An interpretive approach to the host-guest relations in Lazise/Italy

Philipp Wassler
An interpretive approach to the host-guest relations in Lazise/Italy

Dissertation

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

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Acknowledgement

Previous working experience related to the tourism sector in Italy gave me the opportunity to come in contact with different cultures and to meet and get to know tourists as much as locals in different tourism destinations. The experienced meeting of diverse cultures in tourism as much as in daily life has helped in developing a sincere interest in culturally, literary and philosophical studies throughout the last years. Especially during my Master program of Tourism Destination Management I have put effort in order to investigate the process of meaning making and cultural exchange within the tourism sector. Writing my dissertation has given me the ideal opportunity to apply my interest to practice and to a familiar environment in the choice of the research location.

By choosing Lazise as my research destination an attempt is made to link my past years of working experience to the acquired theoretical and practical knowledge of the Master program. The study-related three-month fieldtrip in Tasmania, Singapore and Bali has helped in developing a more professional and perspicacious approach to the topic and to widen my cultural horizon.

I would like to thank several persons for their contribution given in many ways without whom my studies and the realization of this thesis would not have been possible.

First of all I would like to thank my supervisor Vincent Platenkamp for giving me inspiration and for encouraging my interest in philosophy and cultural studies. The information given during the Master course as much as his sincere dedication have been indispensable for the realization of this thesis.

Second I would like to thank the Tourism Association of Lazise for their help, with special thanks to Ms. Lisa Pevarello for providing me the necessary background information for my research. Special thanks go also to the inhabitants of Lazise who have welcomed me once more in the warm and sincere way I had experienced during my past stays.

Finally, I would like to thank my family without whom support my Master would not have been possible and my friends in Italy as well as in Breda for encouraging me and giving me their support in every moment.
Executive Summary

Background

Lazise is a popular tourism destination situated at the shores of Lake Garda, Italy’s biggest and most popular lake. During the past six decades Lazise has experienced a steadily growing flux of tourists from mainly Northern Europe. The main inbound market is Germany which has proven to be loyal and resistant as much as growing, while other North-European countries such as Denmark and the Netherlands have been increasing during the last years. The long history of cultural exchange between foreign tourists and locals makes Lazise the ideal platform for a host-guest relation analysis and the researcher’s personal work-experience in the location facilitates the understanding and interpretation of the results. It is hoped that the results can assist Lazise in competing with other destinations and that a contribution to the recognition of the importance of host-guest relations within the tourism field can be given.

Objective of the Thesis

According to the relevant background the research objective can be formulated as follows:

> Investigate and analyze the host-guest relations in Lazise with an interpretive approach in order to clarify and explain the mutual understanding and misunderstanding

The Research Questions

In order to obtain the research goal the following research questions had to be answered:

1. How can the host and the guest community be defined in Lazise?

2. What are the most important frames within the communities which have to be taken into consideration in order to investigate the host-guest relations in Lazise?

3. How do these frames create meaning in tourism?

4. Where could understanding and misunderstanding between host and guest possibly occur according to the respective cultural backgrounds?

5. To which extend and why is there understanding or misunderstanding between host and guest considering the gained research results related to the context of Lazise?
The Method of Working

In order to deal with the high level of complexity that a host-guest relation analysis requires in order to be realistic and tangible, the choice for an Interpretive Approach was taken. The Interpretive Approach distinguished itself from more traditional research-methods by not being merely objective but rather based on the personal interpretation of the researcher. Typical methods employed for this type of research are case studies, politics, ethics, participatory inquiry, participant observation and visual methods.

In order to avoid excessive stereotyping and prejudices, a process of self-reflection was chosen as a first step for the researcher. This contains analysis of literature about the researchers own cultural background and reflection on the personal experiences related to the destination.

The next step was the relevant definition for the host and guest community in Lazise. Clustering was applied in order to create a realistic overview of both communities. The heterogeneity within the communities and their correct representation has been a major challenge for the research.

Following the definition of the host and guest respectively, background theory on the relative cultural traits of the involved nationalities has been gathered and their possible behavior in tourism has been investigated. Major possibilities of understanding and misunderstanding between host and guest have been identified.

Secondary sources such as journals, books and various online databases were considered in this phase of the research.

The primary research was conducted in the chosen tourism destination during a two week stay in Lazise. Amongst participant observation, unstructured interviews were held with the previously chosen clusters in both communities until the stagnation point of relevant information was reached. During the stay in Lazise the context was carefully observed.

In the last phase of the research a ‘Third Space’ was created in which the researcher has created a final interpretation of the level of understanding and misunderstanding between host and guest in Lazise. In this final interpretation the context of the destination has met the analysis of both communities and a hermeneutic circle has been created in which the whole and details meet in order to create an overall understanding of the host-guest relations in Lazise.

Conclusions

Culturally spoken the German culture reaches a higher level of understanding with the host community than the emerging Danish and Dutch markets. This is partly caused by a higher degree of cultural similarity, partly by the longer period of cultural exchange between locals and German tourists.

Due to these factors it seems mainly to be the older population of Lazise which has a better connection to Germany and speaks the German language better than English. The younger locals focus more on English and do not distinguish much between the three main inbound markets.

The same can be said for the guest. There is no major fact of irritation among the guest community but the German tourists seem again to have a higher level of understanding with the locals. This anyhow is supposed to change during the next years if new inbound markets and locals respectively get used to each other and their culture.

The overall conclusion does not show major problems in understanding and the minor facts of irritation are most likely to disappear during the next years if the main inbound markets persist.
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Chapter One: Introduction

1.1. Background to the study

Boundaries are breaking in the post-modern world. Some of them between countries and
nations, others in between value sets and culturally constructed images. The arise of post-
structuralism, pragmatism and deconstruction as streams of thought place the post-modern
homo-sapiens in a position where every certainty seems to disappear and the quest for
universal validity appears to be futile.

The trend of breaking boundaries does also not spare the academic field. Researchers of
various disciplines find themselves involved in various fields of study, which in the past were
clearly distinct from each other. An example therefore is the school of ‘New Historicism’ which
introduces literary analysis into the field of historic research in order to discover the context of
studied timeframes. New subjects of focus such as post-colonialism are introduced in the
academic field, in which perspectives switch from the former colonizers to the former colonized.

Obviously also the hospitality sector has undergone notable changes in the multidisciplinary
sense. Tourism as an academic field has a long history of interdisciplinarity (Platenkamp 2007),
operating in economy, geography and lately also in a wide range of humanistic sciences such
as sociology, psychology and anthropology. The introduction of the last into the world of tourism
is caused by the observation of the impacts that the industry has, not only on the environment
but also on the culture of the involved subjects. In order to prevent stresses of cultural nature
more and more effort is put in the study field of host-guest relations. Since Valene L. Smith’s
milestone ‘Hosts and Guests’ in the year 1977 plenty of attention has been shifting to this
subject.

Host-guest encounters in tourism draw a perfect example of cross-cultural exchange, which is
not feasible in mere quantitative research methods and demands the introduction of new
approaches into the area. A past positivist supremacy in the academic field had created the
illusion of universal validity, postmodernism instead is demanding for a higher degree of
sensibility which is expressed in new, often interpretive methods. This anthropologic turn has
given birth to research methods such as symbolic interactionism and constructionism which are
gaining importance in order to investigate the level of understanding between host and guest.

In this paper an attempt will be made to apply an interpretive approach to the host-guest
relations in the town of Lazise, situated on the shores of the lake Garda in Northern Italy. Since
more than half a century the town and its surrounding area are famous as a holiday-hub for
Northern Europeans, having received and exchanged flows of culture for more than sixty years.
The focus of investigation will be the identification of level of understanding and
misunderstanding between the host and the guest community. The interpretive approach will
be focused on the determination of a decontextualized meaning-making process within the
communities which will be applied to the social, geographical and political context of Lazise.
1.2. Problem Statement

In recent analysis of host-guest relations the focus has shifted intensely to postcolonialism and the perspective of the former colonized communities, mainly in a host position. With the growing outbound of tourists from developing countries a new trend in the field also considers the ‘inverse’ perspective of former colonizers which suddenly are hosting the former colonized. In developed countries instead there has not been much research within the field of host-guest relations and if there is, it is mostly outdated (Boissevain 1996). In many popular European destinations which have undergone a long period of cross-cultural flow, there is still a lack of adequate research. In this paper an attempt will be made to use an interpretive approach in order to determine eventual conflicts between the host- and guest communities in a popular European tourist destination. It is an intention of this research to contribute to the gap of knowledge within the host-guest relation field in many European tourist destinations, and to demonstrate the validity and necessity of further studies concerning the topic.

1.3. Research questions and research goal

The aim of this research is to explore the host-guest relations in a popular European tourist destination from an interpretive angle. More specifically, the goal of the research is to

"Investigate and analyze the host-guest relations in Lazise with an interpretive approach in order to clarify and explain the mutual understanding and misunderstanding"

In order to reach the research goal the following research questions have to be answered:

6. How can the host and the guest community be defined in Lazise?

7. What are the most important frames within the communities which have to be taken into consideration in order to investigate the host-guest relations in Lazise?

8. How do these frames create meaning in tourism?

9. Where could understanding and misunderstanding between host and guest possibly occur according to the respective cultural backgrounds?

10. To which extend and why is there understanding or misunderstanding between host and guest considering the gained research results related to the context of Lazise?
1.4. Significance and expected outcomes

Besides the supposed popularity of Lazise as a tourism destination among European countries and the geographically convenient position of lake Garda, host-guest relations have a major impact on the tourism demand and have to be considered as a key factor in making as much as keeping a tourism destination competitive. Competitiveness is a major issue bearing in mind the diffusion of low-cost airlines and the improving facilities in several emerging destinations. Furthermore also the degree of customer loyalty depends highly on host-guest relations. Besides this, it is of major importance that the host-community copes well with tourism developments and does not show major signs of irritation in order to develop and stabilize a destination. The result of this study aims to assist Lazise as a competitive tourism destination by investigating understandings and misunderstandings between host and guest. It is hoped that measures can be taken in order to minimize eventual tensions and in case of understanding to reinforce the basics of positive interaction. Furthermore it is hoped that a contribution to the importance and recognition of social studies within the tourism field, which are underestimated, can be given.

1.5. Location of study

The study was conducted in Lazise, a Northern Italian town of approximately 6,800 inhabitants (Comuni Italiani, 2010) located at the south-eastern shores of Lake Garda, Italy’s biggest lake. Since the aftermath of World War Two Lazise’s Mediterranean atmosphere and its relatively easy accessibility from the North of Europe have transformed the former fishing village into a famous summer holiday destination. Besides the domestic market Lazise attracts visitors from mainly Central and Northern Europe. During the past years the town has been crammed with various accommodation possibilities, which range from high-yield hotels to a large number of campsites and pensions. This has caused the town’s economy to be highly dependent on
tourism with 443,701 registered tourist arrivals in the year 2009, 304,253 of them being international visitors (Comune di Lazise 2010).

As the above graph shows the main inbound market for Lazise comes from European countries such as Denmark and the Netherlands with Germany being on top, surpassing even the domestic market. Other important inbound markets are Austria, Switzerland and the remaining Scandinavian countries. It has to be added that this graph does not consider the length of stay, which in international tourists is notably higher than for the domestic market (Comune di Lazise 2010).

During high season which lasts from late spring until early autumn Lazise attracts besides tourists also a high number of seasonal workforce, many of them from neighboring cities and some from other, mostly European countries. Many of these workers and also tourists have moved permanently or at least acquired a second home in Lazise or the immediate surroundings, with approximately 9% of the town’s residents being of foreign origin (Comuni Italiani 2010).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Foreign Residents</th>
<th>Total Residents</th>
<th>% Foreigners</th>
<th>Born in Italy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>446</td>
<td>6,292</td>
<td>7,1%</td>
<td>/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>491</td>
<td>6,423</td>
<td>7,6%</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>528</td>
<td>6,551</td>
<td>8,1%</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>617</td>
<td>6,754</td>
<td>9,1%</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Half a decade of social and economic interaction between locals and international guests make Lazise an ideal starting point for investigating cross-cultural exchange within tourism, and its consequences for a tourism destination. Considering the loyalty of the main markets to the destination the level of understanding between host and guest have to be dealt with as a vital matter for Lazise as a competitive tourism destination.
Chapter Two: Literature review

2.1. Cultural complexity in a postmodern and postcolonial context

Postmodernism refuses to privilege any one perspective, and recognizes only difference, never inequality, only fragments, never conflict (Elizabeth Wilson)

In his book ‘The Tourist Image’ Tom Selwyn (1996) states that ‘if we attend the local voices we find that the members of host societies are involved in their own politics of accommodation with or resistance to the development of international tourism; they interpret the consequences of touristic development in ‘their own’ terms and they act according to those interpretations’.

This statement reflects that in an age where past positivist sciences have largely given place to postmodern skepticism introducing a wide range of new perspectives and blurring transitions and boundaries within science, also the field of tourism has to be rethought. More and more importance is given to social interaction between the host communities, visitors and the cultural background in which the process takes place. While a wide range of destinations are getting subject to mass tourism, the impact on the environment but also the clash of cultures between host and guest is becoming more and more visible.

