberto, 2007). No measures are therefore taken to stop this decline. Since is chosen for the tourism industry, everyone is invited.





### 6.3.2 Brief description

For years it is known that the population is shrinking, what the reasons are and how to stop this depopulation. Nothing has however been done to stop this decline. All decisions have been made in favour of the tourism industry and not with the aim to protect the community (Coro, 2007). With the expected tourism growth it is stated that no inhabitants will be left anymore. The tourism industry makes the prices rise to extreme levels. Only payable when you stay a short while in Venice. Not to live in. The inhabitants are therefore forced to leave the historic centre which is left for the 'rich' (Platenkamp, 2007). Now that there is chosen to develop the tourism industry even more, the historic centre will more than ever become a product in which, according to many, everything is fake (Romano, 2007). Good to attract tourists since the more openly fake or empty the buildings are, the more comfortable visitors are with them' (Zukin, 1995). Although there is a lot of critique that a city can not survive without its inhabitants there seems no evidence of it. In Capri is even shown the opposite. It is seen that a small community, is still capable to attract and deal with a huge amount of visitors and prevent the island from its 'city decline'. The tourism industry is used to preserve the 'origin' culture and its industries. It is seen that in Capri, tourism co-opts instead of, overwhelms the local culture. Everybody is involved in the tourism industry and is in one way or the other making profit out of it. That the population is getting smaller every year does not seem to influence this in a negative way. The 'crowding out' effect is a process that is happening or happened in every city, and was this a problem? Hardly. The same counts for the historic centre. Many parts are already uninhabited but this doesn't mean that it is not attractive anymore (Ashworth, 2007). Tourism is for Venice an easy and secure economy, as tourists will come anyway, no matter what (Gianni, 2007). It is seen as an opportunity for the city what makes it possible to keep the city alive (Ashworth, 2007). The magnificent heritage that Venice gives to the world is available thanks to tourism fame and visitors money. Visitor audience is necessary to develop and maintain this living and performing culture (Scaramuzzi, 2007). It is therefore that is chosen for the tourism industry and the choice to develop this industry even more is therefore understandable. More profit can be made, especially without inhabitants as the whole historic centre can than be structured as a theme park, meaning, that every facility is focused to serve the visitor (Marconi, 2007). This doesn't mean that much effort has to be put in restructuring the historic centre. It has already been discussed that more and more principles of the Disney theme parks dominate sectors of Venice' society, the so-called 'Disneyfication' or 'Touristification' of a destination (paragraph 5.1). A theory that contains the four elements: theming, dedifferentiation of consumption, merchandising, and emotional labor (Bryman, 2004). All elements can be applied on the current tourism situation in Venice resulting in the fact that the historic centre is already seen as a theme park (Kay, 2006). As a centre of business, politics and culture, it died centuries ago, and only the flow of visitors brought it back to life. Today, most people in the city are tourists, and most people who work there have come for





the day to service the needs of tourists. No-one goes to Venice to have their hair cut or buy their groceries. The economics of the city are the economics of a theme park (Kay, 2006). Everything in the city is already focused on serving the tourists. What has to happen is to recognize that Venice can no longer be run like a normal European city. Running it as a theme park offers its only hope of salvation. At present, this isn't done. That is why it is dying (McKie, 2006). Having stated this it can be concluded that it is mainly the way of managing tourism that has to change, not the product that Venice already is. What can be done is to ask tourists a one off entrance fee, in the form of the Venice Card, and then queue for the various attractions. Once inside, tourists would be able to visit Venice's glorious churches, restaurants and hotels (McKie, 2006). In order to increase the incomes, tourism taxes can be calculated into the prices. The money gained from tourism can be used to keep the city 'up-to-date'. Meaning to restore buildings, to invest in tourism infrastructure and to handle the growing tourism streams. In conclusion, to preserve Venice as it is now.

