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The Dichotomy of Overtourism: How Did Venice Become Venice?

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To my mother, my father, and the residents of Venice...

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Abstract

The over-visitation of one of Europe's largest tourism hubs is becoming a thorny problem for residents, combined with the dichotomy of tourism growth. In this regard, this study aims to examine the phenomenon of overtourism, as a productive machine that consumes its own resources by unfolding its roots and impacts in terms of economic, environmental, and social. To have a clear insight, Butler's Tourism Area Life Cycle Model and the destination carrying capacity are addressed to enlighten the economics of overtourism. The second part focuses on the case of Venice and its tourism economic history, explaining how it exceeded its capacity. Along with these, the twentieth-century counterproductive deseasonalization policies especially with the re-birth of modern Carnival, the shift to hit-and-run tourism over time, the limited space and their outcomes are discussed. To test the phenomenon in the Venice case, the parameters of the city such as tourism and demographic change, job diversity, and congestion over time are assessed.

Keywords: overtourism, Venice, mass tourism, deseasonalization, tourism economic history, modern Carnival, tourism management.

Introduction

Tourism is an important economic activity for most countries in terms of bringing benefits to society locally and nationally. In the year 2019, every 1 out of 10 jobs is financed by the tourism industry (WTTC, 2021), which means income creation, the generation of employment, investment and development in a broader sense (Icoz & Icoz, 2019). In many tourism destinations, there is a direct correlation between the number of visitors and the increase in the GDP (gross domestic product) (Capó and Valle, 2008); hereby, it is no surprise, then, to see that strong momentum led by tourism can indirectly contribute to the growth of other sectors in the region by improving the living standards of the society (Dritsakis, 2004). In the same vein, following the 2008 financial crisis, it was tourism considered the key driver to generating wealth and growth, and as a result, much has been done to develop both urban and rural regions. Yet, imagining an economic activity without its costs is near to impossible, and so tourism again leaves unwanted costs to its beneficiaries. Therefore, the problem of too many tourists in a place so-called “overtourism” started to emerge in the literature in 2016 (Ali, 2016), the phenomenon ‘overtourism’ later 2017 became a fuzzy word in academia (Goodwin, 2017) and appeared on 2018 shortlist of Oxford due to the overuse of the term in the media and academia (Dickinson, 2018). Yet, its origins have been extensively studied since the mid-1960s (Koens, Postma, & Papp, 2018) as an “old wine in new bottles” (Dredge, 2017). Due to its trending marketability and its own discrepancy, even a study exists as labelling overtourism but does not give place in its body (Gonzalez, Coromina and Gali, 2018).

The prefix ‘over’ stresses out the excessive demand for the tourism destination like ‘loving a destination to death’. In the nature of the things, the notion of tourist carrying capacity has been firmly associated with the overtourism studies to evaluate the tourism saturation at the destination level. Rather than merely a number, various elements such as tourist types, infrastructure, destination and poor management practices such as *laissez-faire* attitude all have a position in tourism carrying capacity (Mata, 2019). For instance, the focus on the number misses the point on the balance between day-trippers and residential tourists, which have different effects on destinations and evolve during the tourism area development (Van Der Borg & Russo, 2001). The reliance on a single indicator made the management strategies fail rather than taking the welfare loss into account (Żemła, 2020). Herein, the social carrying capacity has recently come to the forefront while the ecological version dates to relatively older times. Interestingly, the emergence of social carrying capacity and the phenomenon of overtourism occur at closer times to each other. On the other hand, the social and environmental impacts of overtourism do not always come into existence in the same kind of destinations (Peeters et al., 2018). Also, tourism growth may not always reflect in other sectors contrary to Dritsakis’s (2004) discussion, and it can rather create a decline in job diversity owing to the overdependence. Hence, that controversy poses a dichotomy of overtourism between economic growth and various impacts like depopulation and job diversity on the destination level just like a double-edged sword. The theoretical framework of that research ties together the various theoretical and empirical strands in order to demonstrate the dichotomy of overtourism and establish a clear structure for the phenomenon.

In tourism area development literature, Venice is recognised as an “urban tourism destination *par excellence*” (Van der Borg, 2017). Venice might be the best example to investigate the overtourism considering the resident to annual tourist arrival ratio which was 1:16.3 in 2014, having the lowest ratio among touristic cities (Oklevik et al., 2019). Due to its limited space, visitors and residents are essentially forced to congregate in the same place and at the same time. Not only does the daily life in the city worsen, but also the quality of the visit declines, namely, tourists hate tourists as well. Furthermore, apart from the conditions of daily life, the inhabitants or demography in the city change, and did so. Subsequently, the residents lose their memories and become strangers in their own cities as a part of gentrification and depopulation, which is one of the three ways of a city’s death according to Settis (2014). Whilst gentrification and saturation of the historic city continued, having a sense of otherness caused by local culture led Airbnb, one of the most famous vacation rental companies with their ‘live like a local’ strategy, enabled more tourists to flock and gaze in the narrow streets and residential areas. However, there is more to that, the development of urban tourism in Venice has a lengthy history. The transition from the maritime republic period when people curiously came for the Carnival or just to pass through on their way to the Levant to an overtourism destination selling itself as a tourism product explains a lot about the tourism area development based on Butler’s (2006) Tourism Area Life Cycle. To develop a better understanding of the shift, it is necessary to pay considerable attention to the tourism policies (Davis & Marvin, 2004; Zannini, 2014), art and cultural initiatives (Stone, 1999; Favero & Moretti, 2017), urbanisation strategies (Favero, 2014; Fincardi & Tabet, 2014) and other factors promoting mass and consumer tourism. Unsurprising it might be, the city serves

its tourists all along the year, 11 out of 12 months, as high season referring to the tourism tax excluding the day-trippers (Città di Venezia, 2020). Even though one of WTTC's (World Travel & Tourism Council) propositions is to employ deseasonalization strategies for the mitigation of overtourism (Blázquez-Salom, 2019) and the most common measure for overtourism in 41 case destinations is to spread tourists over the prolonged season (Peeters et al., 2018), that has nothing to do with already year-round tourism in Venice. To date, there have been limited studies highlighting the deseasonalization of tourism in Venice and this research seeks to examine the counterproductive deseasonalization policies in a historical context.

Island destinations are analysed as the risky and vulnerable places for overtourism impacts yet they are the best places to limit the tourist access (Peeters et al., 2018). As if the contradiction of excessive tourism wasn't enough, the Venice case once again comes with another discrepancy. The tourists flock to the historic city, and at the same time, the density of hit-and-run tourists goes up. The pressure of overtourism on carrying capacity was heightened by hit-and-run tourists who had higher social costs than residential tourists and boomed in the 1980s (Van Der Borg & Russo, 2001). The juxtaposition, at that time, shows itself as an illusion of overtourism between the demand and low return for the local businesses with their overdependency on tourism. To mitigate the impacts, there is no 'one size fits all' and top-down solution to tackle the problem, yet it is a more sophisticated solution with shared responsibility with the stakeholders involved. Being a cultural heritage, the city with its unusual topography sets forth its own limits while some destinations can be expanded further afield, or the facilities can be adapted in accordance with the tourism

dynamism. The fourth, fifth and sixth sections present the findings of the research, focusing on the aforementioned facts.

The late 1980s have seen a strong attribution of sustainable tourism to the tourist carrying capacity (Bertocchi et al., 2020). Nevertheless, the sustainability of tourism growth is not just about the demand, but also the supply side. That has been a common concern and newly became a part of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which takes tourism development into consideration on their agenda to promote “sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth” (United Nations, 2015). Unlike the growth or green-growth theories, de-growth strategies as social theories advocate for altering tourist policy and related innovative instruments (Andriotis, 2018; Fletcher et al., 2019). The last chapter highlights the theoretical concept of degrowth and the practices in Venice. But chiefly, this study was motivated by that central research question:

How did Venice become Venice as an overtourism destination which serves its own visitors nearly all year round?

Methodology

This research employed a mixed methodology to investigate the tourism economic history of Venice to demonstrate how Venice became Venice as all season high overtourism destination. The literature review includes the theoretical framework encapsulating a wide analysis of the phenomenon, the economics of overtourism, Butler’s (2006) Tourism Area

Life Cycle which adopted from the product life cycle model, facilitators and impacts of overtourism.

This study follows a case-study design, with an in-depth analysis of the Venice case. The case study makes use of a descriptive and statistical economic history approach to tourism in Venice. The available sources are the city archives, ancient travel diaries, anthropological studies, the literature on tourism and urban studies. The results of historical inquiry are combined with the tourism management policies. Historically, the research starts from the Mediaeval Ages to reflect a wider perspective on the evolution of the tourism destination. The research data in this thesis is drawn from these sources: the reports and yearbook of tourism data Comune di Venezia, the database of the Veneto Region, Chamber of Commerce Venice Rovigo, Italian National Institute of Statistics. The reader should bear in mind that the study is presented until the year 2020 to present more reliable data excluding covid outbreak times.