As mentioned earlier there has been plenty of research about this topic in third world countries while research in developed countries is still limited and often outdated (Boissevain 1996). The reason therefore lies in the process of globalization and the creation of a more complex ‘Network society’ (Hannerz 1992). This is a network of cultural interaction that thanks to technology reaches the most remote areas of the globe. The process facilitates interaction between different cultures and gives voice to the less influential actors such as formerly colonized countries. This new focus on developing countries goes by the name of postcolonialism.

In this multitude of voices not only the colonized but also various subcultures and social layers share and exchange a variety of flows of meaning, containing shared information based on various cultural backgrounds (Hannerz 1992). The focus of several experts is the difference of power within the exchanged flows of meaning, supposed to lead towards a so called ‘unfree flow’ (Hannerz 1992), a transnational cultural bombardment from developed to developing countries. Hannerz mentions also the threat of ‘saturation’, a process which would lead the ‘centers’ (developed countries) to assimilate the ‘periphery’ (developing countries), oppressing their respective native cultures. Structuralist philosopher Levi-Strauss (Wintle 2002) states that this process of assimilation would lead on a long-term to the stagnation of global culture, because cultural progress is made by imitating and competing with other, mostly neighboring, cultures. A global network which exchanges an identical cultural flow would be without stimulus to develop and progress due to the lack of imitation and competition possibilities.

This apparent danger has caused intensive research about tourism and its influence on the local culture in developing countries, mostly from the Western point of view. As a result Hannerz (1992) states that the periphery countries do in fact receive a strong cultural influence form the center, but instead of submitting to it a new ‘creolized’ culture is born, for example African singers combining traditional and Western rhythms to create a new form of music. This process is called ‘maturation’ (Hannerz 1992).
Herewith Hannerz shows that the post-modern world is not only a globalizing entity moving towards a saturation point but a complex interaction of various networks which create, mingle, overlap and interact on a constant base. Tourism as a cultural science has to take account of the cultural interchange within these networks and the context in which the meetings occur.

2.2. Host-guest relations in a postmodern context

Galani-Moutafi (1999) states that ‘unlike in the past when the habitus of fieldwork was defined against that of travel, today, for reasons related to postmodern concern with the dissolving of boundaries – between the personal and the professional, self and other, theory and experience – the boundary between literary travel and academic fieldwork, as well as between academic analysis and travel narrative, is renegotiated… Overall, as the postmodern world – because of travel and mobility – is undergoing a continuous readjustment of cultural geographies, the formerly stable distinctions between the familiar and the foreign, the self and the Other, as well as the conventional views about the ‘field’ where anthropological research takes place, have been undermined’. Herewith an insight in what host-guest theory is becoming is given: Self and Other are not always clearly distinct and cannot be simplified in their categorization. Looking back in history instead, host-guest research was a meeting of clearly distinct entities and mainly concerned with the tourists influence on the host community. The most common aim was to find the in how far tourist behavior has influence on social values, languages and society of the destination’s community (Pearce 1982). Not all of the relevant conclusions have been negative in regard to the process of saturation, instead it was discovered that in several cases tourism leads to new jobs, modernization and preservation of cultural traditions. The recent increasing interest in cultural complexity amongst tourism researchers and the introduction of further disciplines such as psychology and anthropology in the field of tourism have given birth to new form of cultural analysis which shifts away from these classical distinctions. In a new postmodern context the consideration of tourism as a study field has switched from a merely economic science to a cultural product. Destinations are sold as cultural experiences more than just as mere leisure. This evolution in the tourism field creates a growing need for understanding and elaborating the complex cultural dimensions in which tourism takes place (Craik 1995), mirroring its evolution also in host-guest relations. Recent field research about the ‘other’, which in the past was clearly distinct from the ‘self’, reports not only on a different identity but also on the researcher himself in a process of self-reflection, putting in doubt the Western basic values which were the fundamentals of every pre-modern and modern host-guest analysis (Galani-Moutafi 1999). Often travels are seen as a quest for the ‘exotic other’ and adventure, because the traveler (Western traveler) cannot find these feature in his own modern society. This leads ultimately to a deconstruction process of the researchers own culture, reflecting on his society and values. While anthropologists are mostly aware of this fact many travelers are not conscious of the verity that the image they produce of others is directly related to their home culture and inner self. This process of self-reflection by observing the ‘other’ is called the ‘Mirror effect’ (Hannerz 1992). The awareness of the researcher itself being influenced by his cultural background and the rise of pragmatism in tourism studies give life to new experimental approaches in host-guest relations such as symbolic interactionism and constructionism, both based on qualitative research methods and involving supplementary sciences such as psychology and anthropology. In general these new interpretative approaches distinguish themselves from the past positivist tradition by adding a ‘Three Space Analysis’ (Platenkamp 2007). To the first and second space
which are the host and the guest communities way of making meaning respectively, a new dimension is added where host and guest meet in a ‘in-between-world’ (Platenkamp 2007) where the researcher itself receives both voices in a climate of openness and critique (Saïd 2004).

2.3. First Space: The Host Community

Without close attention to the local voice (indeed, we must be careful here, local voices, for tourism produces a range of very different local reactions), our social scientific work risks being descriptively poor and ethnocentric . . . . We need to know the local perceptions and understandings of tourism, we need to know the local perceptions of change and continuity, and we need to recognize that any culture is likely to have contradictory things to say about both. If international tourism is about our culture rather than the destination country, an anthropological approach to international tourism that cannot accord a crucial status to the full range of local voices risks putting itself in the same position (Crick 1988)

2.3.1. Definition and clusters

Although it is difficult to define the term ‘community’ in general because of internal heterogeneity, different definitions of host-community have been established. Sherlock (1999) argues that withstanding the difficulties in definition the word ‘community’ can be used in reference to a group of people which exist in one particular location. Mathieson and Wall (1982) have given a classic definition of host-community as the ‘inhabitants of the destination’. Williams and Lawson (2001) define the host community as ‘a group of people who share common goals or opinions’ while Aramberri (2001) argues that ‘host societies are in fact communities, made of one piece’. This definition portrays the host-community as a homogeneous entity which corresponds to concept of ‘objective spirit’, or ‘objective mind’, cited by the German Idealist philosopher G.W.F. Hegel (1807). The sharing of ideals and goals, according to Hegel, transforms the ‘isolated subject into an objective subject, on the basis of shared local morality since infancy’.

The use of this definition alone would limit the host community to a single and uniform entity on the basis of thought and act, and it is thus important to take in account that Hegel developed two more definitions which complete the concept of objective mind. Additional to the objective spirit every subject has a ‘subjective mind’, which deals with anthropology and psychology, and an ‘absolute mind’ which deals with arts, religion and philosophy. Both of these are according to Hegel not merely dependent from the society and culture the subject lives in.

Hegel’s theory can be seen as a forerunner to the stratification of society by social values, later discussed by Marx, and the concept of ‘polyphony’ (Bakhtin 1929) which argues that ‘everybody in society can speak for itself, distinct from others’. This concept successfully criticizes the notion of community as a heterogeneous whole. Therewith a fundamental crack in the surface of what was seen as an unique, heterogeneous and therefore an easy to grasp entity had been made. The term community itself was raised to a new level and the mere existence of a community as a closed entity was put into doubt. In tourism this affects most of all the field of host and guest relations where as mentioned earlier the borders between guest and host seem to blur and mingle, creating a new overlapping entity.
In order to overcome this issue in defining the host community Davis, Allen and Cosenza (1988) have developed five categories of hosts, based on the cluster analysis of locals attitudes, interests and opinions towards tourism. In the same period, for this research more interesting and therefore listed due to its practical approach, Krippendorf (1987) has categorized the residents in four clusters which enable the conceptualization of certain characteristics, themes and experiences:

- **In direct contact with tourists**: Locals which depend on tourism and would be unemployed without it. They welcome visitors.
- **In unrelated business**: Locals which are the owners of businesses which do not have a regular contact with tourists. Tourism is a purely commercial matter.
- **Partial contact**: Locals who have frequent contacts with tourists but derive only part of their income from tourism. They feel more critical about the disadvantages of tourism.
- **No contact**: Locals which have no contacts with tourists, they see tourists only passing.

This simple categorization is still widely used in host-guest research and has given inspiration to start further investigations on the topic. Tucker and Lynch (2004) have added another distinction on the first cluster ‘in direct contact with tourists’ related to different host personalities. These patterns should be considered as extremes and hosts can be a combination of various types:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Host Personality Types</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Implication for host-guest relationship</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“People People”</td>
<td>Genuine interest in meeting and talking with new people. Wants to help with whatever the guest might be interested in.</td>
<td>Guests enjoy the chance they have to spend the time chatting with their hosts and “exchanging” friendship, knowledge and culture.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Relaxed”</td>
<td>Not overbearing or “fussy”. Doesn’t panic if things are not 100% ready when guests arrive.</td>
<td>Allows guests to relax also. As long as a basic level of cleanliness is maintained most guests do not worry if everything is “just so”.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Perfect host”</td>
<td>Wants to put on the right image to guests, so ensures everything is ready and absolutely perfect from the beginning to the end of the guests stay.</td>
<td>The stay is a rather formal experience. Guests may find the host rather overbearing, and might not be feeling able to ask for something for fear of offending the hosts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“House proud”</td>
<td>Makes clear the rules and regulations of the household, letting the guests know that the home, its content and organization are precious and not to be tampered with.</td>
<td>Guests may be unable to relax, feeling nervous in case they step out of line or spill or break something. In extreme cases, they may feel completely unwelcome in the house, feeling as they are intruding.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Business (wo)man”</td>
<td>Runs the place purely as a business, fitting as many guests as possible, charging for everything, and not having/making time to chat with the guests.</td>
<td>Guests feel like another tourist passing through, and see what they are getting as a bed and breakfast service, rather than hospitality.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 4: Host-types and their implication for the host-guest relationship*
It is important to notice that these clusters are related merely to the hospitality sector and do not include other types of hosts. Therefore they cannot be considered useful and applicable in every host-guest approach.

Swarbrooke (1999) has given an all including definition ‘all those people who live within a tourist-destination’, embracing but not solving the heterogeneity of the host community.

2.3.2. Host perception models

Majority of tourism studies have been conducted by measuring resident’s attitudes towards tourism and the effects which are perceived by the locals (Zhang 2006). It has been recognized that that the residents perception is a valuable component in identifying tourism impact (Getz 1994), introducing a more cognitive perspective in the study area.

Smith (1977) states that ‘the two major bases for conflict and stress among the host community appear to be economic and social and are individually considered’. Therefore hosts which economic capacity is similar to the guests are less likely tempted to see tourism as an annoyance. Where ‘worldwide economic disparities exist and tourists are perceived to be “rich” simply because they are leisured, severe stress is often apparent’ (Smith 1977).

Speaking in economic terms the reaction of the host community to tourism does not depend only on disparities but also on ‘the benefit that it brings to the local community’ (Faulkner and Tideswell 1997) and in social terms ‘what the locals observe in the tourists and wish to copy’ (Swarbrooke 1999). Faulkner and Tideswell (1999) state that ‘within the local community tolerance to tourism is strictly related to how much profit and individual personally makes from tourism to influence the perception, that means that where negative effects are recognized but profit is made the tolerance level is higher’.

Generally a distinction between intrinsic factors and extrinsic factors which influence the residents perception of tourism is made.

Intrinsic factors influencing the hosts perception are patterns such as age, gender, dependency on tourism, education and community attachment (Al Hasanat 2008), community attachment being the time the host has been resident in the area. Regarding this topic recent studies have concluded that mostly individuals which are longer resident in a tourism destination dislike tourism to a higher degree than persons who shortly have moved (Jurowski 1997, Weaver 2001, McGehee and Andereck 2004).

Recent studies have shown that mostly higher educated persons welcome tourism, fact which is connected to their awareness of the economic benefits tourism brings (Al Hasanat 2008). This anyway does not apply to every destination, other examples have shown that education does not influence the hosts perception (Konstantinos 2003).

Extrinsic factors which influence the hosts perception are amongst others seasonality, cultural differences between host and guest, type of tourists and the stage of development of a tourist destination (Doxey 1975, Butler 1980, Ap 1993). While seasonality and connected problems such as overcrowdment and traffic are accepted easier by residents directly profiting from tourism, cultural differences highly depend on the level of interaction (Al Hasanat 2008). Package tourists seem to cause more irritation because of the lesser level of interaction with the host community (Smith 1989). This shows that a higher degree of interaction does not automatically mean more annoyance but it can have the opposite effect. In this case the researcher has to be aware of the fact that this depends highly on the cultural background of the host community and varies for every destination.
Literature regarding host perceptions suggests that the rapid expansion of tourism in the late 20th century has brought more welcome changes such as improving income, education, employment opportunities and local infrastructure and services (Lankford 1994, McCool and Martin 1994, Ross 1992) but also less welcome impacts such as the cultural and family values challenged, new economically powerful groups emerging, and cultural practices adapt to suit the need of tourists (Ap and Crompton 1993, Johnson, Sneepeenger and Akis 1994). These mostly unwelcome impacts cause a degree of irritation on the host-community, which depends on the balance between the benefits and the annoyances but also the cultural environment in which the meeting takes place. Different theories have been developed in order to explain tourism impacts and residents attitudes towards tourists. Some of them are concerned with the change in residents attitudes by time (Butler 2006, Dogan 1989, Doxey 1975), while others have focused on the residents strategies for responding to tourism impacts (Ap and Crompton 1993). Some of the most influential are listed below.