### 6.3.3 Challenges

The case of Venice shows that the historic centre evolved according the destination life cycle and that the city is confronted to be part of a vicious circle which is described in chapter 5. This, as forecasted lead to the definite decline of the city. This means, no inhabitants anymore (Russo, 2000). The rapid tourism growth triggered in Venice a process known by the name of 'crowding out'. This mechanism tends to expel the less lucrative urban functions and replace them for tourist activities (van der Borg, 2007). In the beginning it could be that tourism is able to compensate these losses. The violation of the 'carrying capacity' of tourism arrivals not only reduces the quality of life to a minimum, but also implies the destruction of non-reproducible natural and cultural urban resources (Baily, 2007). The challenge will be to set up a structure in which the historic centre is able to survive without inhabitants (or a small number) and to let Venice remain Venice. In this scenario is chosen to ask an entrance fee and tourism taxes in order to have incomes, which can be invested into the city. Although a great part of the historic centre will be filled with hotels, shops and tourism related companies it will be a challenge to make the whole historic centre part of the 'theme park'. With (hardly) no inhabitants anymore, lots of building will soon reach a horrific state in which they are not interesting anymore for the tourism industry (Baily, 2007). A relevant question will be who is in charge of keeping these buildings 'up-to-date' if no one is using them





anymore, or who is paying for the maintenance for buildings that are not used. The same counts for the services offered. Post offices, supermarkets, barbershops all become useless. Although not all of these services were used by tourists it is certain that they contribute to a certain atmosphere which will be lost if the inhabitants leave the city, especially on the long term (Grandi, 2007). At the same time, the growth in the residential segment of tourism may stagnate, either because the hotel capacity cannot be expanded any further because buildings will degrade quickly, or because the price level of accommodation has reached a level that repels additional tourists. The local market of tourism has become mature by then (van der Borg, 2007). A threat that may come in existence is that the economic base of Venice simplifies to such an extent that the attractiveness and atmosphere in the city for tourism purposes may be lost. A challenge to prevent this from happening but can be done by rejuvenating the origin industries and events. Something what has also been done in Capri, which helps the destination to keep up its image as an, authentic, high standard destination.

### 6.3.4 Sustainability

Sustainability contains three elements; socio-cultural, environmental and economic. The focus will therefore be on these aspects.

- In an economic sense it can be said that more tourism means more business and thus more economic benefits (Akash, 2007). This is also in the case of Venice. There is no place like Venice and it doesn't seem to matter for tourists if their stay in Venice was pleasant or not as they come anyway (Gianni, 2007). In this sense it is an, vulnerable but sustainable economy. Vulnerable because it will attract many tourists/ foreign ('fake') industries, the prices will rise to extreme levels and much money will leak out of Venice. Although they can be dealt with these issues, the consequence of the growing tourism industry, is that families and firms leave the central city. Venice' economic base tends to shrink drastically, the quality of the facilities and of the living and business environment diminish, resulting in the fact that, the attractiveness of the inner city decreases even further, which may fall into a persistent urban depression (van der Borg, 2007). The city may then not only become unattractive for the residential population, but also for tourists and excursionists. Now, the entire urban tourism system is about to lose even its last flourishing urban function, tourism. On the long term thus also the economic benefits will be reduced to a minimum. In the end, when not managed well, it may turn out to be an unsustainable scenario.
- From an environmental point of view this scenario seems unsustainable. In theory is described that the most pessimistic scenario of tourist development foresees a situation in which the number of visitors of a tourist city exceeds some maximum





related to its physical capacity of absorption (van der Borg, 2007). Something what happens within this scenario. Venice does not have an own social, cultural, and economic activity to absorb the impact of tourism. Then, the long-term negative external effects connected with tourism (pollution, natural and building degradation, congestion, etc.) will readily become unacceptable and tourism becomes unsustainable. In the extreme case, the uncontrolled growth of tourism slowly consumes a city's heritage and nature, the one major urban resource that unfortunately cannot be reproduced (van der Borg, 2007).