1. Theoretical Framework of Overtourism

1.1. The Dichotomy of Overtourism and Tourismphobia

Tourism, being one of the world's fastest-growing industries, has inevitably come with public dissatisfaction with its negative economic, socio-cultural, and environmental consequences in major tourist locations due to "overtourism" (Milano, Novelli, & Cheer, 2019). The drastic change in visitor numbers put a strain on public transportation, infrastructure, roads, museums, attractions, and other facilities that were designed largely for residents. The growing supply of online accommodation and tourism services made tourism activities interrupt daily life more and more. The destinations are flooded by tourists every day and get their economic benefits from the trippers with tourists' needs, their beneficiaries and residents face the dichotomy of the overtourism by having the unwanted costs. Butler (1980) describes it in Tourism Area Life Cycle as 'tourism destinations suffer from their own success'; in other words, tourism destinations become the ultimate weapon for themselves. It turns out to be a manufacturing mechanism living out its life over time: but how are the touristic destinations at war themselves and how do the cities kill themselves?

Following the growth and changes like touristification, social unrest and protests have been observed in many European tourist destinations (e.g., Amsterdam, Barcelona, Reykjavik, Venice). In an article titled *Turistofobia*, published by Catalan anthropologist Manuel Delgado, the term "tourismphobia" was first used in the Spanish daily El Pas in 2008 (Delgado, 2008). The word tourismphobia became more widespread due to the use of international press and unsustainable mass tourism practices. The phenomenon 'overtourism' has quickly gained popularity as a way to explain these tourism disruptions. Despite their

connection, tourismphobia is separated from overtourism in terms of meaning. While overtourism is a circumstance caused by different factors, tourism phobia is an anti-tourist perception held by locals against tourists under tourism pressure and its impacts such as loss of purchasing power, rent inflation, the impression of alienation and loudness. In addition, one of the reasons for voicing their anger in coastal destinations is the burden of cruise ships. The focal point of this perspective, which usually ends with a wave of anti-tourism protests, is generally a call for municipal authorities to take control of growth and crowds in a sustainable way (Coldwell, 2017). Though, Milano (2017) draws attention to focus on overtourism instead of tourismphobia in the main findings of Barcelona, Berlin, and Venice cases.

Even though the term has been coined in recent times, the problem itself has taken part in literature for a long time (Wagar, 1964; Doxey, 1975; Pizam, 1978; Butler, 1980; Boissevain, 1996) as an “*old wine in new bottles*” (Dredge, 2017). To highlight the point of just resetting the debate with a new term, Dredge (2017) supported their argument with The Club of Rome's Limits of Growth, Limits of Acceptable Change and carrying capacity. These publications did not mention overtourism, yet they all pointed to the probable negative impacts of resource overconsumption and overuse in tourism. With its trending marketability and popularity, the framing of the post-mass tourism phenomenon might be varying from scholar to scholar. As Koens et al. (2018) stated in their article, it is even possible to encounter a study in the literature that mentions overtourism on its title but does not use it on its body (Gonzalez, Coromina and Gali, 2018). According to Koens et al. (2018), the phenomenon came mostly from media resources that lacked a substantial theoretical ground. By taking into account that the term was non-existent prior to Skift's article in 2017 in

academia, the phenomenon may lack clarity as blurred, or it can be considered a fuzzy word. In addition, the factors leading to the problem and perspectives considered by the authors may also differ. To be able to see how the phenomenon is framed by different authors in literature, some outstanding definitions are compiled below.

Goodwin (2017)	“Overtourism describes destinations where hosts or guests, locals or visitors, feel that there are too many visitors and that the quality of life in the area or the quality of the experience has deteriorated unacceptably.”
Milano et al. (2018)	“As the excessive growth of visitors leading to overcrowding in areas where residents suffer the consequences of temporary and seasonal tourism peaks, which have enforced permanent changes to their lifestyles, access to amenities and general well-being.”
Peeters et al. (2018)	“Overtourism describes the situation in which the impact of tourism, at certain times and in certain locations, exceeds physical, ecological, social, economic, psychological, and/or political capacity thresholds.”
UNWTO (2018)	“The impact of tourism on a destination, or parts thereof, that excessively influences perceived quality of life of citizens and/or quality of visitor experiences in a negative way.”
Butler (2018)	“Overtourism is not the same as over-crowding or busy destinations, it represents a situation where numbers of visitors overload the services and facilities available and also become a serious inconvenience for permanent residents of such locations.”
Perkumienė & Pranskūnienė (2019)	“Overtourism is characterized by an excessive number of visitors, which affects the quality of the region.”
Wall (2019)	“Overtourism is a “wicked problem” of maintaining a balance between supply and demand, in a system that is continuing to grow and is made up of many moving parts.”
Volo (2020)	“Overtourism is defined as an excessive presence of tourists that carries negative socio-cultural and environmental consequences for residents, destinations and tourists.”

Figure 1. Prominent Definitions for Overtourism

As listed above and in the literature generally, it is possible to see some similarities and common points such as exceeding the city's tourist carrying capacity, degradation in the quality of life, and overgrowth of tourism. Principally, the majority of overtourism affairs are attributed to the negative impressions between locals and tourists as a result of "too many" visitors at specific times and places even if "too many" is subjective to say. Yet, as Butler (2018) stated, the overtourism phenomenon is not the same as overcrowding or mass tourism. Having too many visitors in a certain location does not always imply that it is enough to call it overtourism. Accordingly, classifying a destination in overtourism requires exceeding its carrying capacity (Butler, 2019). Exceeding the ecological capacity is mostly analysed through the studies, alternatively what Peeters et al. (2018) emphasised newly to define is social capacity. So, the impact of tourism is the crucial component for the evaluation. Prior to conceptualization, the human and social elements were covered by the European Environment Agency in its Dobris Assessment (Stanners & Bourdeau, 1995) and the community perception was tied with sustainable tourism (Avgoustis & Achana, 2003). The social carrying capacity is related to hosts, guests, and citizens; above all, it has recently come to the fore that the opinion of residents and their perception of the issue should be considered in the evaluation of tourism impacts (Peeters et al., 2018). Coincidentally or not, the proliferation of resident-centred tourism evaluation and the birth of overtourism phenomenon nearly concur. These findings add to a growing body of literature on the role of resident attitudes in expressing overtourism whether they accept (over)growing tourism or not, yet it is so difficult to frame with strict lines as the residents and their attitudes are dynamic (Butler, 2019). Aside from the economic or environmental indicators, the resident

perspective has a great influence on the invisible part of the iceberg and it is shaped by different factors such as location externalities, infrastructure, governance. So, the phenomenon itself is a paradox as overtourism is more than certain numbers and tourism growth.

Another common conception to describe the phenomenon is unsustainable tourism which causes severe consequences. If the tourism activity is not properly handled, it is possible to see the significant harm and disturbance to the destination together with the surpassing the costs over the benefits *in situ* (Coldwell, 2017). Going by the same point, Collins Dictionary (2018) define the phenomenon as “being overrun with tourists in an unsustainable way”. Likewise, many tourism researchers emphasize the importance of sustainable development (Sharpley, 2009; Saarinen, 2013) and that a sustainable viewpoint to the problematic tourism growth dates back to the 1980s. Given that eight percent of the green gas emissions is constituted by global tourism, it is recognizable as an important player to mitigate adverse effects. Notwithstanding, according to some tourism academics and analysts, the concept's validity is questionable, and it is just in theory a marketing ploy (Kryczka, 2019).

The other typical point for the conceptualization of the phenomenon would be the uncontrolled or mismanagement of tourism growth, such as the World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO)’s manner by calling local authorities for better management of the tourism growth. To make tourism more sustainable and take track of circularity, the supply and demand balance should be achieved with the effective supervision of national and local governments. Not only actors involved in tourism but also the diverse group of stakeholders

that are acknowledged are required to cooperate effectively for better urban tourism management (UNWTO, 2018). The management of urban tourism (Conti & Perelli, 2007) and its impact on overtourism (Mata, 2019; Fletcher et al, 2019; Dodds & Butler, 2019a) occupy a considerable place in the literature.

The emphasis on the specific place at a specific time might reveal the importance of a local or authentic outlook, on the other hand, the findings from the case studies set a foundation for overtourism as a global problem with a certain extent of commonality—like in Berlin, Palma de Mallorca, Reykjavik, Venice. In spite of this disseminating view handled in a bottom-up way, the constructivist perspective of seeing the problem as a global issue runs into a research gap from the point of the conceptual framework (Milano, 2017; Pike, 2017).