2.3.3. Irridex Model (Doxey)

Developed in 1975 this model is one of the most important contributions to modern tourism research. With the Irridex (Index of Tourist Irritation) Doxey states that by increasing tourism in a destination the residents pass through the four phases of:

- **Euphoria**: Feeling of happiness and comfort
- **Apathy**: Locals start losing their interest in tourism
- **Annoyance**: By increasing the number of tourists neutrality changes into hostility.
- **Antagonism**: A generation of hostile reactions against tourism.

Although the Irridex is useful in identifying the stages of development in a tourism destination, and therefore can be applied in the space of time, the model fails to address the community as a heterogeneous entity (Wall and Mathieson 2006). The model cannot explain the variety of residents within a community (Zhang 2006) and does not explain situations in which visitor management strategies may help to reduce pressure on the local community (Shaw and Williams 2002). The Irridex is a merely descriptive model which is useful for host-guest relations but it can be used as a starting point for a research only rather than as a conclusion. The lack of heterogeneity should be supported by clusters of residents, being aware of the fact that the Irridex might vary by cluster. There is also to add that the model should not be seen as universally applicable because of the high degree of difference between destinations related to social, cultural and economic context.

2.3.4. Tourism Life Cycle and Dynamic Matrix (Butler)

Developed out of a model which was created in 1980 Butlers ‘Tourism Destination Life Cycle’ (2006) is still a milestone in tourism studies. The model is based on the product cycle concept and explains the phases in which a tourism destination evolves and changes over time, thus is more concerned with the destination itself than with the residents from a social point of view.
The model suggests that every destination passes through the phases of 'exploration, involvement, development, consolidation, stagnation, decline and/or rejuvenation'. Initially the destination will be visited by a small number of tourists which are restricted by the lack of facilities. When awareness grows facilities are being developed and numbers of tourist arrivals grow. The area is then supposed to grow rapidly because of marketing efforts triggered by the rising awareness among the hosts. Ultimately the destination will reach its carrying capacity which will lead to a decline on a long-term if the destination is not rejuvenated or reinnovated. While Butler states that 'a consistent evolution of a tourist area can be conceptualized' (2006), similar to the Irridex model the Tourism Destination Life Cycle has received criticism for assuming homogeneity within the host community (Mason and Cheyne 2000). Other scholars have affirmed that the model is only partly applicable, because not all of the destinations experience all the phases of the cycle in a distinct and chronological order (Tosun 2002).

In 1974 Butler has developed another framework more concerned with the host community as a social entity, called the Dynamic Matrix (Butler 1974) in which he suggests that residents may be active or passive in their attitudes towards tourism as well as positive or negative in terms of their attitude (Cordero 2008). Unlike the Irridex which represents the general opinion of a community Butler’s Matrix succeeds in taking into account the different opinions within society and that there are different resident groups within a community.

2.3.5. Embracement – Withdrawal Strategy (Ap and Compton)

Ap and Compton (1993) have developed a model which contains four strategies in residents reactions to tourism, related to the growing number of tourists in a destination:

- **Embracement**: Tourism is accepted by the locals, positive feelings about impacts.
- **Tolerance**: More impacts are being felt. Enthusiasm transforms into acceptance.
- **Adjustment**: Locals become divided. Some adjust to tourism, some don’t.
- **Withdrawal**: Negative perceptions take over.

Similar to the Irridex this model discusses the attitude of local people towards tourism. Ap and Crompton (1993) have recognized that there may be diversity of attitudes among the local population and therefore do not consider their framework as rigid.

This model, standing by itself, needs the support of clusters of residents within the host community in order to distinguish various reactions on various stages of tourism development and to embrace heterogeneity within society.
2.3.6. Response Framework (Dogan)

Unlike the models of Butler and Doxey, Dogan’s framework (1989) focuses on the responses of the host-community rather than on their attitude. By assuming that the host society is relatively homogeneous previous to tourism arrival, Dogan’s model shows that the impact of tourism creates a more heterogeneous society which tends towards acceptance or resistance (Cordero, 2008). To cope with the effects of tourism the model proposes the following strategies for the host community:

- Resistance
- Retreatism
- Boundary Maintenance
- Revitalization
- Adoption

Like Butler Dogan recognizes that ‘the level of heterogeneity of the local population and the power structure within it determine the differentiation of responses to tourism and the forms of strategies adopted. Moreover the power structure within a region may regulate the responses of the local population and suppress certain forms of reaction’ (Dogan 1989).

Besides the heterogeneity of society Dogan considers also the power structures, such as the local government influencing and regulating the reactions of the host society. Clustering the residents in different groups is therefore useful to a correct application of this model.

2.3.7. Conclusion regarding the host community

The proceeding debate about host communities has shown that there are various theories which give a valid starting point for future studies. Nonetheless it is difficult to find a solid theoretical background for a realistic host-community analysis. The main reason therefore is the term ‘society’ or ‘community’ itself which in most cases is wrongly considered to be a homogeneous entity. Although many researchers have recognized this issue it is difficult to find a universal solution. This limitation is causing a lack of standard scales in measuring the locals perception regarding tourism.

The universal use of standard scales does not seem only difficult but also impractical taking into consideration the cultural differences between host communities and the divergences within each and every one of them such as social discrepancies and involvement in tourism. Qualitative research methods are appropriate for analyzing the community because of the high degree of sensibility to difference within the approach. By using techniques such as participant observation and in-depth interviews with residents, the researcher can reach a deeper understanding of the cultural background of the local community and adapt quantitative instruments to the case in question. Qualitative research is gaining more importance within this field and the question ‘why’ certain decisions are taken is shifting in the center of attention (Riley and Love 2000). This seems to be a big step forward in order to define the host community as a heterogeneous entity and base further research on this assumption.
2.4. Second Space: The Guest Community

2.4.1. Definition and clusters

Similar to the previously mentioned problems in defining the host-community as homogeneous also the term ‘tourist’ as a general definition is highly debated by researchers (Berno 1997). The first step in approaching the guest community is therefore to realize that there are numerous definitions of visitors and tourists among experts. Often researchers themselves are mistaken as being tourists and often tourists themselves prefer to be called ‘visitors’ or ‘travelers’ (Berno 1997). In the academic field rises therefore a growing need for finding an unanimous definition for the term tourist (Lanfant 1993). In the past fifty years various definitions have been identified by researchers. Some of them are given as an example.

MacCannell (1976) is a pioneer in guest theory and defines the modern tourist as ‘archetypical structuralists’ which ‘by means of tourism try to recreate the sense of wholeness and structure absent from everyday contemporary life’. This is a response to Levi-Strauss’ affirmation that structuralist interpretations of the modern world are impossible, as modernity has destroyed the pre-modern structures on which the interpretations were based (Selwyn 1996).

As previously discussed regarding host-theories also the guest definition of MacCannell is subject to several points of criticism. Selwyn (1996) mentions the following two as the most relevant.

Cohen’s objection that the term tourist describes a seemingly homogeneous entity (1988) is not applicable in a postmodern context. Selwyn (1996) argues that there is no such person as the tourist, but rather many different kinds which look for different things. It is due to him simply not convincing to define all the tourists as seekers of a lost structure. The second point of criticism points out that the search for structure that MacCannell mentions derives directly from the structuralist sociology of the 1960’s (Cohen 1988). In a post-modern context which has rejected the pattern of structuralism, so Cohen, these definitions can no longer be applied.

Baudrillard (1988) defines the modern tourists as ‘monitoring screens’, driven by consumerism and therefore insensible to feel alienated by a seemingly lost structure. The traveler of the past has given space to a new post-modern tourist which does not base its assumptions on the lost ‘self’ but rather finds himself on the continuous search for something new.

The difficulties in definition aside it is fundamental to notice that tourists similar to hosts are not homogeneous within the guest community, and that there are different types of tourists, or better, different tourist experiences (Mehmetoglu 2004). Experiences are crucial for explanation and prediction of the tourist behavior because they can explain the push factors (why people decide to travel), as well as the pull factors (why they choose a specific destination) and therefore bring also the field of guest research on a postpositivist level.
2.4.2. Tourist Typologies (Cohen)

Cohen (1964) was the first scholar which did not treat tourists as a uniform entity. This reaction was caused by Boorstin (1964) which grouped all tourists to a homogeneous cluster. According to Cohen (1972) the basics for deriving a tourist typology can be deducted from the extent in which tourists combine elements of familiarity with new experiences. On one extreme therefore we find tourists which consider novelty as the most important experience while others search mainly for familiarity. By grouping various kinds of experiences into a typology Cohen (1972) has identified the following four tourist typologies:

- **Organized mass-tourist** (Institutionalized)
- **Individual mass-tourist** (Institutionalized)
- **Explorer** (Non-institutionalized)
- **Drifter** (Non-institutionalized)

While organized mass-tourists and individual mass-tourists search and prefer familiarity, explorers and drifters are more adventurous and look for a novelty experience. These typologies are mainly based on observed behavior rather than on different desired experiences. The cognitive background assumptions which lead to the decision making process can are not being identified by Cohen.

2.4.3. Tourist Typologies (Smith)

In 1977 Smith identified seven clusters of tourists based on Cohen’s typologies:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Tourist</th>
<th>Numbers of Tourists</th>
<th>Adaptations to Local Norms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Explorer</td>
<td>Very limited</td>
<td>Accepts fully</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elite</td>
<td>Rarely seen</td>
<td>Adapts fully</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Off-beat</td>
<td>Uncommon but seen</td>
<td>Adapts well</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unusual</td>
<td>Occasional</td>
<td>Adapts somewhat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incipient Mass</td>
<td>Steady flow</td>
<td>Seeks Familiar Amenities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mass</td>
<td>Continuous influx</td>
<td>Expects Familiar Amenities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charter</td>
<td>Massive arrivals</td>
<td>Demands Familiar Amenities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Explorers are anthropologists more than tourists which live as participant-observers amongst the host-community. Their number is very limited. Elite tourists are ‘touring’ and have plenty of travel experience. They adapt easily because they know the adaption is temporary. Off-beat
tourists instead are going beyond the norm and usually seek distance from other travelers. In general they adapt well to different kinds of services. Unusual tourists prefer and organized tour but sometimes take days off the track. They generally prefer a familiar environment but are interested in difference. Incipient Mass tourists prefer guided tours and modern hotels but normally travel in smaller groups. The destination chosen is mostly popular. Mass tourism is built upon middle-class values and income and creates a "tourist bubble", in which a familiar atmosphere is reproduced. Their numbers are higher than those of incipient mass tourists. Charter tourists operate mainly in large groups and arrive in large numbers. The contact with the local culture is minimized and only business related.

The clusters identified by Smith (1977) add a new dimension to the interaction between host and guest by considering in how far the guests adapts to the local norms. Nonetheless his categorization was seen to be less applicable than Cohen’s by most scholars, and the clusters as not easily distinguishable (Mehmetoglu 2004) because they are linked to specific observations in specific contexts.

2.4.4. Phenomenological Framework (Cohen)

In 1979 Cohen proposed a new framework based more on the tourist experiences than on observed behavior (Cohen 1979). With his new distinctions he relates to the school of Husserl and the movement of phenomenology, a cognitive science which investigates the decision making process of its subjects.

The phenomenological clusters identified by Cohen are the following:

- **Recreational**: Travels for pleasure
- **Diversionary**: Alienated by current environment, searching for difference
- **Experiential**: Looking for meaning
- **Experimental**: Looking for alternatives in many directions, no commitments
- **Existential**: Fully committed to a spiritual quest external to the native culture

In bringing a cognitive approach into tourism, Cohen deconstructs the extremes between a familiarity and novelty searching tourist and shows the shades of grey between the black and white of past distinctions. Instead of basing the clustering merely on the ‘what’ Cohen brings the ‘why’ into account which is a fundamental step into including social sciences into the tourism field. Phenomenology within tourism has been a crucial step in the direction of a more sophisticated cultural analysis.

2.4.5. Tourist Experience Categorization (Plog)

Plog (1974) was the first scholar to relate tourism experience to the visited destination and therewith to the cultural and social background instead of generalizing it on a global scale. Similar to Cohen’s tourist typologies (1972) there are two extremes in tourists regarding the destination. The psychocentric tourist prefers a familiar atmosphere while the allocentric looks for a different cultural experience in the chosen destination.
The strength of this model is that the investigator can identify how many people chose a certain destination and for which purpose. The cultural background of the tourists can explain if they are psychocentric or allocentric if related to the culture of the destination.

2.4.6. Empirical Clusterings and Individualistic versus Collectivistic

While up to this point most of the guest theories where theoretical more than applicable, Pearce (1982) created five empirical clusters based on Cohen’s theory (1974), distinguishing tourists by travel related roles: Environmental travel (Anthropologists, conservationists and explorers), High contact travel (travelers, overseas students and foreign journalists), spiritual travel (hippies, religious pilgrims and missionaries), pleasure first travel (jet-setters, tourists and holidaymakers) and exploitative travel (businessmen and jet-setters). By this study of social psychological perspective Pearce (1982) includes the social dimension in the travelers choice which is an important contribution to the merely ego-centric distinction made by previous researchers.

Yiannakis and Gibson (1992) have created fourteen different leisure based profiles of tourists using a quantitative method based on Pearce roles (1982). The tourists are clustered as sun lovers, anthropologists, archeologists, organized mass tourists, thrill seekers, explorers, jetsetters, seekers, independent mass tourists 1 & 2, escapists 1 & 2, active sport tourists and educational tourists. This distinction is limited by the fact that it targets only leisure tourists and does not provide any information about why a certain destination was chosen.