- From a socio-cultural perspective it can be said that the quality of urban life deteriorates fast as excessive pressure from tourism reduces the accessibility of the centre to a minimum and most inhabitants and economic activities have found accessible sites elsewhere (van der Borg, 2007). They can not be spoken anymore of a balanced community or a balanced visitor/ inhabitant relation as there will be no community left anymore. The culture may be preserved but in such a way that tourism turns local cultures into commodities, meaning that culture is reduced and sanitized to conform to tourist expectations (van der Borg, 2007). They can not be spoken anymore of an origin culture. Something what is in contrast with what the community wants (Ribaldi, 2007).

### 6.3.5 Feasibility

With the expected tourism growth it is forecasted that within 10 years the total number of visitors to Venice exceeds the 20 million (Russo, 2007). This will happen automatically since tourists are attracted by the strong image Venice has, created over the past centuries (Kouwenberg, 2005). Promotion efforts are therefore not needed to achieve in this aim. Handling with at least 20 million visitors a year seems not to be problematic. At this moment already 15 million tourists, per year, visit the historic centre. These streams are already structured and concentrated since 85% of the tourists are clustered within the triangle of prime attractions (appendix 1). By making it a kind of theme park destination it will relatively be easier to build further on this and to spread the tourists over time and space. Spreading them, in a structured way over more parts of Venice, will put less pressure on the main attractions (Baily, 2007). With the choice to focus everything in the city on the tourism industry it is certain that it will lead to a rise in prices and in the end to the fact that inhabitants are forced to leave every part of the city. Maybe not everyone, but at least so much that can not be spoken of a community anymore (Platenkamp, 2007). This is however something what is desired in this scenario. It has however the consequence that not the whole historic centre can be part of the 'theme park city'. Many buildings will be converted into empty constructions as no one can live there anymore, for practical purposes (rising costs, no facilities to use) but also because there is not the willingness to live in a backstreet of a tourism area. These





back alley may also not be interesting for the 'tourism product' Venice has become, although it contributes to the overall romantic image the historic centre has. Maintaining all of this seems unfeasible. On the other hand a Venice in decline can even increase the appeal the city has, resulting in even more tourists.

## 6.4 Scenario 3: What we want.

*Tourism is the most important industry of the historic centre. It is recognised that without tourism the old city core will be a dead zone, with big economic and social problems as well (Scaramuzzi, 2007). It is therefore up to the historic centre to manage this kind of demand, not to demonize it. On the other hand however, it is the tourism industry that is causing many problems with as a result that the community is leaving the historic centre rapidly. Undesired situations as the inhabitants are seen as the most important facet of the historic centre (Platenkamp, 2007). In order to have best of both Venice is in search of a balance between the economic sustainability of the tourism industry and the maintenance of inhabitants in the historic core (Scaramuzzi, 2007).*

### 6.4.1 Target

The main target of this scenario is to reduce the number of visitors to 8 million visitors a year. This number is chosen since is calculated that the carrying capacity for the historic centre is 8.2 million. A concept that recognises and sets limits to impacts on the host community, environment and economy that are acceptable and sustainable over future times (Cooper, 1993). For both inhabitants and tourists. Reducing the tourism industry will be of use to bring the number of residents back to the amount they once were, 200.000 (Kerper, 2002). This will serve the aim to find a balance between the tourism industry and the function of Venice as a city. In this way tourism can become an industry existing next to the public system, which has an own identity and which is able to absorb the tourism impacts (Russo, 2007).

### 6.4.2 Brief description

Realised is that it is very important to maintain a community in the historic centre as the loss of stakeholder ship of the heritage ultimately causes the greatest risk to the city's integrity (Russo, 2007). Since tourism is a threat for the community, but also helps to raise local awareness of the value of natural and cultural sites and stimulates a feeling of pride in local and national heritage and interest in its conservation, it is preferred that there should be a balanced mix of tourists and inhabitants (Verheijden, 2007). At this moment there is an imbalance. Too many tourists are coming into the private area of the inhabitants and this leads to conflicts. The city is also too dependent from one industry, as it would be healthier for a city to have a mix of industry's (Verheijden, 2007). In order to achieve this, the aim is set to give the historic centre its cities function back again. This means that attempts are made to make the city more liveable again, for inhabitants and other industries. With the introduction of the Venice Card, first attempts are