Another common phenomenon seen in the tourism literature is the issue of seasonality as Milano et al. (2018) mentioned their definition. Seasonality signifies touristic visit imbalance in a destination at certain times and the tendency of visitors to travel to prominent destinations is frequently cited as the primary cause of overtourism (Phi, 2020). For that reason, the fluctuation in tourist numbers to a destination affects the viability of businesses. Seasonal impacts on tourist destinations can be influenced by natural or institutional factors. While natural seasonality is associated with the climate and temporal changes of the seasons during the year like beach and snow tourism, institutional seasonality is formed by human activities and events like religious holidays and cultural events (Butler, 2001). For these two types, seasonality in art destinations and cultural attractions is more prolonged than those in seashore or mountain locations by bringing more fluctuation in other economic activities such as job diversity (Milano et al., 2018). However, not every tourist destination has a proper seasonality effect all year long. Based on tourism tax data, Venice is 11 out of 12 months in

the peak season (Città di Venezia, 2020). So, it might be claimed that an off-season would be a time to be recovery and relaxation of the environment and residents (Milano et al., 2018). In that sense, it does not mean that seasonality always has the outcomes of negative externalities, which is elaborated on later in that study.

In the literature, there are also studies approaching overtourism in a way of urbanisation and economic point of view, like Wall (2019). Tourists are more prone to consume and their needs are diversified than during the time when they are at home. The destination is in charge of both meeting the demands of tourists and making its citizens happy. Though, this might end up with the bigger hotels, more gift shops, related touristic services and less space to enjoy life for locals. So, touristification or over-touristification of a destination becomes a fundamental issue by disrupting the supply-demand balance (Wall, 2019). In order to analyse the economics of overtourism in supply and demand curves, we are going to look closer in deep down at the issue.

1.1.1. The Economics of Overtourism

Thus far, it is obvious that overtourism creates problems of alienation, environmental degradation, poor visitor experience and cultural harm, all of which cost the economy, society, and the environment. However, these costs are not reflected in the market prices of goods and services used by visitors, such as admission fees and tickets. In the end, ‘negative externalities’ or ‘external costs’ (Pigou, 1932; Baumol, 1974) which are the costs of individual tourist activities become a burden to residents. Neither the individual tourist’s economic activity covers the social costs, nor the market outcome is enough to compensate for the cost. Thus and so, it brings about the overconsumption of the goods (Marshall, 1920) in tourism.

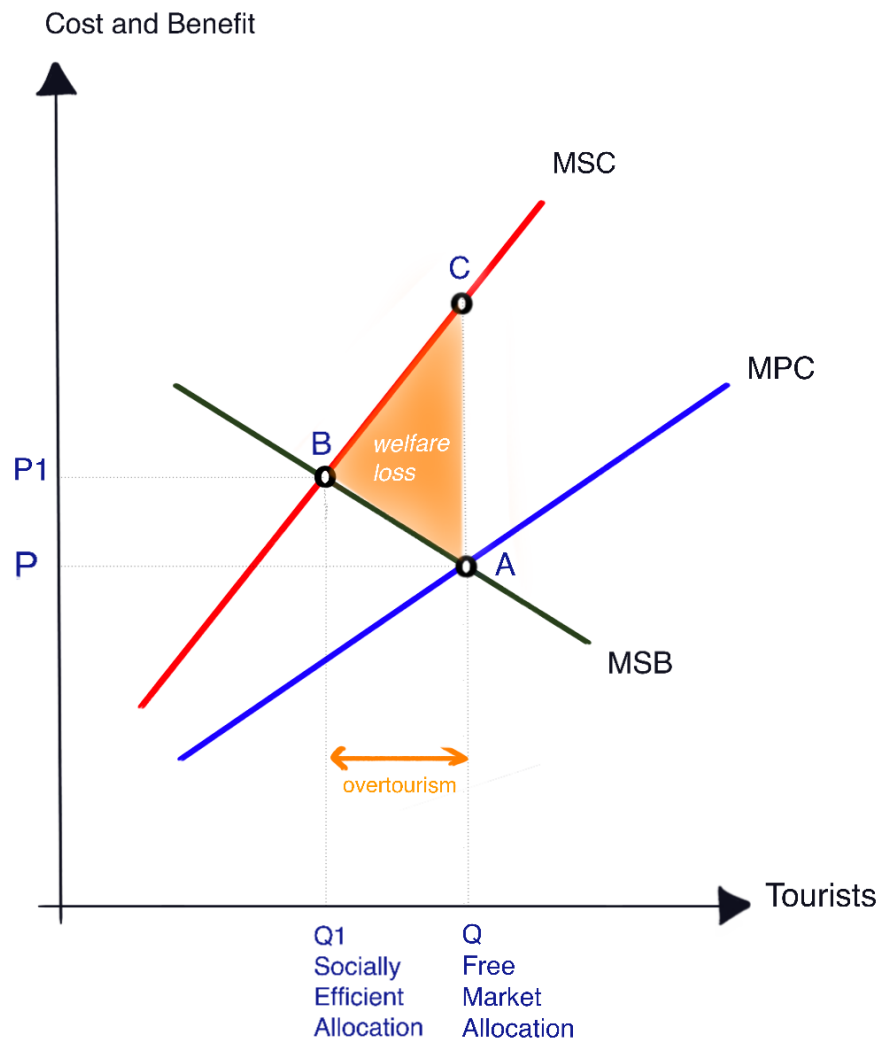


Figure 2. The Economics of Overtourism. Adopted from Nepal & Nepal (2019). Illustrated by the author.

In the figure shown above, which is adopted from Nepal & Nepal's (2019) study, negative externalities place in the gap between the lines of marginal social cost (MSC) and marginal private cost (MPC). In a free market, 'Q' is the number of tourists visiting a destination and these users pay for the services, signifying 'P'. This economic activity happens at the point of 'A', where the MPC equals the marginal social benefit (MSB). Yet, the destination's capacity for tourists is indicated with Q1 and the desired price for the

services is remarked with P1. Q1 and P1 occur at the point 'B' where MSC intersects with MSB.

Following the external costs, we additionally see the point 'C' where the lines of MSC and 'Free Market Allocation' cross each other. Therein, a triangle consisting of the points of 'A', 'B' and 'C' resembles the deadweight loss that resulted from the overtourism. That shaded area or triangle tells us the degree of welfare cost to the local society in the wake of overtourism rather than responsible tourism. If the number of tourists was lower at the point of socially desired tourist quantity, the cost for the tourists would have been higher and the welfare loss would have been avoided. To eliminate the deadweight loss, taxation named the Pigouvian tax (Pigou, 1930) is one of the commonly known ways by discouraging the over-consumption of the services. As many major touristic European cities face challenges with tourism development, we can see the countries levying the tax such as Austria, Croatia, Italy, Germany, Greece and so on (ETOA, 2018).

After going over the economics of overtourism, we are going to have a look at the types of tourists, who are the main component of the tourism industry as consumers, as they have varying good and negative effects.

1.2. Types of Tourists

UNWTO (2010) distinguishes tourism into three types of forms: domestic, inbound, and outbound tourism. As the study examines overtourism and its impacts on destinations, we are going to look at the inbound travellers from a demand perspective. The model by Van Der Borg, Costa and Gotti (1996) identifies two types of tourists: residential tourist (overnight visitors) and excursionists or day-trippers. In addition to the difference in the length of

visitors' stay in the city, there is also differentiation in their economic activities during their visits (Van Der Borg et al., 1996). So, the length of the journey is a significant factor in determining the degree of demand for tourist services such as overnight lodging (UNWTO, 2010).

Basically, it is apparent that excursionists spend considerably less time than residential visitors. For that reason, the excursionists get fewer goods and services, and they do not accommodate within the city visited or they are just coming with cruise ships. They just see the main attractions even sometimes without paying any fee and they tend to produce more waste as they bring their food with them. The average expenditure per day naturally decreases and it is nearly four times less than residential tourists (Van Der Borg, 2017). Considering that Barcelona could be an ideal case as the city has an evenly distributed tourists and day-trippers ratio, tourists account for 89.4 percent of the *direct effect* of tourism, with day-trippers accounting for the remaining 10.6 percent according to the research. We should bear in mind that the direct effect of tourism is attributed to the tourist spending on goods and services, and this demand leads the tourism industry to interact with other sectors to get their needs, which is called *indirect effect* of tourism (Murillo et al., 2013). For destinations having more imbalanced overnight visitors and day-trippers ratio, the impacts can reach irreparable levels. In 2019, Venice produced 1.5 billion euros in tourist earnings, with excursionists accounting for 30% of that total. Despite this, the same category corresponds to 70% of all visitors (Brambilla, 2021). Again, the cities suffering from overtourism have the dichotomy, this time, because of excursionism. The excursionists have limited time to visit the attractions as much as they can, so they are in hurry with a constant move by creating pedestrian traffic on the same routes and districts (Momigliano, 2020). Having that tourist flow comes with monoculture particularly giving negative impacts. Apart

from the information gathering methods like phone signal tracking and cameras for surveillance, the numbers of the day-trippers are most difficult to measure as they are not charged for the tax (Van Der Borg, 2017).