Mehmetoglu (2004) makes a distinction between ‘individualistic’ and ‘collectivistic’ tourists. Individualistic travelers tend to see their trip as cultural investment and search for values more than just for leisure. Collectivistic tourists instead are normally not as independent as the individualistic travelers and for them travel is merely a short break from routine.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Individualistic</th>
<th>Collectivistic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>High level:</strong> Solo travelers</td>
<td><strong>High level:</strong> All-inclusive package tourists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Low level:</strong> Backpackers, small groups</td>
<td><strong>Low level:</strong> Independent tourists</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mehmetoglu does recognize that there are several mid levels between an individualistic and a collectivist traveler, which are distinguished by high and low level classifications respectively. This distinction is comparable to Cohen’s familiarity and novelty pattern, individualistic tourists tend more versus novelty while collectivistic travelers prefer familiarity.
2.4.7. The U-Curve of ‘Culture Shock’ (Oberg)

Originally from 1960 the model of Kalervo Oberg is still popular amongst researchers and has been widely applied and discussed since then (Hottola 2004). Similar to Doxey’s Irridex (1975) the U-curve is the invert application of the residents perception towards tourists. It describes the five emotional phases a tourist goes through when he clashes with the host-mentality in the meeting space. First, in the joy of arrival the tourist is in euphoria, followed by disillusion which goes to the extreme of hostility, caused by a so called overdose of diversity which Oberg names ‘Culture Shock’. From hostility the tourist moves to adaption and later assimilation to the host culture. Similar to the Irridex this model is highly limited by the assumption that the cognitive process of every tourist is similar, and does therefore not have universal validity (Hottola 2004). For a guest analysis the curve can contribute rather in naming the cognitive stage in which a certain cluster is operating rather following its chronological logic. Further on, the U-curve does not explain anything about the cultural and motivational background that lies at the basics of the tourists reactions. Related to the Irridex it is interesting to notice that while the host community seems to get more irritated by the increase of tourism, tourists get assimilated to the environment by the passing of time.

2.4.8. Conclusion regarding the guest community

Similar to what has been said about the host community also the guest community including tourists, travelers and visitors respectively, is a heterogeneous entity and therefore hard if not impossible to generalize.

In addition to the difference created by social and economic factors the guest community is mostly formed by a even more heterogeneous group than the host community, including different nationalities which possess different cultural backgrounds. It might therefore be that a domestic tourists shares a large number of common values with the host community rather than with fellow tourists from other countries. Consequently in addition to the distinction between various tourist experiences, motivations and behaviors the researcher has to be aware of the ‘cultural luggage’ (Hannerz 1992), the set of fixed background assumptions related to a person’s cultural provenience.

By the means of qualitative research methods a deeper insight in the cultural background can be gained and quantitative instruments can be adapted once again to the respective tourist categories.
2.5. Third Space: The third dimension as a meeting point

In a new ‘post-modern’ situation there seems to be a need for a horizontal transcendence in which historically and culturally situated, plural insights from value-laden practices thematise the marginalized ‘slow’ questions about morals and existence. (Vincent Platenkamp)

In the post-modern context, a large set of new perspectives is introduced in the field of host-guest relations, which can be the postcolonial voice of the former colonized but also a large set of other background voices which can no longer be ignored (Platenkamp 2007).

To unite these voices, Bhabha introduces the idea of a ‘third space’ (1994), which is a ‘in between creolising world’ where various cultures are continuously in a process of negotiation. Similar to Bakhtin’s theory of polyphony (1929) Bhabha refers to a polyphonic space, where various voices will be heard from various backgrounds and identities.

In this space, the first space of the ‘we’ and the second space of the ‘they’ meet without any assumed or presupposed hierarchy (Platenkamp 2007). This meeting point does not stimulate an attempt to assimilate the various voices but rather points on differences, prejudices and subjective judgments. Values, norms, knowledge and convictions come to the surface in the third space (Platenkamp 2007). This is possible only if the traditional vertical hierarchy of voices, based on their importance, values and opinions is transformed in a horizontal space where every voice is equally heard, even voices which where tacit and could return to the surface by the stories of various lifeworlds. The researcher himself has to realize that he is not an all knowing entity standing above his work, but is merely one of the many voices heard. This horizontalization of values is an open critique to the ‘Expertenkultur’ of past positivist approaches.

In relation to this, Hannerz (1992) describes the process of meaning making, which every voice does in between their cultural and social structure. Amongst these there is another part. In every voice which is not influenced by these two factors and adds a personal interpretation. Understanding this from a hermeneutic point of view brings to the surface the ‘hidden knowledge’ (Hannerz 1992) which are subconscious background assumptions laying on the basics of interpretation. This asks for a dive into the conscious and subconscious, causing deeper understanding under the surface, what the German philosopher Schleiermacher in hermeneutic tradition calls ‘Empfindung’ (Garrish, MacKintosh, Stewart 1999). Once the hidden knowledge comes to the surface, a deeper insight in culture can be gained which is not based on a single interpretation as it was in Western tradition, but rather on various perspectives in the same field of knowledge (Platenkamp 2007) and a hermeneutic circle can be created.

The main reason for the necessity of a third space is the combination of various networks in the globalised world and the confusion that the interlinking networks create. Research has been influenced by a long Western dominance in interpretation and after the rise of postmodernism seems to ask for another hold for universal validity. For gaining a deeper understanding in a postmodern context, none of these perspectives, including the one of the researcher, can be understood separately but merely on the basics of universal understanding and therefore bound to the context (Platenkamp 2007).

The following theories can be supporting the third space analysis.
2.5.1. Hofstede and the Cultural Stereotype

As one of the pioneers in cross-cultural research Geert Hofstede (1980) attempts to cluster value positions by evaluating primary and secondary data in order to create scores in various values for 66 nations. This is an attempt to gain the hidden knowledge which lays behind the actions of a certain culture/nationality. Every nationality is evaluated in the following 5 clusters:

- **Power-Distance**: The degree of acceptance of the less powerful to be seen as inferior in hierarchy
- **Individualism-Collectivism**: Measures the degree to which individuals look after their own and close family’s interest only.
- **Masculinity-Femininity**: Masculine cultures tend towards competitiveness and material success while feminine cultures tend towards equality.
- **Long-term and Short-term orientation**: Long-term strives towards future rewards while short term is more concerned with the present and past, traditional values.
- **Uncertainty avoidance**: Measures the degree by which a culture feels threatened by unknown situations.

Originally this model was created to measure work related values but has been widely used in social anthropology and host-guest relations (Litvin, Crots, Hefner 2004). The model has been widely criticized for stereotyping and generalizing cultures but the possible application in a third space analysis as a starting point for understanding of cultural backgrounds is unquestionable. The researcher has to take in account once more that no community itself is homogeneous and there are differences of perception within nationalities based on other previously mentioned factors.

2.5.2. Contextualisation and Decontextualisation

In order to overcome simplicity in precedent cultural studies within tourism Platenkamp (2007) proposes a conceptual frame which involves (cultural) context in the academic field with the purpose to filter the tacit knowledge (Hannerz 1992).

In the first phase which is called ‘contextualisation’ the researcher starts by observing eventual clashes between the global and the local, and is therefore very related to the location which is investigated. It is in this phase that every voice is heard and perspectives are switched in order to interpret the polyphonic dialogue in a self-reflexive manner (Platenkamp 2007). Here the researcher aims at bringing the hidden background assumptions rooted in the investigated cultures to the surface.

In the second phase of ‘decontextualisation’ the researcher reflects on the gained knowledge by mirroring the context on other situations. In this phase solutions to eventual problems can be found.

Originally this approach was applied in order to contextualize and decontextualize and international classroom in a Dutch university (Platenkamp 2007), but the high degree of sensibility towards cross-cultural communication makes this framework also applicable to host-guest analysis. In the third space where all the voices meet there is a need to contextualize in order to reflect background assumptions on the investigated location and to destabilize their universal validity. The phase of decontextualisation is not relevant for this case study, being merely focused on one single destination. Further research may be carried out in order to decontextualize the gained results and therewith ‘universalize’ them to other destinations.
2.5.3. Issues and conclusion regarding the Third Space

2.5.3.1. The host-guest paradigm and relevant criticism

The traditional notion of host-guest relations has three main features, commonly known as the host-guest paradigm (Smith 1989). The first is ‘protection’ given by the host to the guest, the second is ‘reciprocity’ which the host is expecting from the guest in future and the third is ‘duty from both sides’, which does not only claim respect but also reciprocal well-being.

Aramberri (2001) claims that in post-modern times this paradigm which had been used for too long is not applicable. Recent tourism is based on a relationship which is often merely financial, and if there is still an amount of reciprocity it is in terms of money only. The guests are switching from the position of guest to the position of customer, disilluding many post-modernist and Marxist scholars. According to Aramberri the paradigm can be applied only to the ‘drifter’ tourist in Cohen’s guest clustering (Cohen 1972), while the growing number of mass tourists act merely as customers. Baudrillard (1988) which had been mentioned before in analysis of the guest community shares a similar opinion by defining the tourist as ‘driven only by the search of something new’ in the age of consumerism.

In the third space analysis the researcher has to be aware of the fact that the traditional values of the host-guest paradigm are not (fully) applicable to every guest category and therefore needs to contextualize. Within the academic field the trend of ‘commercialization’ of tourism has received severe critique mainly from postmodernist and Marxist scholars, but its existence is important to be taken in account even within an interpretive research. The growth of mass-tourism and of other forms of tourism in a postmodern context do require a growing need of contextualization within the analysis and the host-guest paradigm has to be questioned and overcome by new forms of research and investigation. Contextualisation is an important step in this direction.

2.5.3.2. The need for horizontal hierarchy and conclusion

The fact that the third space application requires a total rethinking of the past positivist and structuralist ‘Expertenkultur’ for the First World and socialist and Marxist culture of the Second World (Gouldner 1971) is a main issue.

In Positivism we find more a struggle for a universally applicable theory instead of tolerance to a multitude of voices, while in the third space the predominance of these master-thinkers has to be avoided (Platenkamp 2007). This means that no voice should overrule the others and new theories and insights have to be stimulated instead of being assimilated.

While in a premodern society we find a strict vertical hierarchy of voices in which the less influential are overruled, modernity broke this concept by introducing a large degree of personal autonomy and individual freedom on a personal, economical and political level (Platenkamp 2007). To some degree the modern autonomy and freedom were unaware of the fact that they can damage the interest of others instead of contributing to their progress. Post-modernity as a new stream of thinking leaves the repression of premodernity and the competitiveness of modernity aside and creates a space in which ‘self’ and ‘other’ remain intact and live together amongst a multitude of other, often previously silenced voices (Platenkamp 2007).

The third space analysis which requires a high degree of awareness among the researcher includes self-awareness and awareness of the social and cultural context in which the investigation takes place. This high degree of difficulty of the third space application in tourism and social studies may be the cause that the application of this method is still at the beginnings.
2.6. Theoretical Framework

Considering all the relevant literature previously discussed the theoretical framework for this research has been developed.

The dimension of the host and the dimension of the guest meet with the dimension of the researcher within the context of the research in a process of contextualization. Every dimension is a different way of meaning-making, meaning the interpretation of a context. This process is influenced by the various subdivisions we find in each of the decontextualized dimensions. The context is determined by location, political and social factors amongst others.

Each of the three dimensions is composed of a conscious and an subconscious part according to Hegel’s distinctions between ‘objective’, ‘subjective’ and ‘absolute’ mind discussed previously (Hegel 1807). The objective mind is what can be called the cultural background and therefore the dimension is mostly subconscious, the subjective mind is the individuality of every subject which cannot be generalized and is as well mostly subconscious. The definition of the third cluster is not identical to Hegel’s absolute mind which deals with anthropology and philosophy, but is social, showing an economic relationship to tourism for the host and the type of tourist for the guest. It is acknowledged that these three dimensions are not always clearly distinct but can overlap within the relevant sphere. It is in the ability of the researcher to take this into account and to generalize the result in a realistic way. Various theories which have been discussed in the previous part will be applied in order to support the generalization process.

The researchers dimension is composed of a conscious and an subconscious part similar to the sphere of the host and guest. It is not necessary to cluster these but the researcher has to be aware of his own cultural background, personality and relationship to tourism which might influence his perception during the research. Rather than striving towards an absolute
objectivity which due to the researchers own cultural luggage is impossible, it is important to keep self-awareness during the research process in order to avoid and recognize eventual prejudices.

The dimensions of host, guest and researcher fuse in within the context into a hermeneutical process, a so called ‘Horizontverschmelzung’, in which the hidden background assumptions (Hannerz 1992) come to the surface and the context is interpreted from various perspectives. This is possible only in a space with total horizontal hierarchy of voices where every voice is heard (Platenkamp 2007), including voices forming the context which can be determined by various qualitative research methods such as participant observation. It is this space of openness, in which the researcher receives rather than judges information that is defined as the ‘Third Space’ (Platenkamp 2007).