made to manage the flow of tourists effectively. It also gives day trippers a proper opportunity, which they do not have at the moment, to learn about the history, the culture, the context of what it is they see, with well-designed exhibits, and with qualified guides (Baily, 2007). Goal with this is to change the day-tripper into a tourist that is an aware, curious, 'green' tourists (Russo, 2007). They will however also be day-trippers left. In order to reduce their negative impacts to a minimum the tourism flows are managed in such a way that visitors can be guided in the quickest way to the 'attractions' they want to see, without disturbing the private areas of the inhabitants. There is however already a tourism infrastructure present, guiding the tourists towards these attractions. This can however be improved as tourists still get lost in the narrow alleys (Kouwenberg, 2005). Controlling the tourists on misbehaviour (walking in bath clothing, throwing garbage on the ground and sitting on places where this is not allowed) is an option to prevent irritations of the inhabitants (Ribaldi, 2007). Preferred is that there will be made a differentiation in tourism areas and zones for the inhabitants (Verheijden, 2007). It is logical that they need something for their own (event, square), a place where they can feel themselves Venetian, without the concern that it will be taken over by the tourists as this may lead to conflict situations (Platenkamp, 2007). A community can however not be re-attracted when the city has no strong economic structure. In order to stimulate other industries the policy of Venice already focuses on giving some protection while the tourism related industries (and tourists) are confronted with higher taxes. The original lace and glass industry, for example, get protection and a origin label to defend them from the illegal and false competition coming from outside Italy (Esposito, 2007), done to make the establishment climate for other industries more attractive. Consequence of the reduced tourism industry may be that the costs of living can be dropped (house prices, services) so that inhabitants are also able to return to their home and together with them other industries (schools, post offices, ship building, lace making etc). The universities of Venice can also play an active role in attracting young and ambitious inhabitants to the city (Verheijden, 2007). As the inhabitants become more important again it is evident that services are adapted to them instead of the tourists (e.g. train/ buss routes, prices, infrastructure). Step by step Venice can become a city again, focused to serve in the first place its inhabitants so that they are capable to absorb the tourism impacts (Platenkamp, 2007).

### 6.4.3 Challenges

The problems of Venice are not problems of technology or finance, but problems of politics, organisation and management (Baily, 2007). Venice is still lacking an explicit and integrated development strategy (van der Borg, 1995). The challenge will be to set up such a strategy and to focus this on achieving a balance between the tourism industry and the inhabitants. This is a challenge since this balance is something 'untouchable' (Gianni, 2007). It can be measured in number of visitors and inhabitants but this does not say that the change was actually a success. It





seems therefore a big risk to say stop to the most important industry as tourism is and take measures against it. Especially because it is not a change that can be done in one time but evolves over many years. Waiting for the pay-off of this change may be a hard battle as it will lead to opposition. That is why nothing happens despite 30 years of chit-chatting (Russo, 2007). Reducing the number of visitors with the Venice Card, is possible but only when tourists are obliged to buy such a card, and when only a limited number of it be can be sold. A sensitive topic however, as most of the city is public terrain, in which everybody is allowed to be, without having to pay for it. It can also not be controlled who is a visitor, who inhabitant and how everybody enters the historic centre. Working with taxes is another way to reduce the number of visitors. But than it is, as discussed before, a challenge to introduce a tax that penalises the specific group that is not preferred (van der Borg, 2007). Another challenge will be to attract a more sophisticated visitor as the historic centre may lack the basic requisites, that is, a highly diversified, appealing package of attractions and facilities, to obtain a large enough share in the market of urban tourism to guarantee their competitiveness on the long run (Scaramuzzi, 2007). This may sound strange as Venice is a city with a very sophisticated, and an abundant presence of natural and cultural, man-made resources. But if tourists can only visit the major attractions as most of the city is known as the 'communities' private areas where tourists are not wished than Venice becomes a scarce tourism attraction. The same counts in attracting other industries as the historic centre is just not the most accessible place for an industry. It is therefore a challenge to change the city structure and function as it is right now. An element which is important to succeed as inhabitants may than feel attracted again to live in the historic centre. Giving them the feeling, the historic centre is theirs, is also important in this case because when this feeling is lost their will be no connection with the city anymore. Their will be no reason to come back or to remain in the historic centre (Tesaro, 2006)