Over time, the increasing accessibility to the cities like new railways and charter flights contributed to the volume of excursionist flow. Contrary to the increase in the number of holidays, recent studies have shown that holidays become shorter (Allen, 2017). For creating excessive tourism demand and carrying capacity problems, there is a common accusation towards the day-trippers as they cause more costs and provide fewer benefits than residential tourists. Receiving a considerable number of day-trippers pushes these cities to the later phases of the tourism life cycle (Van Der Borg et al., 1996).

On the other hand, residential tourists spending much more time have a smaller impact on the destination. Somehow, their expenditure might compensate for the impacts as they comparatively spend much more. Overnight visitors have a chance to explore and enjoy the destination at a leisurely pace, causing less congestion (De Marchi & Manente, 2019). In regard to the monoculture effect of overnight visitors, they are significantly less inclined to stay just in the city centre. Having more time during their holidays allows them to explore further afield, in that they have expenditure there, too (Momigliano, 2020).

Aside from these two groups of tourists, domestic visitors are classified as tourists and residents visiting the country of reference. All inbound visitors are classified as tourists and excursionists, and ultimately all inbound visitors are categorised based on their primary reason for travelling (UNWTO, 2010).

Van Der Borg (1988) looks to the tourist characteristics in the form of tourists' spatial moves as if they were commuting in the traditional urban system. Excursionism is an activity

described as tourist movement between the destination and stopover(s) excluding interregional movements. What we see here for tourism and excursionism is that they are complementing each other. However, the stark reality of excursionism's hazardous effect on destination and the marriage of excursionism and tourism, anew, came into sight as juxtaposition. Therefore, the tourist system in spatial structure presents the idea that tourist systems emerge from the spatial behaviour of tourists, the tourism industry, and local states. From another perspective, the actors that promote tourism and excursionism by giving shape to the infrastructure are the industry and local governments (Van Der Borg, 1988).

As we give some thought to the issue of tourist types and their behaviours, we are going to look at the destination side with its capacity to embrace tourists.

1.3. Life Cycle of The Tourism Destination and Carrying Capacity

The demand in the tourism industry for a destination is not stable and it naturally changes over time, or the volume of the demand may fluctuate. In order to meet the demand, the market supply is shaped accordingly. This dynamic change can occur as a result of the tourist needs, some progressive deterioration, the destination in vogue and promotional activities. Eventually, the destination evolves, its popularity waves and the city goes through different stages as tourism scholars conceived earlier (Plog, 1974; Tooman 1997). If a destination continues to change and evolve in this way, how many tourists can a destination carry and how long does a destination sustain without decaying?

The answer is related to what is more often known as carrying capacity, the maximum limit to tourist expansion without any negative impact (UNWTO, 1981) or having a load capacity (O'Reilly, 1986). The baselined conceptualization can be found on the irridex

(irritation index) by Doxey (Doxey, 1975) and tourism area life cycle by Butler (Butler, 1980; updated Butler, 2006). Both models propose a set of stages framing the touristification of the destination and the response or resistance of locals to the increasing number of tourists. Each phase has both tangible and intangible consequences generating social, environmental, and economic impacts; so these impacts in a location ultimately alter its character, also by affecting the quality of life (Martin & Uysal, 1990). To understand the nature of overtourism, the concept of the tourism area life cycle will provide a clear answer to the previous question.

1.3.1. Doxey's Irridex

Unquestionably, Doxey's irridex is one of the most important and pioneer contributions to the creation of theoretical models to understand the tourism area cycle of evolution. Niagara-on-the-Lake, a town close to the Canada-US border with its widespread tourism popularity, inspired Doxey for the development of the framework. The theoretical model is composed of four stages *euphoria*, *apathy*, *annoyance*, *antagonism*; and the intensity of incompatibility between residents and tourists determines the irritation. In the first stage, euphoria, the number of tourists is small, and the locals are interested in tourists. During the phase of apathy, the number of tourists increases and the interaction between locals and tourists becomes formal. In the phase of annoyance, tourism development reaches the highest level and the locals become more concerned about tourism by competing for the resources. Antagonism is the last stage when tourists are thought to be responsible for all wrongdoings and locals become hostile to them (Doxey, 1975). The last stage is the most related one to overtourism with respect to destination saturation.

Doxey's model is not established on an extensive empirical study. Regardless of the intrinsic variables relevant to the local community, Irridex sees the relationship in a homogenous way and the tourism development is formulated as a unidirectional model. Hence, the model misses out the certain constraints such as local demography and the complexity of tourism impacts despite its fundamental role in literature (Pavlič & Portolan, 2014).

Doxey's Irridex is often thought of in connection with Butler's Tourism Area Life Cycle (Beeton, 2006, p. 40). The exceeding of carrying capacity occurs in Doxey's antagonism, while in Butler's life cycle in stagnation.

1.3.2. Butler's Tourism Area Life Cycle

One of the most attributed models to analyse tourism lifetime for overtourism destinations is Butler's TALC (Tourism Area Life Cycle), which was established very early in 1980 and adapted from the product life cycle concept (Butler, 1980) and updated almost one and a half-decade later (Butler, 2006). Arguments on destination carrying capacity propelled the unidirectional development view ahead of multidimensional and dynamic ones in the 1980s. In that vein, Butler (1980) indicated a diversity of local viewpoints and resident groups unlike Doxey's linear perception of the tourism destination development. According to Butler, the model was influenced by three essential elements of tourists, locals and tourism conditions (Butler, 1980, p. 10).

Previously, Christaller (1964) described the consistent tourist area evolution with three stages in the European setting. Whereas, in the most well-known TALC model version Butler formed the evolution in 6 stages of *exploration*, *involvement*, *development*,

consolidation, stagnation, decline. The S-shaped graphical formulation illustrates the time on the x-axis and the number of overnight stays on the y-axis. In the graphical representation, Noronha's (1976) three stages of tourism development are shown as Butler (1980) referred to in their study.

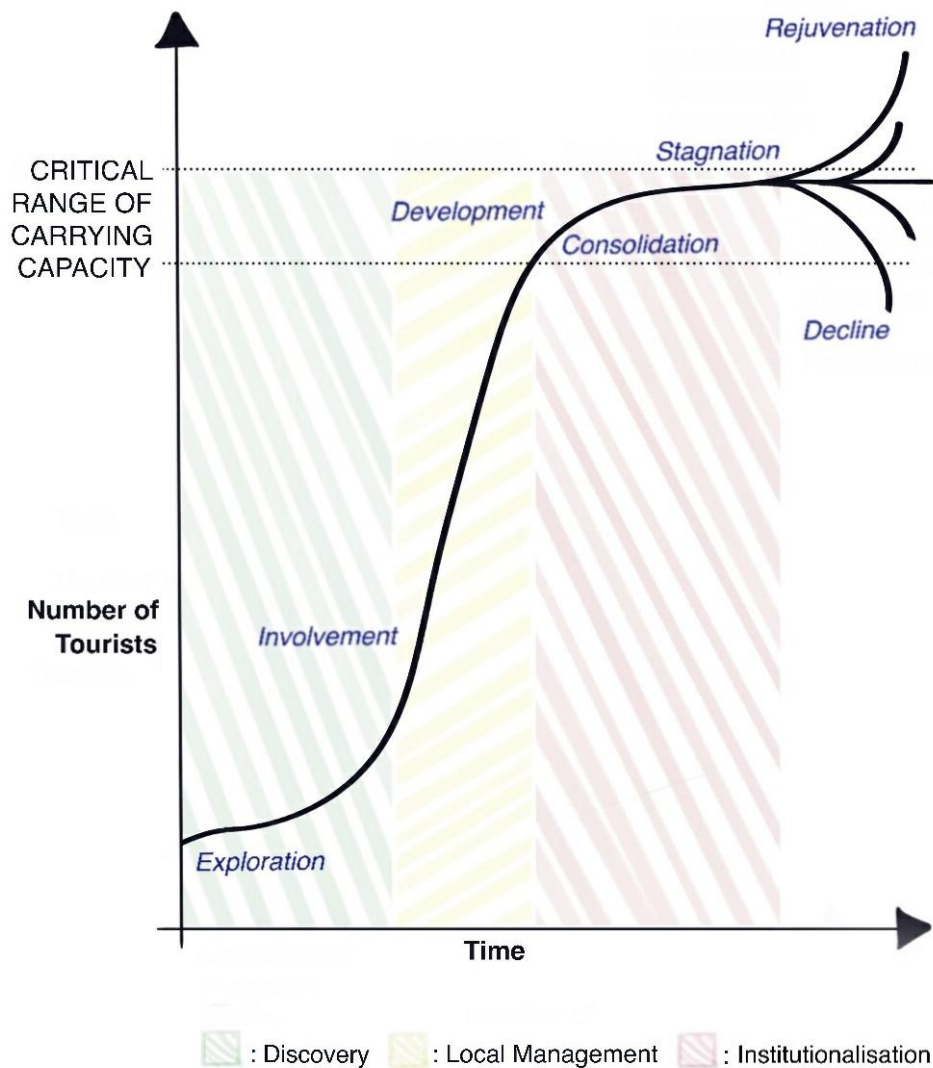


Figure 3. Butler's (2006) Tourism Area Life Cycle Model. The model is combined with Noronha's (1976) three stages of tourism development. Illustrated by the author.