It is within this space that hidden background assumption of host and guest bound to the context will come to the surface and determine the level of mutual understanding. The accuracy of the results again depend highly on the sensibility and ability of the researcher in mimetizing with the investigated cultures and the environment.
Chapter Three: Methodology

‘The qualitative research community consists of groups of globally dispersed persons who are attempting to implement a critical interpretive approach which will help them (and others) to make sense of the terrifying conditions that define daily life in the first decade of this new century.’ (Norman Denzin)

The following chapter outlines the process of research and the methods chosen for this study. In order to support the choice to implement the interpretive approach, which is a qualitative research method, Denzin and Lincoln’s book ‘The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research, Third Edition’ (2005) and Bailey’s (2007) ‘A Guide to Qualitative Field Research: Second Edition’ have been chosen as guideline. Both Carol A. Bailey’s and Norman Denzin’s studies enjoy a good reputation amongst qualitative research circles and their handbooks have been published in a Third Edition and Second Edition respectively, which shows their popularity and resistance as milestones in the field.

3.1. Qualitative Research and Interpretive Approach

As mentioned before, in the past century a positivist quantitative research method has largely prevailed in most academic fields. This approach was distinguished mainly by its ‘complicity with colonialism, commitments to monumentalism and the production of timeless texts’ (Denzin and Lincoln 2005). The total hegemony of this method has come under heavy critic by failing to address co-construction questions, interpret and deal with social change (Denzin and Lincoln 2005).

In the last years of the fin de siècle qualitative research has emerged as a main stream approach in order to add value in many academic fields. Compared to the past quantitative and empirical methods, qualitative research is a field of study which is more difficult to define. It crosscuts between several sciences, incorporating streams of pragmatism, postcolonialism, poststructuralism, hermeneutics, phenomenology, deconstruction and interpretive studies. It is important to notice that qualitative research means different things in different periods of time, as Denzin and Lincoln (2005) point out. Its focus moves from a positivist fundamentalist approach similar to the basics of quantitative research, to a postmodernist approach where social sciences turn for the most part into humanities.

It is in this late period of qualitative research that the interpretive approach gains more importance among researchers. This method asks the researcher to make use of his paradigm or interpretive framework, which is the set of background assumptions which form his way of perceiving the world, similar to what Hannerz (1992) calls the ‘cultural luggage’ of an individual. Typical methods employed for this type of research are case studies, politics, ethics, participatory inquiry, participant observation and visual methods. Clifford Geertz as one of the forefathers of the interpretive approach has described culture as a ‘text which has to be interpreted’ (Martin 1993), it is intended that the interpretation is constructed by the researcher.

For this research an interpretive approach was chosen due to the high sensibility of the topic. By combining various interpretations embedded in the context an attempt is made to construct a generalization of the level of understanding. The method to reach this goal will be following the five steps which Denzin and Lincoln (2005) propose in order to define the research process. The traditional methodology subdivision in primary and secondary research only would be limiting in this case because the interpretive approach starts from the analysis of the
researchers own way of meaning-making and therefore requires a high degree of self-awareness. It was found that the five steps of qualitative research describe the process best. During all of the five phases a steady contact and consultancy was kept with the supervisor by email and meetings were held regularly.

3.2. The research process and techniques

Phase 1: The Researcher

It is important for the researcher to be self-reflective before starting an interpretive approach. The reason therefore is mainly the avoidance of personal stereotypes and prejudgments. It is in this phase that the ethics and politics of the research have to be confronted by the researcher. As mentioned before awareness of the own cultural background which is conscious and subconsious has to be gained. Denzin and Lincoln (2005) state we cannot speak of ‘researching the native, the indigenous other, while claiming to engage in value-free inquiry for the human disciplines’. In this case Hofstede’s stereotyping clusters for Italians have been considered and self-awareness about the background engagement with tourism in Lazise is taken into account. This are the first steps in secondary research.

Phase 2: Interpretive Paradigms

When the personal history is shaped according to the process of self-awareness the researcher has investigated his paradigm, or simpler ‘how the qualitative researcher sees the world and acts in it’. According to Denzin and Lincoln (2005) there are four main paradigms which structure the world of qualitative research and have to be investigated:

1. Positivist and Postpositivist
2. Constructivist-Interpretive
3. Critical
4. Feminist

In order to deepen insight in this topic diverse secondary sources have been considered, which include literature and articles regarding host-guest relations, sociology, philosophy, interpretive approach, qualitative research and cross-cultural studies amongst others. Focus was laid on postpositivist literature and constructivist-interpretive approach. Feminist and critical approaches were not taken in account because not being considered central to this research. Online sources were used in order to gain sufficient background knowledge about Lazise as a tourism destination and the municipality of Lazise was contacted in order to gain contextual information about tourist arrivals and nationalities. Furthermore extensive use of the NHTV library and online-database has been made in order to critically review and gain an overview over existing literature in the field. It is in this phase that the context analysis was started from a secondary research point and notes for the literature review were taken and subsequently completed.
Phase 3: Strategies of Inquiry and Interpretive Paradigms

In phase three the focus was narrowing down from a broad background analysis to the issue in question and shifted from paradigm to the empirical world (Denzin and Lincoln 2005). Before moving to the primary part of the research in which the researcher is personally engaged, several issues related to the field of host-guest relations had to be overcome. A suitable definition for the host and the guest community had been found, however the previously mentioned problem of heterogeneity within the communities asked for the application of further theory, considering the background information about the inbound market which was received by the municipality. The literature review was considered in order to find a solution to the problem of diversity within communities and clustering was applied as a solution to both host and guest.

Results which are statistically representative are not relevant for an interpretive approach and therefore use of ‘stratified sampling’ (Bailey 2007) was selected. This means that considering the collected literature about host and guest, relevant subgroups were chosen to represent the communities dependant on their tourism involvement or type of tourism/nationality respectively, based on the previous mentioned clusters.

Once defined the clusters, primary research methods for the case study were chosen consulting the ‘Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research’ (Denzin and Lincoln 2005) in order to be applied in the location of study. Hofstede’s stereotypes were considered again in order to stereotype Italian, German, Danish and Dutch culture which had resulted to be the main presence in Lazise. These clusters were fixed and the fourth and fifth phase of the research based on them.

Phase 4: Methods of Collecting and Analyzing Empirical Materials

In this phase empirical material was collected, switching from secondary into primary research. This was achieved during a two week stay in Italy of which most of the time was spent in Lazise. During this phase several qualitative research techniques were put in practice. Ten unstructured interviews were held per community, starting with the host and with selected subjects who fit in the previously decided clusters. The number of subjects to interrogate was not chosen previously but interviews were held until the ‘stagnation’ point of information was reached. All of the interviews were audio recorded in order to not interrupt the flow of speaking or hindering the discourse by taking notes. It was in the aim of the researcher to not immediately steer the interview but rather let the interviewee speak freely about his feelings regarding the destination and mutual understanding. The variety of interrogated subjects was to notice also in the length of the interviews which vary from ten minutes to over an hour and the interview questions which were not always the same but rather depending on the situation, as suggested by Bailey (2007).

A goal of the researcher was the development of trust which makes the subject speak freely. By gaining trust the interviewer ‘can get to know aspects of the interviewee’s world and the way they live in that world’ (Denzin and Lincoln 2005). The previously done secondary research was considered as a help in this.

After collecting a satisfying amount of information regarding the host community the same method of research was applied to the guest community. Ten open interviews were held in the same way, considering the previous clustering of the local community and taking in account the secondary research conducted in the Netherlands. Repeating issues which came to the surface during the host interviews were addressed after gaining the interviewees trust and attempt to mimetize with the visitors point of view was made. After ten interviews the results were satisfying in order to gain insight in the host perception. It has to be noticed that none of the
twenty totally conducted interviews had been arranged but were rather spontaneous conversations in public places.

As a third method of inquiry participant observation was used considering the background information gained during the interviews. Participant observation distinguishes itself from nonparticipant observation by the fact that the researcher takes part in the daily events of the selected destination (Bailey 2007). Six days were spent in Lazise only to frequent campsites, bars and public places where host and guests interact, among themselves and with each other. The researcher’s mastering of the Italian, German and Dutch language were of great advantage for this technique. Places were chosen according to the researcher’s own experience gained during the previous years of tourism related work in Lazise.

The destination was left after two weeks when a stagnation point of information was reached.

**Phase 5: The Art of Politics of Interpretation and Evaluation**

In this phase the ‘contextualisation’ process (Platenkamp 2007) was completed, qualitative interpretation was constructed out of findings as according to Denzin and Lincoln (2005) in order to ‘make sense’.

The earlier conducted secondary research was put into context with the primary research in order to discover discrepancies between various interpretations and the level of understanding in a climate of openness, corresponding to the third space analysis. By puzzling all the previously gained information to a final interpretation, the understanding of the ‘whole’ was attempted to reach and the level of understanding was brought to the surface.
Chapter Four: The Case Study

‘I confess I am surprised that all this time you have never yet once asked me what I mean by the word meaning’ (Edward Johnson)

The following chapter will draw an outline of the research findings concluded after performing an extensive literature review and secondary research at the investigated destination. According to the theoretical framework the researcher, host and guest dimensions, which are the ways the involved voices making meaning, will be analyzed separately and mostly decontextualized. Thereafter in the fifth chapter, they will meet in the third space of contextualisation from where conclusions about eventual conflicts and/or mutual understanding can be drawn.

4.1. The Researcher Dimension

As mentioned earlier the qualitative researcher is a ‘bricoleur’ (Denzin and Lincoln 2005), an artist which puzzles different pieces of research by means of his own ability linked to the context in which the research takes place.

In interpretive research particularly the researcher is the main tool by which tacit knowledge is understood and uncovered. As opposite to traditional positivist research methods interpretive research is not based on the ground principle of ‘objectivity’ but rather on the ability of the researcher to mimize with and understand the investigated perspectives and context. In order to avoid (or limit) prejudgments and misinterpretations the interpretive researcher has to gain a sufficient degree of self-awareness as a first step to pursue a similar approach. Preparation for this can be done in many ways but it is indisputable that reflection on the own cultural and social background and comparison to the ethics and politics of the investigated cultures is of major importance.

The dimension of the researcher was chosen to be divided in conscious and subconscious dimension. Regarding the conscious dimension it is central to notice that the researcher has a background in tourism and has been working and living in the investigated location for several months during the last 8 years.

Regarding the subconscious dimension the goal has to be to make the hidden visible, to make the subconscious conscious. In this case literature is asked for help. The stereotypes of...
Hofstede (1980) are used as a theoretical background. In order to give sense to the ratings the Italian scale is compared to the average scale of European countries. Special attention will be given to the values which differ in higher degrees from the average because they constitute, according to Hofstede, the main characteristics in which a culture is distinct. The comparison between the Italian scale and the general (average) scale for European countries is shown below:

![Comparison of Italy vs Europe](image)

**Figure 13: Comparison Italy – Europe (Source: Adapted from Hofstede, 1980)**

Hofstede rates on a scale from 0 to 100% every investigated country in the five areas of Power Distance Index, Individuality Index, Masculinity Index, Uncertainty Avoidance Index and Long-Term Orientation Index. For Italy the long certainty avoidance Index has not been investigated by Hofstede and can therefore not be analyzed. While there is only a slight difference with around 10% in power distance and uncertainty avoidance it should be noticed Italy is rated as more individualist and masculine than the average European country.

Hofstede mentions the Individualist scale as being an *extremely fundamental one regarding all societies of the world* (Hofstede 1980). Individualist societies tend to be more focused on individuality and closely related family while its opposite collectivist tends to include people from birth on into groups or extended families, demanding undisputed loyalty in exchange for support. The importance of this factor in host-guest relations is determined by the fact that individualist cultures might seem careless to collectivist, and collectivist cultures may seem closed to their own environment for individualists. Italy has traditionally been a collectivist culture but development has led to the country being more individualist than the European average.

Italy’s predominance in masculinity shows that society is predominantly competitive and assertive while feminist cultures are more modest and caring. While women in feminist countries are similar to men in social and cultural status masculine countries show a value difference with men being more competitive than women. In tourism masculine cultures can be perceived as oppressive and rigid while feminist cultures might seem careless and unmotivated.
For this research the investigator has taken Hofstede’s scale into account and has related it to his individual background. This analysis was made in order to strengthen self-awareness and limit prejudgments. It is also important to add that Hofstede’s stereotypes are merely a help in investigating the subconscious while its scale has not been taken as universally applicable and has been questioned and reinterpreted several times.

4.2. First Space: The Host Dimension

The Host dimension is the sphere of consciousness of the host community, in other words the way in which the host is supposed to give meaning to a context. Every subject within the host community is a combination of cultural background, relationship to tourism and independent individual traits. By investigating the host community all of these traits have to be taken in consideration for every interrogated subject first and then an attempt of generalization has to be made. The generalization process is the final step in making the host’s tacit knowledge visible. As shown in the graph below different methods will be used in order to deal with this process:

![Graph: Analysis for understanding of the Host dimension]

4.2.1. Chosen definition and clustering

As mentioned earlier the term community and the term host itself can have various meanings. The first step in order to analyze the host dimension has therefore to be a clear and applicable definition for the term host, relevant for this analysis.