#### 6.4.4 Sustainability

Sustainability contains three elements; socio-cultural, environmental and economic. The focus will therefore be on these aspects.

- In an economic sense it may on the short term have negative effects to focus less on the tourism industry. But as is known that 70% of the tourism incomes already flow out of Venice the effect will be minimal and on the long term it will be better to differentiate the economy since the city's potential are not fully used (van der Borg, 2007). The seasonal character of the tourism industry creates economic problems for destinations that are heavily dependent on it. Problems that seasonal workers face include job (and therefore income) insecurity, usually with no guarantee of employment from one season to the next. With local industries as shipbuilding, lace making, glass blowing and the





educations that go along with it, employment and incomes are guaranteed to stay in Venice (Grandi, 2007). The industry becomes less vulnerable and the local community is able to profit from this. With a reduced tourism industry prices are able to drop since the demand for basic services and goods from tourists will become less. Also the illegal industries, as street vendors, will be less attracted to the historic centre when there will be less tourists (Akash, 2007).

- From an environmental point of view it will be better to reduce the number of tourists (Russo, 2007). Something what is also according Italy's and Venice' tourism policy (Kouwenberg, 2005). There are for example too many 'tourist' ships, which pollute the water and let the walls crumble down as the waves they make are devastating. Than there is the pollution of hotels of which some are accused to dump garbage in the water (Davis, 2004). There is now even built an island of garbage. All because of tourism. With reducing the tourism industry the natural aspects of the city will become more sustainable. It will also be better to attract another, more 'caring and aware' tourists (Russo, 2007). Although these might stay longer as the day-tripper, it is expected that they are relative less polluting (Paulo, 2007). With inhabitants back in the city, there will be more concern about environmental issues (Ribaldi, 2007). There will be more need to preserve the city buildings and its monuments (Auri, 2007)
- In a socio-cultural sense it will be good to have a community back in the historic centre. They are the ones that keep the city alive and create the atmosphere (Riga, 2007). It is also the best balance if the number of visitors does not exceed the number of residents during a day (van der Borg, 2007). But also in political sense Venice lost a democratic representation and relevance within its region (Russo, 2007). This can be turned around when more inhabitants come back to the historic centre. The crowding out effect will be stopped. With the historic centre becoming more a city again the quality of life will increase, prices drop, culture and traditions are maintained and the city belongs to the Venetians again. Something what is in line with the community's wishes (van der Borg, 2007).

#### 6.4.5 Feasibility

It is feasible to reduce the number of visitors to 8 million a year. Calculated was that the carrying capacity of the historic centre was 8.2 million. It is therefore best for the 'city's health' to aim towards this amount of visitors. An argument that can be used to de-motivate tourists from coming or to prevent them to enter the city (van der Borg, 2007). Efforts will be made to attract another type of tourists than the 'non profitable' day tripper. Something what is possible when the product, promotion and packages are aimed on this. With the Venice Card and the tax policy it is possible to influence this in a positive way (van der Borg, 2007). That the tourists can be





controlled in the historic centre is certain. Already 85% of all tourists stay within the triangle shown in appendix 1 and there is one main route towards these attractions. Here can be seen that tourists can be 'guided' through the city. It is therefore also feasible to make a tourism zone of this. The other parts of the historic centre can be developed into inhabitant zones. A challenge which is not impossible to realize and prevents conflict situations (Verheijden, 2007). Another example to attract inhabitants to the historic centre is to organize activities and events are specially by them and for them. Also fines can be given to people that misbehave themselves, like walking in bath clothing through the city. In this way the community feels themselves respected. It is also feasible to stimulate other industries. This is already tried by giving these industries protection with the label of origin that indicates if something is a real Venetian product. Inhabitants and industries are be attracted by this (Esposito, 2007). To attract them it is however also needed to lower the prices in Venice. Something what can automatically happen when there are less tourists. In this way it is feasible to get a balance between inhabitants and tourists in the historic centre.