In the initial phase *exploration*, the area is visited by a small number of tourists whose purpose is not to visit mass tourism places by running away from institutionalized tourism. The reasons root in the lack of transport connection, tourism facilities or destination promotion and visitors choose the destination due to its cultural heritage, beauty, or quietness. Owing to the low volume of tourists, no tourism policy is applied by the local government.

In the phase of *involvement*, the collection of local and entertaining events is being provided to the visitors and the promotional activities begin to arise. Subsequently, the overnight stays start to increase, and the private sector begins to invest in tourism whereas the public sector is inadequate to coordinate. That leads to the emergence of the tourism market and its seasonality. From the resident perspective based on the scenarios that Butler (2018) framed, insufficient infrastructure and services compared to visitor numbers can create the feeling of overtourism, expressed as overtourism without overdevelopment, over residents during the involvement phase (Candela & Figini, 2012; Cordero, 2008)

In the phase of *development*, the number of tourists and overnight stays notably goes up and typically outnumbers the local population, which is called depopulation. The development continues to occur with more supply of tourism services to make tourists comfortable. The high season in the destination becomes apparent together with the destination's international awareness. To regulate the market, the public sector gets involved in the development of tourism goods, infrastructure and the supply of services. With these developments, some locals might feel alienated from their own city. Along with the locals drawn by economic opportunities, the income from tourism helps to resolve economic issues in the private sector; notwithstanding, the overcrowding may threaten the environment and

infrastructure. This stage is often recognised as the early stage of overtourism, which requires good tourism management and governance strategies before experiencing overtourism, in the academic literature (Yaşlı & Emir, 2020, p. 20).

In the phase of *consolidation*, the destination continues to receive increasing overnight stays by hitting the carrying capacity, albeit at a decreasing rate than before. As the market grows and becomes difficult to manage with the flow of tourists in mass which makes locals overwhelmed, international actors usually start to take over the roles of local suppliers. A flow of both international chain service suppliers and international tourists is observed. As seen in the figure, that is the beginning of the institutionalisation stage and mass tourism. One of the remarkable consequences of that phase is the emergence of residents' xenophobic attitudes (Candela & Figini, 2012).

In the phase of *stagnation*, the number of overnight stays reaches the highest level and the destination experiences peak tourism, which is often known as overtourism with infrastructural deteriorations (Alexis, 2017). In regard to many variables, the carrying capacity is reached or already exceeded. The location begins to face serious overcrowding as tourists come in mass and it starts to lose its attractiveness. After all the overdevelopment and overuse, locals feel displaced since their residential or commercial properties are sold to foreigners and they lash out at the tourists. The fact that multinational corporations are involved in the market requires the cooperation of different stakeholders to solve the arising conflicts (Butler, 2006).

In the phase of so-called *decline*, tourists are increasingly drawn to newer and more trendy destinations, causing the overtourism destination to lose visitors. The destination is

increasingly visited by excursionists overtaking the overnight stays like in old resorts throughout Europe and even it may turn to be dependent on excursionism if it is easily accessible to a lot of people. From the point of supply, the market, which becomes highly competitive, experiences low-profit margins. The owners of the destination change together with the evolution of the destination and the residential properties might become someone else's second home or emptied touristic properties may alter their function with high real estate turnover or the destination may even lose its tourism identity. The degradation of infrastructure and resources becomes more evident and the existence of xenophobia gets worse. In the end, the destination may even follow *trexit* (tourism exit) by losing its tourism identity (Seraphin et al., 2018). Having said that, the destination may continue to develop and go through *rejuvenation*. Although the decline has been consistently argued by scholars, the tourism area can follow five different pathways in the last stage according to TALC. Following the stagnation phase, a destination might also enter into a period of a reduced rate, and no growth. The founding model suggests that rejuvenation will never occur unless the attractions on which tourism is built undergo a complete transformation. Butler (2006) holds the view that this stage can be reached only in two conditions. First, the destination should be human-made like gambling resorts so that all the attractions can be adapted and enlarged in accordance. Second, the utilisation of untouched natural resources might enliven an overtourism destination again. A prominent example of this is the integration of spa towns, which is the origin of modern tourism, in Europe to rejuvenate the winter sports market.

In terms of limitation, the tourism area life cycle model has been criticised for being presented as a unidirectional concept and scalability of the model to each destination with homogenous residents (Cordero, 2008, p. 37).

The tourism area life cycle model clearly demonstrates that the number of incoming tourists and the amount change, the characteristic of the destination is likely to alter and so do the residents and their attitudes if locals are inclined to accept tourism. As prior studies have argued that overtourism is associated with exceeding carrying capacity, the life cycle model's last two stages bring out overtourism in present (Alexis, 2017). Following the rapid growth and overdevelopment, the destination goes through degrowth or decline, but it is necessary to remember that there is a line between overdevelopment and overtourism. Keeping the dynamic tourist-destination relationship (Peeters et al., 2018), it must be emphasized that not every tourism resort passes through the same evolution as indicated in Russel (2006)'s Chaos-Complexity model application to TALC. The type of tourism it receives and the character of the destination might shape how the overtourism is occurring. For instance, the categorization of tourist cities as a resort, touristic-historic and converted cities structure the relationship between residents and tourists (Judd and Fainstein, 1999, p. 262); moreover, bigger cities can tolerate mass tourism while it has a greater impact on smaller urban areas (Stanners & Bourdeau, 1995). In regard to the size of the city, cities like London and Mexico City receive much more tourists but the complaints of overtourism do not set the tone in those. Conversely, smaller cities like Prague or Florence are more vulnerable to suffering from the flow of tourists by exceeding carrying capacity, the anti-tourist voices are loud and it is hard to eliminate the impacts. Highlighting the type of destination, overtourism

destinations not necessarily are should not have to be urban places: overtourism can be observed anywhere, like on Mount Everest (Brown, 2019) with the crowds of people waiting to climb, their waste along the paths and the inadequacy of tourist facilities and services by its nature.

Back to the question at the beginning of this part, it is not possible to define a threshold for the carrying capacity as overtourism. Rather than just a number, other variables such as tourist distribution, activities and behaviours of tourists, and infrastructure have a place in tourism carrying capacity (Milano, 2017). Previous lessons taken from the overtourism experiences also show that a focus on a single metric, instead of a system of metrics displaying the real cost and advantages of tourism growth, made stakeholders fall into error (Cheers et al., 2019, p. 228; Żemła, 2020). Therefore, the type of tourists and tourism, the characteristics of destination, the local authorities' approach and the sector's response to developing tourism are some of the key variables for carrying capacity. After exceeding the carrying capacity, it is more appropriate to use the term overtourism in view of residents' attitudes against developing tourism, and the permanent evolution of any tourist destination, keeping in mind the fact that overtourism can be felt in several phases.

1.4. The Facilitators of Overtourism

Over the last decades, scholars referred to the tremendous tourism growth with excessive tourism and tourists travelling more often as leading factors for the occurring negative outcomes of tourism. This is one of the well-recognized sources of tourism, yet there is more to discover. Going back to the past so earlier than the emergence of the term, Rosenow and Pulsipher (1979) present the causes of visitor overkill in three general

headlines: (1) too many visitors, exacerbated by seasonality; (2) extreme negative visitor impact like annoyance; (3) extreme physical impact of the tourist economy. The contemporary studies later contributed that the tourist behaviour, concentration, timing, location, tourism experience, local etiquette, and so forth are just as essential as the numbers (Postma, 2013).

A seminal study in this area is the work of Dodds and Butler (2019b)'s 'the enablers of overtourism' in 10 bullet points: (1) greater numbers of tourism; (2) travel has become more affordable; (3) new groups of tourists; (4) dominance of the growth-focused mindset; (5) short-term focus; (6) competition for space, amenities and services; (7) wider access to media and information; (8) destinations lack control over tourists numbers; (9) imbalance of power among stakeholders; (10) tourism stakeholders are fragmented and at odds.