Lazise as a town and as a tourist destination has been undergoing plenty of cultural interaction in the last decades and besides tourism the arrival of immigrants, partly for working, partly for leisure, has raised the number of non-native inhabitants to almost 10% (Comuni italiani 2010). In order to grasp this heterogeneity among the host society the definition of Swarbrooke (1999) is chosen and the host will be defined as

‘all those people who live within a tourist-destination’.
While this definition definitely includes all layers of Lazise’s society it needs a support in order to create a realistic and relevant picture. The decision has been made to apply ‘clustering’, which by means of ‘stratified sampling’ (Bailey 2007) chooses relevant subjects for the interviews in sequence to gain a complete overview of the host community. The choice has been made to apply the four clusters created by Krippendorf (1987) from which representants have been chosen for the interviews.

- **In direct contact with tourists**: 3 subjects interrogated
- **In unrelated business**: 2 subjects interrogated
- **Partial contact**: 2 subjects interrogated
- **No contact**: 3 subjects interrogated

It has been seen as useful to add a minimum of ten years living experience in Lazise because newly arrived residents often struggle with assimilating to the local culture and do therefore not notice much of the tourist culture which they are confronted with. The number ten for interrogated subjects had not been fixed before the interviews but it was felt that the stagnation point for information was reached after ten open interviews had being conducted. Three subjects were chosen for the extremes, means locals which depend directly on tourism (In direct contact) and locals which have no contact at all with tourists (No contact).

While the interviews were mainly aiming in discovering eventual tensions or understandings perceived by the host community it was also a helpful tool in criticizing or confirming Hofstede’s stereotypes in order to understand the cultural background and the reason for the discoveries.

### 4.2.2. Interpretation of the Host culture in tourism based on Hofstede

Similar to the process to increase self-consciousness for the researcher, Hofstede’s stereotypes will be applied for the host community in order to understand and support the findings during the field research. Therewith ratings basic characteristics of the host culture can be identified which will be useful in order to explain the mutual understanding in relation with the guest community. In this case an attempt is made to link the stereotypes to tourism and predict a possible host behavior.

![Figure 15: Cultural Stereotyping for the Host Community (Source: Hofstede, 2010)](image)
It should be noticed that as explained before the host community is not homogeneous and therefore the ratings are not being taken as universally applicable, but rather as a background theory for understanding of the host behavior. In the case of Lazise in Italy. While in the research the schedule of the host community is identical with the researchers schedule, both of them being Italian. While in the research dimension Hofstede’s ratings were merely used as a tool of self-reflection, in host-guest relations the use of describing particular characteristics of a culture can lead to the deduction of how the community can be perceived by and perceive others.

Italy scores high in Individuality, Masculinity and Uncertainty Avoidance and as noticed before the Power Distance Index is lowest, but still higher than in the average European country. While the high score of Individualism suggests that traditional Italian values which are related to family and group integration are changing, the strong masculine character of the culture is still present. This means that women are bound more to family and household and are less competitive and career oriented than in more feminine countries.

The Power Distance Index which scores also higher than the European average suggests a strong hierarchy in society which often can be related to Masculinity. Family as much as more powerful subjects in everyday life are unconditionally accepted as superior and their authority is hardly questioned. The high score in individuality might suggest that the extend of the involved subjects, for example in family, is not that high (anymore) and that Italians start to look out for their closer relatives instead of involving a large number of family members.

It is therefore important to not mistake the high degree of individuality in family and professional life as total independence but rather consider it as a development towards diminishing the involved subjects. Tradition and hierarchy are still an important factor in everyday life and the above average score in uncertainty avoidance supports this theory.

Uncertainty Avoidance does not show only the amount of rules and regulations that a country applies in everyday life, but is also strictly related to the extend in which a culture is open and tolerant for different and new opinions. Italy in scoring high in Uncertainty Avoidance tends as a culture to be closed, believe in a unique truth which should not be discussed and which is supposed to be already discovered (Hofstede 2010). This can be closely linked to religion and in Italy’s case Catholicism. Cultures with a high score in this field tend also to be more emotional and expressing emotions that their counterparts.

Summarizing it can be said that Italy according to Hofstede’s categories is a country which demonstrates to be moving forward towards individualism but in which tradition, family and religion still play an important and undisputed role in everyday life.

In tourism this attitude can lead to a host community which is caring and friendly but not particularly open to mentalities which differ too much from their own, especially regarding the countries traditions and values. Being a culture in which expression of emotion plays an important role indifferent or distant behavior in host-guest relations may be perceived as rude or simply not polite.

If the traditional values of society are anyway respected and at least partly shared by the guest, the Italian culture should, according to Hofstede’s ratings, create a warm and welcoming host-community.
4.2.3. Interviews with the host community

During a two week stay in Italy several interviews were conducted in Lazise with selected subjects according to Krippendorf’s (1987) categorization of hosts. The interviews were held in an unstructured way and it was not in the attention of the researcher to immediately steer the interview to the issue of conflict or understanding but rather let the interviewee speak freely about the life in Lazise and the personal experiences made with tourism and tourists in general. Mostly this part of the interview gave sufficient information about the involvement level in tourism and the cluster in which the subject could be categorized. The missing clusters were asked about their position before later interviews. Bearing in mind what was known about the destination and culture the focus was laid on eventual issues and feelings rather than knowledge about the guest culture. Cultural background, individuality and relationship to tourism were taken into account for every subject.

4.2.4. Result of the Interviews

By not standardizing the patterns of the interviews which were held in public places and were in many cases similar to standard conversations, the results vary and require empathy in order to be interpreted. The following several repeating topics could be identified and evaluated in the process.

1. Number of tourists and overcrowdment

As mentioned in the location analysis, Lazise as a town with around 7.000 inhabitants counts a total number of 450.000 tourist arrivals on an annual basis. The result gets even more impressive considering the strong seasonal character of the destination which is almost totally deserted during the winter months. Every interrogated subject in direct, unrelated and partial contact with tourists affirmed for not having the feeling of overcrowdment, the number of tourists was described as ’sufficient’ by two subjects while the rest claimed that they would love to host more tourists and that the town never feels too crowded. Only one out of ten subjects which did not have any contact with tourists told that in the peak season of July and August the walking area in the city center is not very walkable but this fact can be tolerated considering the money that tourists bring.

2. Influence on local culture

Half a century of international tourism has exposed Lazise to a steady cultural stream coming from mainly northern Europe. Six subjects out of ten mentioned the influence mainly German culture had on the locals. Schools have been adopting German as a second language because of its importance in tourism. This was not perceived as negative by any interrogated subject and it was rather suggested that the level of German and English teaching at schools was not sufficient, with English taking anyway more importance for the younger. A 22 years old bicycle seller from Lazise explained that:
'We have learned a lot from the Germans in these last years and I think they have learned from us. This anyway has never led to a change in the local people’s lifestyle. The Italian tradition is alive in Lazise and I don’t think that it will change. After all that is what the tourists are here for.'

Every subject that has mentioned international influence on the local culture has done this in a positive way. The interaction with foreigners was explained to be an opportunity to learn a language and to get in touch with the rest of the world.

3. Colonialism

The issue was mentioned in different contexts by four interrogated subjects. This seems to be triggered by various shops in the center of Lazise which have been bought by foreign residents, selling familiar products to foreign tourists. A 35 year old local not related to tourism states:

'I have heard several complaints about a shop in Lazise which has been bought by Germans. They try to sell things the German way, focused on business, and they don’t interact with the customer. It is not a frequent phenomenon yet but if we allow more foreigners to buy shops here it might change our image permanently. It might work in their country but not in Lazise. We are famous for our friendliness and this is what locals and tourists like about this place. If we make it a business only we lose our character."

Another subject was pointing out that several shops had been acquired by Chinese businessman. The concern was similar to the previous. If the town is admitting a high number of not locals to interact with tourists it might lose its character as a friendly and genuine destination.

4. Degree of interaction and contact with tourists

While the younger interviewees told to have a more business related contact with tourists the older locals all claimed to have at least some friends among the visitors. Most of the time repeat visitors which come to Lazise since several years were mentioned and which were almost considered as ‘being part of the family’.

A 17 year old student from Lazise told that:

'My English is not very good so I cannot really speak a lot with them. My parents anyway have plenty of German friends which visit us on a regular basis. For us young people mainly the girls which come on holiday here are interesting. In one way or the other everybody has contact with tourists.'

The interviews have stated that there seems to be more interaction between repeat visitors and the older generation of the town. Plenty of friendships are established and relationships are kept over the years.

5. Different perception of different nationalities

While three subjects did not mention a preference of inbound nationalities seven locals spoke about to their good relationship to German tourists. A 33 year old newspaper salesman states:
‘We have a long history with Germany. They come here, they behave well, they respect our culture. Lately we receive a lot of Dutch and Scandinavian tourists. There are no major issues with them but I can notice that they don’t behave as respectful as the Germans do. Joking we say that we still prefer them to Italian tourists. We seem to have more problems with our own people.’

No major issues were mentioned with none of the nationalities but Germans were described as being more reliable and friendly. The fact that they are the oldest and first inbound market was also mentioned as an advantage for the locals to learn the language and get used to the culture.

6. Other mentioned issues

Half of the interviewees mentioned a problem in the administration of tourism by the municipality. The mentality is still stuck with older tourists and not much investments are made for the young. This issue is anyway not related to the relation with the guest community but is important to be noticed for the context of the research.

4.3. Second Space: The Guest Dimension

As mentioned before the guest dimension is similar to the host dimension a highly complex and heterogeneous entity. While the host dimension largely shares a common cultural background which has been inborn or adopted by the selected requirements of minimum ten years of residence in Lazise, the guest dimension includes different nationalities and therefore different value sets. Hofstede will be applied in order to clarify the diverse cultural backgrounds and the interviews will be used as a further support of the theory. In order to give a realistic overview of the heterogeneity of tourist types Mehmetoglu’s distinction between Individualistic and Collectivistic tourist will be applied. As mentioned before in the host dimension it is important to take the individuality of every interrogated subject into account.
4.3.1. Chosen Definition and Clustering

Similar to the host dimension the first step in order to analyze the guest community is to find a suitable definition for the term guest which will be applied in this analysis. According to the previously explained inbound market the definition chosen will be

‘all international visitors and tourists which belong to the major inbound nationalities’

This definition has been selected in order to give a realistic overview over the whole of the culturally different guest community. The limitation to the main inbound nationalities and international guests only is chosen in order to allow a deeper insight in the various involved cultures. Expansion to a wider number of inbound nationalities which in number are not indispensable to Lazise, would have limited the possibility to gain a deeper insight into the most frequent cultures.

Domestic tourists have not been included because of their cultural similarities and the main focus of this research is to investigate tensions and understandings between different value sets.

As mentioned earlier the most important international inbound markets for Lazise are Germany, the Netherlands and Denmark and these are the investigated nationalities chosen for this research. The proportions related to the number of tourists per year have been considered but Germany has been given priority because of the biggest numbers and the Netherlands because of the steady growth in arrivals. Denmark has been selected as the stable third biggest inbound market:

- German: 4 subjects interrogated
- Dutch: 4 subjects interrogated
- Danish: 2 subjects interrogated

The number ten was chosen considering the number of interrogated hosts, but was taken as flexible if the stagnation point of information would not have been reached. The number of selected subjects anyway has proved sufficient for gaining relevant information.

Besides the heterogeneity caused by different cultural backgrounds the diverse tourist-types visiting Lazise are considered in order to give a realistic overview of the whole guest community.

‘Clustering’ into different types is applied again and the differentiation of Mehmentoglu (2004) is put into practice in combination with Cohen’s (1972) distinction between familiarity and novelty seekers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Collectivistic</th>
<th>Individualistic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>High level:</strong> 3 subjects (DE, NL, DK)</td>
<td><strong>High level:</strong> 3 subjects (DE, NL, DK)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Low level:</strong> 2 subjects (DE, NL)</td>
<td><strong>Low level:</strong> 2 subjects (DE, NL)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 17: Clustering of guests for interviews (Source: Adapted from Mehmentoglu and Cohen)**

To both familiar and novelty seeking extremes one guest of every nationality has been included while the lower levels have been distributed among the remaining two nationalities, based on the factors previously explained. The reason therefore is the major importance given to the
extremes of familiarity and novelty in order to get a more complete overview over the whole scale of guest types. Length of stay has not been taken into consideration as a cluster because of the same importance given to first expression and familiarity with the host culture, both being cognitive processes which play an important role in host-guest relations.

4.3.2. Interpretation of the Guest cultures in tourism based on Hofstede

As mentioned before regarding the host and the researcher dimensions Hofstede’s stereotypes will be applied also for the guest community with the same purpose. The fundamental difference between the former host and researcher dimensions and the guest sphere is the even bigger level of cultural heterogeneity within the community. As explained before German, Dutch and Danish are chosen as the main representants of the international inbound tourists and therefore these cultures and their ratings will be taken into consideration. An attempt will be made to outline the basic characteristics of the guest cultures according to Hofstede which will help in the evaluation of the field research and the contextualisation. Same as for the previous interpretations it should be remembered that Hofstede’s stereotypes are merely a help and guideline and their ratings are not taken for granted but will be evaluated and criticized in relation with the interviews.

Figure 18: Cultural stereotyping for the guest community (Source: Hofstede, 2010)
1. The German tourist

Germany scores relatively high in Individuality, Masculinity and Uncertainty Avoidance. With a low Long-term Orientation score German culture can be seen as relatively short term oriented. The high scores in IDC, MAS and UAI show that German culture is essentially individualistic, competitive and structured in family and society.