## 6.5 Evaluation of scenarios

In this paragraph will the before mentioned scenarios be assessed on the impacts they have on the economic, environmental and socio cultural aspects of the historic centre and the community. In the grid below are all impacts are enumerated and per scenario is indicated if the different impacts are relevant or not.

- |     |                       |    |                     |
|-----|-----------------------|----|---------------------|
| ++  | Highly relevant       | -  | Not relevant        |
| +   | Relevant              | -- | Not at all relevant |
| +/- | More or less relevant |    |                     |





	Scenario 1	Scenario 2	Scenario 3
<b>Economy</b>			
Sustainable economy on the long term	+/-	+/-	+
Attracts foreign (fake) industries	-	++	-
Stimulation of employment	+	++	++
Leakage of money	-	+	+/-
Profitable for the local community	+	+/-	+
Increased dependency on the tourism sector	--	++	-
Diversified economy	+	--	++
Vulnerability	-	++	--
Used city potential	+/-	+/-	+
Origin industry protection	+	+/-	++
Community importance	++	+/-	++
Rising prices	-	+	-
Seasonal character	-	+	-
<b>Environment</b>			
Within physical CC	++	--	+
Increase of pollution (air, noise)	+/-	++	+/-
Degrading of building/ environment	-	++	-
According to Italy's tourism policy	+	--	+
Stimulates preservation of the city and its environment	+	+/-	+
Increased awareness of environmental issues	+	+/-	+
<b>Socio-culture</b>			
Balanced community (in age)	+	--	+
Increased irritation	-	+/-	-
Balanced inhabitant/ visitor	-	--	+
Increased quality of life	+	--	++
Crowding out effect	-	++	--
Maintenance of origin culture	+	+/-	+
According to community's opinion	+	--	++
Increased commodification	-	++	-
Revaluation of culture and traditions	+	+/-	+





Regarding the economic impacts on the community and the city it can be concluded that scenario 3 will be the best possible development. In this scenario is a mix of different industries present. This makes the economy less vulnerable and more sustainable on the long term since the city will not be dependent anymore on one economy. This diversification is a sign of health of the city and the community has in this case the power to choose for an economy they prefer. There is a need for the community to choose for jobs not related to tourism as is said that a lot of money leaks away and that, confronted with the rising prices, it becomes impossible to remain in the historic centre. Tourism as a single industry is just not sustainable on the long term. Something what is discussed in chapter 5.

*On the long term the city may become unattractive for tourists because it has no inhabitants anymore that keep the city 'up-to-date' and create a certain atmosphere in the centre. The city may eventually fall into a persistent urban depression, lose its identity and eventually also its positive image as the tourism product becomes too banal.*

It will however not be right to leave the tourism industry for what it is, as it is an important industry that is part of the city. It can even be, especially in economic sense, be good to choose for the situation sketched in scenario 2. It is however also stated that a mix of different industries would be better to maximise the city's potential, in a balanced way.

Looking at the environment it is certain that scenario 2 will lead to many environmental issues. With 20 million visitors a year the carrying capacity is surpassed heavily.