The first enabler is the most outstanding reason for overtourism, yet it should not be the only indicator to express it, as discussed explicitly in the introduction part of this study. A 56-fold increase in the international tourist arrivals from post-World War II times to 2018 precluded the slight possibility to share the same space for residents and visitors. For the second enabler, the increased wealth and the decline in travel expenses led the travel to becoming more affordable (Garcia, 2017). Even in the nineteenth century, the tours organised to Egypt by Thomas Cook came in for criticism (Dodds & Butler, 2019c). While in the past this corresponds to the increase of railway connections or the accessibility of the destination to the tourists, in the contemporary connected world it turned out to be the increase of low-cost carriers like Ryanair or Easyjet and increasing direct routes in addition to the shared transportation. Changed mobility complicated local authorities' jobs to impose limits on the

destinations accessible via air, land, and sea (Volo, 2020). The expansion of peer-to-peer platforms (Airbnb) and online accommodation services and accommodation in the residential areas, distant from traditional lodging, gave momentum to the tourism flow. With the help of affordable accommodation offers by online booking platforms against the conventional ones (Guttentag, 2015), the case of Barcelona also shows the tourism pressure on the residential areas and the narrowing gap between tourists and residents (Gutiérrez et al., 2017) with the direct relationship of overnight stays and number of beds (Milano, 2017). For the third enabler, the growing middle class induced by the world population increase caused the emergence of a new group of tourists who can benefit from low-cost travel. Also, the easier visa regulations especially for high-spending countries diversified the prevalent tourist groups (Dodds & Butler, 2019b).

About the fourth enabler, organisations and international corporations in the tourism sector generally seek how to fulfil or overrun their service capacities powered by strong marketing campaigns and maximise their turnover with a growth mindset regardless of the impacts. Meanwhile, public stakeholders and policymakers, most of the time, are not so aware of the potential impacts or they manage the growth from the standpoint of the Holy Grail as observed in more than 30 overtourism destinations in Europe (Peeters et al., 2018). Residents are frequently part of tourism planning, instead, it is reflected them as job creation and economic growth (Volo, 2020). This way of thinking way can make the coastal cities vulnerable to cruise tourism like in Venice (Żemła, 2020). In the flush of growth-centric strategies, sustainable development goals just become the marketing slogans of corporations. The fifth enabler comes from a long-term management plan's growth mindset and deficiency.

In addition, event tourism by organising new ones to make the destination more attractive can trigger it (Getz & Page, 2016). These successive mistakes may end up in market failure and an imbalance of demand and supply (Dodds & Butler, 2019b). Once the problem comes to the ground, it is too late to compensate long terms impacts with short-term benefits and curb the demand.

The space has its own limits compared to the everlasting tourist demand. The sixth enabler stresses the limits of the supply side. Expanding the facilities or capacity can be easier for human-made attractions, yet not easy for small or island destinations and with technology only. Even, that can be a stress multiplier for small-scale destinations to feel the overtourism pressure. With the proliferation of online booking and sharing platforms, tourists can even invade the space of residents in spite of lessened authenticity (Lalicic & Weismayer, 2017).

The greater access to the internet and the new media changed travel habits and made the destinations attract more tourists. Tourists imitate the same pose in the same place that they saw on their social media feeds taken in front of the Bridge of Sights in Venice or in the avenue of Champs-Élysées in Paris. Dodds & Butler (2019b) exemplify this in their study and also there are more studies focused on the role of social media (Koens, Postma, & Papp, 2018; Gretzel, 2019). “Must see” articles written for destinations and their attractions by popular travel blogs stimulate the consensus crowds (Rickly, 2019). In the same vein, films and tv series promote the spots to become over-visited like Dubrovnik with *Game of Thrones* (Żemła, 2020) and Skelling Michael, Ireland with *Star Wars*.

The participation of different players in the market hampers the job of local authorities to restrict the incoming tourists, which is underlined by the eighth enabler. For instance, many airports and ports are usually managed by the private sector or national governments. Also, it is difficult to control highways or worldwide online platforms for municipalities. Therefore, many destinations run into the difficulty of controlling the numbers (Dodds & Butler, 2019b). The following enabler is also related to too much power of players and exclusion of them from the tourism planning since their relatively smaller size (Dodds & Butler, 2019b). These actors can be institutions giving insights, media, or residents themselves who are taking the burden. In the end, different stakeholders looking in different directions are not able to confer on the obvious issue, which is given with the last enabler.

When a destination is in a demand or at its peak times, it attracts more and more visitors regardless of the impacts left behind. The form of strong seasonality in unsustainable levels may create a waving effect and temporary low-paid jobs (Peeters et al., 2018). Even though extending the season might seem worthwhile for the short term and create more secure jobs, it will intensify tourism and facilitate reaching greater numbers (Goodwin, 2017).

Policies directing and re-routing the tourists to new and less frequently visited places might worsen the problem. The rising volume of tourists, possibly more to residential areas, will increase the tension between tourists and residents (Peeters et al., 2018). Even though it is indirect but main, tourism management practices that are centred on volume growth, instead of optimising existing tourism systems, drive overtourism.

The facilitators to overtourism mentioned above converge in many places; nevertheless, the contributing facilitators may vary according to urban, rural, and coastal areas as Peeters et al. (2018) examined in the cities all over the world. Once occurred, the overconsumption of the destination as an ultimate weapon for itself enforces permanent changes, mostly adverse impacts, on the destinations and residents. The impacts affecting the life quality of residents and visitor experience will be explained hereinafter.

1.5. The Impacts of Overtourism

The negative impacts of tourism have long been discussed in the tourist literature and the issue has a rich background. These impacts are commonly classified into three pillars: environmental, economic, and socio-cultural (Mowforth & Munt, 2016). Apart from economic impacts, it is more likely to see that social impacts have widespread media coverage, albeit the case studies from Peeters et al. (2018)'s publication show that environmental impacts are also widespread. Specifically, social impacts prevail in urban areas, whereas environmental impacts in rural areas. In islands or coastal areas and heritage destinations, all three groups of impacts can be dominant. In order to reflect the impacts in a broadscale way, it is academia's mission to connect business studies and social sciences. While assessing from these three dimensions, it is better not to have a unidirectional viewpoint and approach them interdependently (Peeters et al., 2018).

1.5.1. Economic Impacts

The economic impacts of overtourism are principally related to the uphill demand for tourism goods and services, and the market's response to it. The increase in the demand is followed by the re-pricing of the supply. So this means, there is seen inflation in the prices

and most probably decrease in the supply of certain services for inhabitants. Overtourism has been linked to problems such as rising housing prices, real estate speculation and gentrification, as well as a loss of purchasing power among inhabitants with fixed incomes. In addition, the opportunity to rent their availability to visitors via peer-to-peer platforms contributes to the price surge in the real estate market and rental inflation as happened in Berlin (Milano, 2017). Based on what Peeters et al. (2018) found out, heritage & attractions and coastal & islands areas experienced more inflation and reduction of goods and services whereas noticeably less in the rural areas as tourists prefer to stay in urban areas.

The constant exposure to large numbers of tourists can make the local economy dependent on tourism. When a destination becomes over-reliant on tourism, it becomes subject to fluctuations in visitor demand (Icoz & Icoz, 2019). Seasonality in tourism can also cause some disruptions throughout the year and insecurity in the jobs. In the end, strong dependency on tourism can lead to the degradation of other sectors and adversely affect job diversity. Residents find more tourist goods and services than the ones for their daily needs. In that scenario, tourism destinations should maintain their economy diversified, and base economy to minimise economic disruption due to variations in demand (Peeters et al., 2018). Despite the emphasis on not being limited to economic indicators, previous research by McKinsey & Company and World Travel & Tourism Council (2017) established that the economic dependency on tourism might be seen as a sign of early-stage of overtourism with the change of political focus from residents to the tourism sector.

The beginning of institutionalised tourism connects more international corporations to the resort area and this follows the ‘leakage’ of revenues abroad or the hidden costs (Icoz &

Icoz, 2019). In other words, some part of earnings from tourism does not come back to the residents or to the region. Also, operating firms in the sector avoid paying the costs that the sector caused and third parties are obliged to pay unpaid costs. Over-visitation causes the degradation of infrastructure and facilities needing to be maintained, afterwards, it leads to a decrease in quality and a rise in maintenance costs for infrastructure. Along with that, the overcrowding with reduced accessibility of infrastructure impedes the performance of activities designed for tourists and locals, who are unable to reach their works or shops (Peeters et al., 2018). For instance, a person, who is living in Prague and needs to cross Charles Bridge full of charmed tourists taking photos, must bear in mind the congestion and delay to go to work.

A distinct form of economic impacts, rather seen in later phases of the tourism area, is the deterioration of destination image. The authentic image is harmed by the over visitation of destinations and the bad visitor experience (Peeters et al., 2018). Furthermore, the image yielding to be negative affects the coming tourist types and their activities there.

1.5.2. Environmental Impacts

The carrying capacity has been often linked to the environmental impacts that excessive tourism damages (Goodwin, 2017) and the tragedy of commons (Hardin, 1968) is genuinely exemplified by overtourism. The growing depletion of natural resources has a major influence on the environment, which is widely covered in the Club of Rome's Limits to Growth report (Meadows et al., 1972) and contemporarily by United Nations (2015)'s Sustainable Development Goals to promote responsible tourism in the contemporary world. Tourists' usage of resources, so-called tourism's invisible burden, costs almost eight or ten

times greater than the local consumption of energy, water, food and emissions (Gössling & Peeters, 2015). Broadly, this brings about the pollution of air, water, noise and issues with solid waste disposal.