It can be deducted that high value is laid on personal performance and structure in every sense. Things are expected to be working as they should and making mistakes is not seen very well. If mistakes are made the individual which is responsible is the one to be blamed. It is in every individuals responsibility to be reliable and to do its part.

The high UAI value indicates normally that a culture is not very open to changes, in the sense that they way things work is believed to be right and this is supported by a wide range of laws and rules.

With a Power Distance Index of 30% inequality is only accepted to a certain degree, may it be in family or in professional life, but the competitive and individualistic character of the culture make it more likely that subjects in a lower position give major importance to climb the scale to a higher status.

Long Term Orientation is not too high which shows the importance of fulfilling social obligations and to appear as a responsible and respected person to other people. Although the high degree of competition its seems to be significant in which way a person climbs the latter of success, giving high importance to appreciation from family and society.

All in all can be concluded that according to Hofstede the German tourist might be especially stuck to the rules and will most likely give their best in order to not bother the host society. In exchange therefore things are expected to work as they should, according to the standards of their own culture. If these features are met, which will require to some degree similarity with the host culture, German tourists should according to their rating be behaving in a respectful way as it is common in their culture.

2. The Dutch tourist

The Netherlands are characterized by an extremely high score in Individuality which touches almost 80%. This, according to Hofstede, indicates a culture in which everyone is expected to look after himself or at their closest relatives only (Hofstede 2010).

In the case of the Netherlands this does not mean that every individual is in competition but on the contrary, competition is very low and it is rather expected to be on the same level as others, shown by the strong feminine character of the culture.

Power distance is accepted but not exposed in a obvious way. It can be said that everybody is accepted for what he is and respected in the relative position. Rather than exposing success it is more important to keep privacy and a certain amount of tolerant distance.

The Uncertainty Avoidance Index is not extremely high but rules and safety measures are anyway an important factor according to Hofstede.

The relatively high score in Long-term Orientation shows that resistance and perseverance in order to reach a personal goal might be more important than what other persons think and the public image of a person. Tradition is not a major issue to be considered.

As a conclusion it can be said that according to Hofstede the Dutch tourist is hard to generalize. The high degree of individuality and the low importance given to tradition might result in a high level of different behaviors among different subjects. There is to say that because of this factor deep personal contact between host and guest might not be established easily and too much
confidence might not be seen as appropriate from a Dutch tourist. The tolerance level for difference in culture and values anyway is expected to be very high from the Dutch side, which should anyway not be mistaken for empathy but rather seen as acceptance.

3. The Danish tourist

Denmark scores high with Individuality being at 70% while all the other indicators are low, strongly below the European average. Similar to the Netherlands the Danish culture expects every individual to look for himself or the close family only. The Power Distance in Danish culture is extremely low, showing that inequality in society is minimal and the feminine character suggests that this is also supported by a high degree of emancipation for women and minimal competition. The low uncertainty avoidance shows tolerance for unknown situations and difference in general, might it be in a religious, cultural or social way. Summarizing it can be said that according to Hofstede's rating the Danish culture is open minded and tolerant, everybody is expected to be treated the same. This anyway does not limit the level of individuality and privacy which is not expected to be invaded. From a tourist point of view Danish are expected to be especially tolerant to difference in culture and to different rhythms and rules. Competitive behavior and Power Distance in general might be perceived as arrogant manners from the host side and too much confidence might not be easily given.

4.3.3. Interviews with the guest community

Similar to the interviews held with the host community by not standardizing patterns and holding interviews in public places, many cases were similar to standard conversations. The results vary therefore and require empathy in order to be interpreted. Several repeating topics could be identified and evaluated in the process.

4.3.4. Result of the Interviews

1. Relaxed Lifestyle

In all in the ten investigated guests the ‘relaxed lifestyle’ of the locals in Lazise was mentioned. Eight out of ten subjects have given a positive value to this topic, mentioning the ‘friendliness, relaxation and not stressful way of life’ of the host community. A 36 year old German traveler said that:

‘People here are very relaxed and very friendly. This is not a problem at all for me. Even if in a shop the service takes longer than home it is fine by me, I am on holiday. I think people in Germany could learn from this lifestyle, at home everybody is running all day long.’

Both negative comments regarding the subject came from Dutch tourists, a solo traveler and a family respectively. As major issues were mentioned the long closing times during lunch break and the slow rhythm of the employees.
2. Preservation of local culture

Four interviewees mentioned the local culture as a main attraction point of Lazise, one of them has mentioned the selling out of several shops to foreigners which was mentioned by the locals before. A German couple which visits Lazise frequently has stated:

‘Sure, the sun and the lake are nice but what makes this place unique is the culture. The small houses, the family atmosphere. This is what Lazise is for us and this is what we want to see. If the place gets sold out there is a serious possibility that this all will disappear like it happened to some other holiday destinations on the Adriatic coast. People look for authenticity and this can still be found here. We don’t need everything perfect but that’s part of the experience.’

Culture was mentioned to be a unique selling point of Lazise and main importance was given to the preservation, also because it seems appealing to a major percentage of tourists.

3. Language barrier

Four subjects have mentioned the language barrier as a major issue. The fact that none of them was German suggests that in many cases the level of German is better than the level of English.

It has been mentioned that the English level is mostly sufficient for standard conversations such as shopping, but asking for more information is still a difficult task.

The main focus on German language has been confirmed by a 55 year old Danish tourist that has expressed annoyance of being frequently addressed in German rather than in English or his native language.

4. Degree of interaction and contact with tourists

Most of the interviewed subjects have affirmed that their contact with locals is merely based on business. While some of them state to personally know the owner of the hotel or campsite in which they are staying, only one out of ten interviewees seems to have deeper relations with the locals. A 70 year old woman from the Netherlands is a repeat visitor of Lazise since 27 years, switching between various hotels. She told that:

‘I know the owner of the hotel where I am staying now and I know many people in Lazise. Most of them don’t speak Dutch and I don’t speak Italian or English but we understand each other in some way. I find the people here very nice and friendly.’

The other interrogated subjects give various reasons for not knowing any local, some of them express to have no interest in meeting people or that ‘contact just did not happen’. Most of the visitors state anyway that there is a high degree of business based interaction only.

5. Arrogant behavior from the host side

Arrogant behavior by the host community was mentioned three times during the interviews. The reason therefore was an apparent distant and superior attitude towards the tourists.

A group of Dutch camping tourists has explained that the perceived superiority comes also from the fact that Italians seem to care much more about fashion and appearance and this seems an
important factor in judging a person. This might not be done with purpose so the tourist, but it can make a person seem arrogant.

6. Arrogant behavior from the guest side

While arrogance from the host side was mentioned three times, four subjects mentioned arrogance from their fellow tourists towards the locals. A German family states:

‘The tourists come here and think they can show off. They rent big boats and spend lots of money in going for dinner. It seems they want to be the boss here. I understand that they are on holiday but when they come home they are broke. I think the locals deal much better with money than we do.’

None of the subjects which has mentioned arrogant tourist behavior had noticed the same in the locals. In these cases the locals were describes as ‘responsible, respectful and friendly’.

4.4. Third Space: Host-Guest interaction

After the examination of the host and guest community in a separate way, in the third space analysis all dimensions will meet in the context and understanding or misunderstanding will be investigated. First Hofstede’s clusters will be compared decontextualized in order to determine possibilities for conflict or concord. After this the results of the interviews meet with the context of Lazise, Hofstede’s stereotyping and participant observation as well as the researchers personal experience will be added. By uniting all the voices a third space is created in which a final interpretation of conflict or understanding is possible. This process can be compared to a Hermeneutic Circle, in which no part can be understood separately with referring to the whole and the whole cannot be understood without referencing to separate parts.

4.3.5. Host-Guest relations in Lazise according to Hofstede

After analyzing the possible guest and host behavior according to Hofstede’s stereotypes in the third space the evaluations will collide in order to establish possibilities for conflict or understanding between the communities. This will be done by analyzing every rating separately. Long term orientation has not been considered because the ratings for Italy are not available but the factor is kept in mind according to the previous guest-dimension analysis. It is important that a high difference in the relevant scores is not immediately seen as a negative fact but its effective impact on the context of Lazise will be determined only by creating the final interpretation. Following are the various factors proposed by Hofstede compared, considering the relevant host and guest nationalities.
1. Interpretation of Power Distance Index

The comparison of the Power Index ratings shows that the host community scores higher than the various guest cultures. While the difference with the Netherlands and Germany is between 10 and 20% the Danish culture scores low with less than 20 out of 100 on the scale. It can be noticed that in this case the host culture is used to a higher level of power-distance, the degree of difference depends on the guest nationality. This might lead to several interpretations on the interactive level.

The host culture which is used to a different level within family and society to a higher degree than the guests, might appear as somehow arrogant. The higher ranks of society might be perceived to not be treating people with respect (or in the worst case abuse them). A guest which is not used to this distribution of power might react insulted or frustrated by the behavior which is observed or in the worst case received. Negative factors aside a host culture with strong power distance might appear as clearly structured an organized, people working in tourism might appear competent and aware of their position.

A guest culture which is not used to these kind of social divisions might often seem rude to the host, for example in the way of addressing elder people or persons which have a high social position in the host society. On the opposite the approach of lower social classes and younger people might be perceived as extremely friendly and respectful.

In the case of Lazise there is a higher degree of Power Distance in the host than in any of the major guest cultures. It is therefore important to take this index and the connected possible consequences in account.
2. Interpretation of Individuality Index

The individuality Index is the only rating in which the host community does not score higher than all the guest cultures. With more than 75% of Individuality the host culture can be seen as relatively individualist, characteristic that they share with the Netherlands and Denmark. With more than 65% Germany scores lowest but still higher than the European average. Principally it can be said that host and guest are both individualist at a first glance but the previous analysis of the Italian culture according to Hofstede has suggested that individualism might not be perceived in the same way by the various involved nationalities. While the analysis suggests that in Italy individualism might be seen as restricting the involved subjects, for example the switch from extended to close family, especially in the Netherlands and Denmark the concept might be more related to privacy and economical independence. For the host this might create besides a certain degree of admiration a feeling of carelessness within and in contact with the guests. Distance might be perceived as rude and the lack of interaction as arrogance while the treatment of for example children could appear as sloppy and cold. For a highly independent guest culture the host’s attempt to interact on a deeper level might simply be seen as inappropriate and invasion of privacy. At the worst the guests could feel bothered which might cause an even higher degree of distance or a angry reaction. In this case the ranking does not show a big difference in individuality but the previous interpretation of the various culture draws attention on the way this might be interpreted.

3. Interpretation of Masculinity Index

In this index the biggest gap between host and guest can be noticed. While the host and Germany both are mainly masculine cultures Denmark and the Netherlands are extremely feminine. While masculine cultures are competitive in daily life and are usually not afraid of showing it, feminine cultures strive towards equality and modesty. Competitiveness aside this index is related also the position of women in society. While for Italy and Germany there is still a clear distinction between man and women and their relevant position in society, the Dutch and Danish culture suggests a high level of female emancipation. For the host this can give a positive impression of modesty and on the other side it shows a high level of independence from the women’s side. On the downside guests might appear as careless and women as too manly, which might create an impolite impression. The high level of competitiveness among the host culture might create an arrogant feeling because feminine cultures are not used to express wealth or above average competence in an obvious way. The divisions of men and women within society may create an obsolete and oppressive impression. Considering the major gap between the host and especially the Dutch and Danish culture this factor has to be considered as crucial in the interpretation of host and guest relations in Lazise.
4. Interpretation of Uncertainty Avoidance Index

As previously mentioned individuality aside, the host culture scores highest also in Uncertainty Avoidance. While Germany reaches a similar score Denmark is once more the most different among the hosts.

While the host and Germany clearly tend to avoid the unknown and try to apply rules, official or unofficial, in order to follow this trend, the Dutch and even more the Danish reveal themselves more pragmatist and open to diversity.

In tourism a host community with is more uncertainty avoidant tends to not adapt easily to the guest rules and rather expects them to do so. By having similar patterns among tourists such as Germany in this case, there is a possibility of easy understanding but also a high danger of conflict if the rules of the host are highly different than the guest's. This depends on the context and in this case will be determined in the final analysis.

For a guest with a low degree of Uncertainty Avoidance this mentality might give the positive impression of being in control but also a negative image of oppression and intolerance at worst. Both the similarities and the differences among host and guest will be given special attention in the final analysis.

4.4.2. Final Interpretation: Contextualisation and analysis of understanding and conflict

*Everyone in a complex system has a slightly different interpretation. The more interpretations we gather, the easier it becomes to gain a sense of the whole* (Margaret J. Wheatley)

In this final interpretation the context of Lazise as a tourism destination will be related to the results of the interviews and previous analysis based on Hofstede’s stereotypes. It is in this creation of a third space that the researcher, host, guest dimension and the context melt in order to determine the level of understanding or misunderstanding between locals and visitors. Participant observation and personal background experience will be added by the researcher in order to explain and analyze the previous findings.

First of all the context of Lazise as a tourism destination has to be taken into account. As previously mentioned the town measures approximately 6,800 inhabitants registered. It has been discovered during past working experiences that many of them live officially in Lazise but spend most of their low-season time, autumn and winter, in neighboring cities like Verona or Brescia, following up another occupation. Because of this high degree of seasonality the town’s 450,000 annual visitor arrivals spread over approximately eight months only, leaving Lazise almost deserted during the rest of the year. The same has to be considered for the high season. Many of the seasonal workers employed in the local tourism industry are not registered as official inhabitants but rather move from the neighboring cities during the spring and summer months, adding their presence to the number of tourists. During the interviews it was mentioned that the summer months were very crowded but this does not seem to annoy the locals, considering that the town empties almost completely during the winter.