*the city's carrying capacity is currently surpassed by some two million tourists annually. While the 'historic centre' can deal with 22,500 visitors a day the centre is on peak days already visited by 150,000 tourists. The overnight tourist versus resident ratio can reach a peak of 50:1 in the historic core. When excursionists are included, this ratio increases to 242:1.*

An increasing number of tourists will certainly stimulate this imbalance, resulting in diverse issues such as: environmental degradation, heritage management problems, conservation issues and major impacts on, and implications for, the host community. Tourism has however also the potential to increase public appreciation of the environment and to spread awareness of environmental problems when it brings people into closer contact with nature and the environment. This will however be in contrast with attracting 20 million visitors. Scenario 1 and 3 are therefore a better option as they decrease the number of visitors, something what is also according to Italy's tourism policy. By decreasing the number of tourists it is also possible to control them in a better way and to manage the pollution issues. An important aspect as Venice is a fragile city. But it is partly tourism (money) which makes it for example possible to restore old





buildings and to create a positive image for the city. Visitor audience is therefore absolutely necessary to develop and maintain living and performing culture, today. Scenario 3 seems thus a better option as the tourism industry will be reduced in such a way that still can be benefited from it.

For a city are the inhabitants it's most important good. As the scheme shows it can be concluded that when tourism grows it results in such a situation that no inhabitants will be left anymore. Inhabitants get irritated, the quality of life decreases and Venice is confronted with standardization. A process of satisfying tourists' desires. The origin culture will be lost. Although events may be preserved, it is seen that these events are overwhelmed by the tourism industry, losing their original character. This all may lead to a banal product that is not interesting to visit anymore, resulting in the urban depression that will lead to the fall of the city. Scenario 1 and 3 are in principal the same, trying to prevent this from happening. The only aspect that is different is that inhabitants do not wish to let the tourism industry become extinct. It belongs to the city and that is why scenario 3 is preferred more by the inhabitants. A normal city in which tourism exists, but not as a part of life, but existing next to it.





## 7 Scenario recommendation

While conducting this research it became apparent that Venice is trapped in a vicious circle which is making the historic centre more and more a 'theme park city'. Inhabitants work for the tourism industry but it is because of this same industry they have no other option than to leave the historic centre. It is practically impossible to live in the historic centre since there are hardly any facilities left anymore which can be used and prices rise to extreme levels. On the other hand it's the tourism industry what is bringing in money for the city and every Venetian is direct or indirect making profit out of it. Partly because people have no choice but also because it is the easiest way to make money since 'the pie' is big enough for everybody. The city has therefore become a banal product over time, which makes it an expensive destination to be which offers low quality. What can be seen is that the community is right in stating that everything in the city is their, to serve the tourists. Only now, when the threat is there that within a few years the community is about to become extinct, the discussion has started about the impacts it may have on the city and its tourism appeal and if these impacts are preferred. Nothing has however been done yet to reduce the number of tourists and nothing is planned to do this for the future. This lack of action will, when it continuous, certainly make the historic centre a theme park destination. Where many think this is a worse case scenario there are others that do not see this as a problem. This is where the discussion about the future of Venice started, also the starting point of this research. A discussion which was mainly about the importance of having a host community in a (tourism) destination. In order to find an answer to this, 34 interviews were held with internal and external experts. These interviews served as input for the development of different scenario's that help to asses' alternative policies and actions under different conditions, described and assessed in the previous chapter. From this it can be concluded that the theme park option may not be the worst scenario that could happen to the historic centre. Certainly not from an economic perspective. But when knowing this, than also action has to be taken. The choice has to be made to let it become a theme park destination. In this way plans can be made how to deal with this situation. That on the long term, the city will loose it's 'atmosphere' because there are no inhabitants, and that in the end the tourism numbers will decline can be true, but if managed well does not have to be certain, as is seen in Capri. This is also something what has been said years ago about the current historic centre. What can be seen is that the tourist number is growing, despite it is a fake 'atmosphere'. Tourists don't care about this. From this point of view one could say that, for the tourism product, which Venice is, the community is not important. Except for the ones that serve the tourism industry. From the perspective of the city however, this is different. Becoming a theme park city will have devastating effects on many parts of Venice. It is simply not possible to keep everything in the state as it is now. The 'theme park city' Venice will therefore be reduced to the small islands which form the prime attractions and probably Venice's