The increased visitation overwhelms the infrastructure and may cause the degradation of infrastructure and facilities. Furthermore, the cultural-historical sites and natural resorts are more fragile against overcrowding. Visual pollution, congestion and overcrowding at natural-cultural are other common impacts. In case of going over the limit or mismanagement, the recovery for the environmental degradation might no longer be possible as in the case of Cinque Terre with its eroded hiking paths (Tozzi, 2017). Whereas the case of Bled can serve as a success story in terms of protecting the environment from collapse with its 2009-2020 Municipal Development Strategy (Peeters et al., 2018). Different from classic touristic areas, fragile destinations like deserts or tropical forests require an original strategy plan to conserve their nature and this is evident in the case of Everest and Antarctica as severe climate conditions cause slow waste degradation (Wall, 2019).

1.5.3. Social Impacts

Last but not least for bringing the tourismphobia and overtourism phenomena into prominence, excessive visitation and access to the tourism destinations create social impacts there. The residential areas or even the character of a destination itself might undergo a change. Much of the current literature on overtourism reports two main cases as a high ratio of tourists to local residents and the drastic rise of second homeowners or foreigners in terms of demography. With the tourists outnumbering locals, the marginalisation of residents becomes more visible as urban tourism starts to show up in the uncharted backstreets of the

city. While tourists might be looking for exotic experiences or just trying to frame the attractions as a photo, it may result in a form of hostility for tourists as the residents are disturbed in their residential areas or the congestion can interfere with their daily life. Furthermore, this is not only valid for the resident-tourist relationship but also “tourists complain about tourists” as so in Dublin or Isle of Skye (Peeters et al., 2018). Again, the supply side might, quite likely, respond to the invasion of tourists and the sector’s commercial interest leads to producing more activities and events appealing to the tourists and shaping architecture for tourist accommodation and recreational areas. The privatisation of public space comes as another stress multiplier for residents’ discontentment like in Barcelona and Berlin (Milano, 2017). Meanwhile, the residents struggle to find apartments due to the rental inflation; and even worse, the householder with a commercial mindset can evict tenants permanently (Conte, 2018) or during the high season. Along with the real estate problem, the handover of supply from everyday services to touristic ones causes the relocation of locals neighbouring or further afield. The gentrification pressure imposes an extra burden on city infrastructure and locals commuting every day like “a circle that never ends” (Koens, Postma, & Papp, 2018). The destinations with increasing temporary residents might have job security and diversity problems (Canosa, Graham & Wilson, 2019) in a lack of full-time residents and skilled labour.

In the second case of foreigners replacing locals, the destination demography gets changed and internationalised. However, the city begins to lose not only its real inhabitants but also its identity. The latter leads to degraded authenticity (Lalicic & Weismayer, 2017) and erosion of cultural identity as well as changing values and traditions. In addition, the

destination can receive misbehaving tourists, resulting in an increase in criminality and diminished safety (Peeters et al., 2018).

It is true that the locals might be also content with tourism since the perception of tourism impacts is one of the main decisive factors for their happiness (Jordan & Spencer & Prayag, 2019). Yet, it is undeniable that locals in the destinations infected with overtourism hold negative perceptions against tourism as observed in Barcelona with 4 times more people having negativity between the years 2015 and 2017 (Milano, 2017). Across these impacts, overtourism destination becoming the ultimate weapon shows, once again, the dichotomy of overtourism by killing itself.

For these three negative impacts, cities are not always the weakest destinations against overtourism; rather, coastal, island, and rural historic sites are (Peeters et al., 2018). On account of that commonality, the most exemplary and the global icon as overtourism destination is Venice (Van Der Borg et al., 1996; Minoia, 2017; Visentin & Bertocchi, 2019), the most serene republic of its time La Serenissima, as a coastal and historic island embracing tourists. Despite Venice's tourism role attracting and hosting millions of visitors per year, the tourism growth became a threat for itself rather than a gain (UNESCO, 2015). Though, its evolving inhabitants are paying the real costs and taking the burden together with the land or sealand. Therefore, in the following part, the case of Venice as overtourism destination will be examined first through economic history starting from the Medieval Ages to provide a better framework for the tourism area development.

2. Economic History of Tourism in Venice

“Everyone plays a role, and the role changes. The key to understanding Venetians is rhythm—the rhythm of the lagoon, the rhythm of the water, the tides, the waves. . . . The rhythm in Venice is like breathing...”

(Berendt, 2005).

Marcello’s sentences set forth the sense of Venice effect in the book of Berendt (2005)’s *The City of Falling Angels*. The rest of their narration explicates that Venetian rhythm is not calibrated on any motor vehicle instead to the Adriatic along with the tides. The city lives through the high and low water and the lagoon accommodates itself to this change and evolution. However, in the modern-day, this Venice effect substitutes itself to the Venice syndrome (Pichler et al., 2013) by changing its character over time owing to tourism saturation. In fact, the media often tend to call and portray this “Sinking City” or the “Death of Venice” in articles or videos as the main character is attractive and the tourism crisis is in evidence. Referring to the ever-growing tourism issue and its depopulation pressure, even a fake funeral was staged by a group of locals next to Rialto Bridge (Donadio, 2009). Considering how Settis (2014) frames the death of cities in three ways, the situation corresponds to the third one, that people lose their local identity, forget their memories like a fish itself and become their own greatest enemy as an ultimate weapon. As no citizen wants that, the group of residents on the protest shattered the coffin by saying “Venice, you aren’t dead, you’re just tired.” (Donadio, 2009).

It is obvious that the world’s most fragile city suffers from the burden of overtourism in terms of economic, environmental, and social impacts. In order to understand how the

Venice syndrome came out, the following part will unfold the economic history of Venice as overtourism destination with key points throughout its tourism area evolution.

2.1. A Stopover for Pilgrims

The city of Venice is not composed only of a single island itself; instead, the Venetian lagoon hosts almost 120 small islands and 400 bridges connecting spaces to each other. Although Venice is mostly known as the historic centre, the surrounding islands contributed a lot to Venice gaining its tourism role. Nevertheless, the historic centre was the place where everything started. After the fall of the Western Roman Empire, Venice attracted refugees, especially patrician ones from Padua, from surrounding cities, and Venice's legendary foundation happened in the 4th century. At that time, some islands like Burano in the lagoon were not inhabited but would be home to fishers, salt production, and most importantly glassmaking in the future. Because of the threat of Franks, the year 810 made the ancestral Venetians move towards Rivo Alto, which means 'high bunk' and is called Rialto in modern times, from the frontier island Malamocco. The city's initial role was to provide safety to the people of the Most Serene Republic of Venice, La Serenissima, for their wealth. Two decades later, the relic of Saint Mark's body was placed to rest close to Doge's Palace and the building of the doge's chapel started. San Marco was the heart of governmental and religious affairs, Rialto was the commercial and financial hub, and Arsenal was the complex for the shipyard and naval power, which provided trade control in the Mediterranean and brought foreign merchandise.

The maritime republic becoming the centre of trade started to improve their relations with the Mediterranean and overseas. Thanks to this power that made them the queen of the

Adriatic, the early Venetians learned glass production from Syria and mastered themselves enough to become a sector, which would be one of the main products to sell to their tourists (Museo del Vetro, 2020). At the end of the 13th century, the government decided to move the glass production furnaces to Murano in case of fire and isolate them to keep the secrets of glassmaking secure (Berendt, 2005).

Venice, becoming the queen of the Adriatic, was also wearing Europe's cultural shoes, so merchants, artisans or ambassadors on the road to the East or back to their homes like Britain, France or Germany were spending some time in Venice. Mostly these visitors passing by were there for trade and political reasons or maybe for the women. Either they just came to witness the allure of Venice and enjoy the food, yet the lack of written records or diaries detains us to say that. Nevertheless, these visitors were not the ones for tourism in the city as they have other priorities to follow (Davis & Marvin, 2004).

Heading toward the customers of Venice, namely tourists, the first candidates could be the Middle Age pilgrims on their way to the sacred Levant. While going to Holy Land, many were fascinated by the ambience of the city and stayed longer than they planned or even more than Jerusalem. Besides becoming a holiday with an abundance of goods, foods, and other life essentials at affordable prices sometimes cheaper than in their lands, Venice was also a holy site for them as Venetian noble merchants returned with relics and sacred objects from Constantinople or the Levant (Tafur & Letts, 2004). These collections were making Venice so meaningful for its visitors that some of them were eager to touch the small objects or holy bodies to feel more blessed. The city tried to benefit from this flow of pilgrims or visitors in the best manner of spending on accommodation, food, entertainment and other tourism

supplies. There was an intention among Venetians not to rush tourists to their destination and keep them more (Lane, 1973). After realising the potential of these visitor flows, the Senate in 1229 ruled to regulate the ships' load capacity and the *tolomazi*'s (tourist guides) mission, number and taxation. The *tolomazi* were to be limited to eight with official licences, to be present every day at San Marco and Rialto, and in return commissioned 5 percent per visitors' booking to the East (Casola, 1907, p. 41). Yet, *tolomazi* were more than that by offering help to exchange money, accompany them around the city and organise their lodging in the city. Hereby, their actual role and mediating for pilgrims' lodging were strongly intertwined. Later, the inns of the city in which the emerging tourism was becoming more evident were recorded under the *osterie pubbliche*. Not only that, the goods and services of these properties were controlled by the state because of the prosperous tourism activities (Davis & Marvin, 2004). The *tolomazi* as tourism offices were the competent authority to report the customer dissatisfaction of pilgrims just like today's ABTA (Denke, 2011).