The still rising numbers of tourist arrivals during the last years put Lazise on a ‘development’ stage in Butler’s life cycle, also because of several investments which are still made in improving several facilities. The destination might anyway soon be heading towards ‘consolidation’, considering the limited space and completely tourystified lake-frond.
Regarding the issue of overcrowdment it is important to notice that many people who live permanently in Lazise do not have any winter activities and live the whole year with the money earned during the touristic season. This is another reason that the high number of tourists is accepted and generally not perceived as annoyance. By interacting with locals and engaging in conversation with them it has been noticed that several people want to increase the number of tourists instead of diminishing or even stabilizing it. Decision which have been made by the municipality in order to develop farmland and not to invest in tourism facilities have frequently been criticized.

It is interesting to notice how the changing society which Hofstede portraits in his Independence Index for Italy reflects on the host community of Lazise. Several locals have spoken about the actuality that most of the tourists arriving are repeat visitors and mainly older people. While these visitors have been preferred in the past because of their low level of annoyance for example in vandalism and alcohol abuse, the idea is arising to attract younger visitors. While neighboring towns provide several discotheques and pub’s the closing hour in Lazise is around 2 am and strictly controlled by the police. Several locals have mentioned that young people will be the future and the local mentality has been auto reflexively described as ‘obsolete’ and ‘ready to change’.

This goes in hand with the interpretation of the host culture based on Hofstede’s clustering, traditional but opening up towards a new way of life. This change in lifestyle has been reflected also in the attitude towards foreign influence on the local culture. As mentioned in the previous chapters the host community tends mostly towards a traditional lifestyle and changes are generally not seen as very appealing. In Lazise most locals appear to be very proud of their culture and very keen to keep and defend it. Private motives aside, by many locals their culture is seen as a main attraction point for the town in tourism which distinguishes Lazise from ‘sold-out’ Mediterranean resort-towns. In addition to this unquestionable attachments to local traditions and lifestyle an interesting attitude towards the guests has been noticed. Foreign influence is seldom perceived as a threat to local culture but rather as an addition and an investment for the future, mainly in language skills. The English and specially German level seems to be higher than in other nearby less touristy destinations and this, so a young local, ‘opens the door to the world’. While learning a foreign language is perceived as useful, the North European ‘direct and money-oriented’ way of making business has been criticized and is generally not regarded appropriate because harming the local traditions.

Clustered as ‘warm hosts’ the locals still value personal relationships and not-business related contact. Secondary research has confirmed this hypothesis. However this mentality seems to be rooted more within the older generation remembering the mentioned friendships between older locals and repeat visitors, while most of the young claim to have only superficial and business related contact.

This reflects also in the fact that several middle-aged and older locals have a preference for German tourists rather than for the emerging markets while this could not be noticed among the younger people. Besides the long enduring cultural exchange between the locals and the German inbound which facilitates linguistic communication between the communities, also the relevant cultural background plays an important role. According to Hofstede’s stereotypes the German and Italian culture match in most of the categories while the critic point is their relatively low flexibility in adapting to different rules and regulations. If the German guest would be extremely diverse from the host in their cultural luggage this might be the cause of conflicts, but in the case of Lazise the cultural similarity does not force either of them to adapt in a radical manner. In this case the similarity is creating a high degree of understanding mostly with the older generation, because of their vicinity to traditional Italian culture and therefore to Hofstede’s
clusters. Most of the young locals speak English better than German which will create a future higher degree of interaction and possible understanding with other inbound markets. While generally no high degree of irritation has been perceived from the host side there appear to be minor misunderstandings with the Dutch and Danish culture respectively, again mainly by the older generation. Preference for German tourists has been noticed in a several, also if not predominant number of interactions, sometimes because of the language barrier and sometimes because of Germans being considered more ‘reliable’ and ‘friendly’. This is caused partly their reputation of spending more money than the Dutch and Danish, to a degree because they are perceived as more open to interaction.

Dutch and Danish are in most cases not perceived as annoying but rather as ‘different’ and ‘more difficult to understand’. This anyway is seldom perceived as irritation. The Irridex model (Doxey 1975) has resulted as not convenient for this study, being applied to an almost fully developed tourism destination while the local’s attitude still varies between the stages of ‘euphoria’ and ‘apathy’, tending more towards the first. A possible cause for this is the high factor of seasonality which slows down the stages of the Irridex while the level of development proceeds.

From the guest side the minor irritation noticed between the locals and the Dutch and Danish tourists mostly is reflected by the interviews. While the German interrogated subjects rather notice arrogance and ‘showing-off’ attitude in their fellow tourists, arrogant behavior from the host side was mentioned by both Dutch and Danish visitors. Generally there was no impression that this issue might be of major importance because none of the visitors described it as highly disturbing but rather as a simple cultural difference. Reason therefore might be the high tendency towards conformity in Italian society which in both the Danish and Dutch culture is low and the high importance for material goods and physical appearance in local culture. The irritation anyway is not conform to the misunderstanding because of the high tolerance level in Dutch and Danish culture.

Interesting is that the German tourist, being culturally most similar to the hosts according to Hofstede seem to have more problems with the behavior of their fellow tourists. This is another prove for the heterogeneity within the guest community, socially and most of all culturally. It is more likely that a German tourist is irritated by a cultural diverse fellow traveler than by a culturally more similar, or at least less conflicting, host.

The same pattern can be found also in the language barrier issue. While most of the older locals are used to speak German more than English and most of the young people are balanced between both languages, the impression of the non-German tourists is sometimes still a kind of ‘second class’ tourist. Annoyance is occasionally caused by addressing guests of unknown nationality directly in German, rather than in English or their native tongue. While this is not a major issue for most of the guests, the most conceited among them do feel insulted in their national pride.

A surprising finding has been made in relation to the difference of rhythm and lifestyle between the host and the guest cultures, the locals being described mostly as ‘more slow’ and ‘relaxed’. While almost every tourist seems to notice this, for most of them it is not perceived as a problem but rather as a ‘holiday experience’. Culturally spoken the German tourists might seem the least tolerant to difference, but in relationship to the location and the relaxed feeling the difference in lifestyle is mostly perceived as a welcome change.

Surprisingly the Dutch tourists which are culturally very tolerant had expressed most of the problems with this issue. This anyway is seen as an exception and generally there is a very good perception of the local lifestyle among tourists.
Conclusion

According to primary and secondary sources it can be concluded that Lazise is a developed but not yet stagnated tourism destination, in which both tradition and change live together. While tourist arrival numbers are still growing, the cultural exchange between host and guest continuing since several decades did definitely leave its traces within the local culture and society.

Traditionally the older locals relate and often identify with the time-resistant German inbound market, while other European markets are still growing and often still need to be discovered, or better understood. The process of discovery and the first steps towards reciprocal understanding is often a major source of conflicts between hosts and guests. More time cultures interact, more time they have to comprehend each other’s divergences and learn to deal with them.

Considering the meaning making of researcher, host and guest in relationship to the social, political and geographical context of Lazise the following conclusions can be drawn in order to clarify understanding and misunderstanding between host and guest:

1. The destination is not perceived ad overcrowded, neither by the host, neither by the guest community. On the contrary more tourists would be welcome and more investments in the tourism sector are asked.

2. There is a high level of understanding between repeat visitors and the locals. Culturally spoken the German culture is the most influential on the locals because they are the major and longest inbound and most German tourists are familiar with the local way of life and traditions. Younger and emerging markets such as the Dutch and the Danish do not reach a similar level of understanding with the host community. There is anyway not a high degree of irritation and differences are mostly solved with professional distance rather than with conflict.

3. Cultural influence is not perceived as a threat by most of the locals and most tourists agree in preserving the local culture, considering it a major attraction of the destination.

4. The degree of Irritation did not follow the degree of development. According to the Irridex model (Doxey 1975) the increase of arrival number causes an increase of irritation. Lazise is a highly developed tourism destination but still seems to be in the stage of ‘Euphoria’. The reason therefore is most likely the high seasonality factor which allows the locals to relax during the low-season.

Concluding it can be said that there are no misunderstandings in Lazise which are strong enough to create a serious problem within host-guest relations. Minor tensions with the emerging markets are most likely to disappear during the following years due to more cultural exchange, which is reflected also in the locals request for a younger target group. The difference in host culture is not strong enough to cause a culture-shock in the guest community which shows to be mostly enthusiastic towards the local culture and in the worst case shows distance rather than irritation. The balance between understanding and misunderstanding according to the third space analysis can be shown as follows:
In this final scale no distinction within the host and guest sphere is made but the previous conclusions towards different clusters have been generalized to a whole. The level of understanding is not complete but high. In the following years the level should rise even higher due to the previously mentioned factors. Understanding here does not have to be mistaken with similarity but rather with awareness and acceptance of cultural difference. It is crucial to add that the interpretive approach adopted in order to determine these results is based on the researchers intuition in addition to the obtained information during the research. The interpretive approach asks the researcher to puzzle all the obtained pieces together and to interpret and generalize them.

Heterogeneity among both of the communities has been frequently mentioned as a critical point and has been taken into account by applying appropriate clustering and relevant background literature. It is central to observe that nonetheless it is extremely difficult to generalize the research results, taking into account not only diverse cultural backgrounds but also factors such as the interrogated subjects personality, which partly is independent from provenience and culture. This concept of free will is debatable and will not be discussed here.

Furthermore it is important that Hofstede’s stereotypes were taken into consideration as a background support only and stereotyping of cultures was where possible avoided. The cause therefore is the awareness that culture itself cannot be considered as a fixed and merely causal entity but rather as a flexible and ever-changing way of meaning-making which has to be related to a context in order to ‘make sense’. While the principle of hidden knowledge is based on fixed, also if not conscious assumptions, research has to take into account to be not merely causal (Gubrium and Holstein 2005). By adding the personal and social to the cultural and attempt was made to make the generalization process more accurate and less limiting in its execution.

It is hoped that this research can help in order to understand, maintain and improve Lazise as a tourism destination and hopes to be an important contribution to favor the introduction and expansion of the interpretive approach within the field of tourism studies.
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## Appendix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics of culture in tourism based on Hofstede</th>
<th>Host</th>
<th>Guest 1 (D)</th>
<th>Guest 2 (NL)</th>
<th>Guest 3 (DK)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Traditional society</td>
<td>- Organized</td>
<td>- Very individualist, thus unpredictable</td>
<td>- Individualist</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Traditional view on women</td>
<td>- Expect organization</td>
<td>- Emancipated</td>
<td>- Emancipated</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Increasing independence</td>
<td>- Individual sense of responsibility</td>
<td>- Tolerant to difference in host mentality</td>
<td>- Tolerant to difference in host mentality</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Closed</td>
<td>- Polite if satisfied</td>
<td>- High appreciation of privacy</td>
<td>- Not very warm/ interested in close contact</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Religious</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Warm Host</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Result of the interviews</th>
<th>- Want more tourists</th>
<th>- Like relaxed lifestyle</th>
<th>- More critic towards relaxed lifestyle</th>
<th>- Like relaxed lifestyle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Want to learn from others but keep tradition</td>
<td>- Local culture is seen as a main attraction point</td>
<td>- Local culture is seen as a main attraction point</td>
<td>- Local culture is seen as a main attraction point</td>
<td>- Local culture is seen as a main attraction point</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Good contact with Germany, often German is better than English</td>
<td>- Satisfied with language skills</td>
<td>- Mention language barrier</td>
<td>- Mention language barrier</td>
<td>- Mention language barrier</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Want to move forward, focus on younger tourists</td>
<td>- Some interaction with hosts/ mostly older people</td>
<td>- Some interaction with hosts/ mostly older people</td>
<td>- Some interaction with hosts/ mostly older people</td>
<td>- Some interaction with hosts/ mostly older people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Older people know repeat visitors</td>
<td>- Hosts not perceived as arrogant</td>
<td>- Hosts sometimes perceived as arrogant</td>
<td>- Hosts sometimes perceived as arrogant</td>
<td>- Hosts sometimes perceived as arrogant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Guests not perceived as arrogant</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Understanding/ Conflict according to Hofstede</th>
<th>- Power distance might perceive rudeness, specially of DK</th>
<th>- Similar level of power distance, understanding</th>
<th>- Similar level of power distance, understanding</th>
<th>- Might perceive arrogance, risk</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Individuality growing but still traditional, DK and NL might seem cold</td>
<td>- Similar in Individuality, understanding</td>
<td>- Different notion of individuality, risk</td>
<td>- Feminine, host might seem to show off, old fashioned, risk</td>
<td>- Different notion of individuality, risk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Masculine, might perceive NL and DK as careless, sloppy</td>
<td>- Uncertainty avoidant, if culture is similar understanding, if very different risk</td>
<td>- Feminine, host might seem to show off, old fashioned, risk</td>
<td>- Moderate in uncertainty avoidance, low risk</td>
<td>- Feminine, host might seem to show off, old fashioned, risk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Uncertainty avoidant, want guests to adapt</td>
<td>- Might perceive too strict regulations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Results before contextualisation, risks of misunderstanding marked in grey