most famous other islands (Murano, Burano, Torcello). The rest, the former resident areas, will become useless as these areas can not be maintained. But than again. These areas may probably not be unattractive to visit as a whole city in decline can namely, on itself already be a tourism attraction. The question is if this scenario is preferred when it is likely to happen that on the long term the whole tourism industry may collapse while there is still the choice to choose for another option. Probably not. The scenario in which the tourism industry is abandoned is not the option that is preferred since tourism belongs to the city and it is an industry which, if managed well, can bring a lot of positive aspects to the city. That is why a mix of industries of both scenarios is the best option. A scenario which brings the city back in a balance, and may result in the fact that Venice becomes Venice again. It is a scenario which is according the policy of Italy and Venice and something what is preferred by the inhabitants. It is the best scenario since it serves the inhabitants, the most important good to be a sustainable (tourism) city. The only thing that is missing is the drive to act. One because inhabitants have not the power or bravery to do so, because they are making profit out of the industry and also because policy makers have not yet decided what they want for the future. This must change as Venice is now on the turn of no return.





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## List of interviews

### External experts

- Liz Makrauer, executive director Safe Venice. 29<sup>th</sup> of June. 16:00
- Han Verheijden. Director ZKA consultants. Monday. 2nd of July. 11:30h
- Isabella Scaramuzzi. Vice director of the consortium insocial and economic affairs of Venice . 2<sup>nd</sup> of July. 15:00h.
- G. Ashworth, Professor State University Groningen. 4 July 2007. 10:15h
- Antonio Russo, tourism professor 10 July 2007. 11:00h.
- Nicky Bailey, development director Venice in Peril, 13 July, 2007 12:30h
- Jan van der borg, Professor University of Venice and Rotterdam, 9 August, 2007 17:30h.
- Vincent Platenkamp, Antropologist, 13 August 2007, 10:00h.

### Internal experts

- Salvatore, paddle maker. 23 July 2007. 14:00h.
- Don Ferruccio Gavagnin, Priest. 23 July 2007. 16:00h.
- Paulo Marconi, gondola officer. 23 July 2007. 18:30h.
- Arigo Tesaro, 'inhabitant'. 24 July 2007. 09:00h.
- Laura Romin, 'inhabitant'. 24 July 2007. 12:15h.
- Nico', police officer. 24 July 2007. 15:30h.
- Akash Rha. Street vendor. 24 July 2007. 18:15h.
- Paulo Romano, student. 25 July 2007. 13:30h.
- No name, Bus driver ACTV. 26 July 2007. 10:00h
- Michele Coro, security guard. 26 July 2007. 14:00h.
- Franco Ribaldi, 'inhabitant'. 26 July 2007. 18:40h.
- Alessandro Grandi, Vendor of Murano glass. 27 July 2007. 15:15h.
- Marina Esposito, Jewel vendor/ shop owner. 27 July 2007. 17:30h.
- Romano Riga, bar owner . 27 July 2007. 20:00h.
- Roberto Moro, Vaporetto (waterbus) employee. 28 July 2007. 19:30h.
- Valeria Banderin, 'inhabitant'. 29 July 2007 21:30h.
- Alberto, conductor. 30 July 2007. 09:15h.





- Luca Zanetti, fisherman. 30 July 2007. 15:30h.
- Maria Chiave, market stall owner. 30 July, 2007. 22:00h.
- Sandro Ferro, supermarket employee. 31 July 2007. 11:00h.
- Gianluigi Frazzone, construction worker. 31 July 2007. 17:00h.
- Gianni, 'inhabitant'. 31 July 2007. 21:00h.
- Stefano, city cleaner, 1 August 2007. 12:15h.
- Irene, waiter. 2 August 2007. 19:00h.
- 'Hotel Caprera', hotel owner. 3 August. 15:00h.
- Mario, restaurateur. 4 August. 15:00h.





## Appendix 1 Venice' prime attractions





## Appendix 2 Capri's prime attractions