Venetians, aware of how important it is to see visitors off to their homelands as content people, took advantage of word-of-mouth marketing. Treating visitors in a good manner and providing them entertainment raised the reputation of the holy business centre and an image as the world's wealthiest and most magnificent city (Lane, 1973). The far-famed Venice Carnival, which began to be celebrated with the republic's victory over Aquileia, was celebrated in the streets of the city and mainly in Saint Mark's Square. Based on Tafur & Letts (2004)'s narratives, the carnival and the attending Venetians with their dresses and rich jewels were simply magnificent attractions for the visitors. Though the drawing room of Europe, Saint Mark's Square, was home to more festivals in April, May, and

June organised respectively Saint Mark's Day, the Feast of the Ascension, Corpus Christi. Later, Venetians who are experts in making avenues to fit in entertaining forms combined them into a 15-day festival (Davis & Marvin, 2004). Another point that pleased the city's guests during their visits was the prostitutes. Although their number was not as in abundance as in other cities of that time, it was very possible that the visitor would be approached by a "drest in red and yellow, like Tulips, with their breasts open, and their faces painted a foot deep" person (Misson, 1714). Venice's red-light district was located behind Rialto market and the designated houses were regulated by the state for licensed prostitution in the 1360s. During the carnival times, many of them filled Saint Mark's Square as if they owned and even they were doing their job thanks to the liberty of masks. During the next two centuries, the trade overflowed out of their ghetto and some of them established shops in other avenues (Davis & Marvin, 2004).

St. Mark Square or Piazza San Marco, the only *piazza* of the city and other smaller squares are called *campo*, was home to festivals and many other events also in the past. It was noticed that the Venetian festivals were appreciated and attracted by the pilgrims, especially after the pilgrim boom in the 1380s, they were so attentive to the foreigners that this was accompanied by the boost of Venice's reputation in returning visitors' and pilgrims' lands. In order to impress the pilgrims and establish more bonds with them, a 15-day extended festival was extended to last around one and half months. While the city was adapting to the potential demand, Davis and Marvin (2004) point this out as a tendency of Venetians' eagerness to sacrifice their culture for the sake of tourism. In 1407, the Senate opted to expand the show and the great council, aristocratic people, and the priests were included to the ceremony.

Almost five decades later, the succession happened to include the all-important people from the *scuole grandi* (great schools) and all levels of priests (Casola, 1907). Another reason for pilgrims to come to Piazza San Marco was to register for the Jaffa galleys or see the availability as the galleys were based in front of the church (Davis & Marvin, 2004). Aside from these, pilgrims visited Piazza San Marco to show their respects to Venetian rulers and even some of them were lucky enough to tour the Palazzo Ducale. From the residents' perspective in terms of social usage rather than festive life, Piazza San Marco was the spot for evening promenades and hosting the food market every Thursday (Tafur & Letts, 2004). Venice's only piazza, which mostly serves the tourists today, was more commonly in use by the nobility and residents at that time.

The pilgrims passing by were facing a shortage of accommodation availability; therefore, the aristocracy was obliged to stay in osterie like everyone else (Fabri, 1893). Venetians, who awakened to the potential by virtue of high demand, developed the first system of Airbnb at that time and there were more than five thousand private houses hosting visitors (Museo Correr, n.d.). For these years, it is difficult to document the visitors' diaries, nevertheless, Canon Pietro Casola's travel notes describe "so much has been said and written . . . that it appears to me there is nothing left to say" as a tourist (Casola, 1907).

2.2. From the Pilgrims Package Tourism to Grand Tour

Venice provided an onward journey and established itself as a pilgrimage destination with a number of attractions to keep the pilgrims busy and take their money while they were waiting for their sailing to Jaffa. The Venetians were charging the pilgrims for a package tour from sailing to Jaffa and return that was enriched with different routes. These routes included

stopover excursions to other cities or harbours such as Cairo and there was something for everyone. Until here, the tourism sector in Venice underwent a period of phenomenal growth.

The Ottomans' conquering of Palestine in 1516 undermined Venetians' pilgrim tourism trade in the following years. The tourism business of Venetians took a pause due to the fight between Turks and Venetians. The Mediterranean waters were not safe for Venetian commercial ships sailing to the Levant and so the most valuable components of this journey's participants, which were most willingly English and German pilgrims, abolished the tradition. The pilgrims re-routed their holy trips to Rome and that caused the pilgrim tourism business to take down their shutters and the last ship set sail to the Holy Land around 1580 (Casola, 1907). Though, this tourism phase provided a ready tourism infrastructure, tourism services and rich experience for the upcoming tourism destination phase, especially for Grand Tourists.

In 1575, one of the worst enemies of that time hit the city which was believed to be because of the merchant galleys. The plague. The city lost a third of its population and tried to recover from it as soon as possible. The promise for the end of the plague was to construct a church to honour the Redeemer, the Redentore. The end of the plague was celebrated with the *Festa del Redentore* and it turned out to be a tradition becoming the Venetians' preferred party rather than Carnival with its wide range of participants.

In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, some travellers from Europe like William Wey or Michel Montaigne had been to Venice and they described the city in their writings. Besides, the concrete complete guide for the whole city was created by Francesco Sansovino in 1581 as a book titled "*Venetia, città nobilissima*". Such kinds of publications helped those

who were curious about what to expect from the city and the fame of Venice to increase its trending popularity (Davis & Marvin, 2004).

One of the first things coming to the modern tourists' minds when mentioned is, of course, the traditional Venetian rowing boat *gondola*. The private boatman gondoliers grew in number during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries just like the upsurge of the private room renters. Being aware of the most likely needs of tourists, the gondoliers were meeting the demand and even their trading activity was dissuading the shipbuilders and working-class in Arsenale because of the gondoliers' substantial earnings despite having almost identical working hours (Dumont, 1696).

At the end of the sixteenth century, tourism in Venice started to come back with the arrival of Grand Tourists from northern and north-western Europe. Venice was one of the crucial destinations within the scope of art and architecture in general (Lane, 1973), culture and civility in studies for youth (Davis & Marvin, 2004). Considering the entire route and particularly the other attractions in Italy, Davis and Marvin (2004) indicate that Venice does not offer as much as other destinations when it takes into account that the food culture consists of fish and its humid weather. Yet, one of the key points making Venice interesting and unique was its topography as still today. After arriving in the city differently than today due to the absence of a connecting bridge and railroad, it was time for Grand Tourists to find accommodation and head for investigating the mystery.

Although the carnivals and festivities were held in other European cities, the visitors were continuing to arrive even in cold winter. The multinational character of the Venetian Carnival and the amusement it provided for its curious visitors kept its rhythm at a high level

and filled the *piazza* with strangers. The carnival was witnessing fancy costumes made with various kinds of rare fabrics, most presumably to show off Venetian traders' goods that they brought from the east (de Blainville, 1743). *Le Città in Festa* (The Cities in Festivity) was in evidence also at those times with a rich event calendar that had only forty days break from January to June. So as to give more reasons to the visitors out of the two-week carnival time, the previous continuous two-month festivity was prolonged to carnival-like six months with the diverse festival for Corpus Christi (Keyssler, 1751).

While tourism in Venice started to gain momentum, illegal gambling even taking place in the streets was another issue for the government. The Great Council of Venice agreed to license the private gambling room *ridotto*, which will operate during the Carnival period, to take a pie from its wealthy tourists' spending, particularly Grand Tourists'. These private gambling houses were attracted by mostly nobles and wealthy foreigners making the city of Venice richer, even so, there were some *ridotti* for common people in the peripheral areas. The familiar routine in Venetian casinos was to wear a carnival mask, which made the experience more authentic and mysterious. The *ridotti* in question did not only function as a private gambling house but also provided a ground for artful performances, political conversations, love affairs, and prostitution. Having put in evidence the relevance of tourists and the gambling houses, Venetian nobles who were the only people allowed to enter without the mask and with helpful advisors had the exclusive role of gamechanger to declare who was cheating or winning. Even so, some Venetian aristocrats failed on the table (Keyssler, 1751).

What made Venice alluring for Grand Tourists was the operas and theatres organised in several houses during the Carnival times. The operas, well praised by the tourists, were

staging the best Italian artists of their time at the price of around seven or eight times higher than the regular opera tickets (Davis & Marvin, 2004). The potential of operas to contribute to economic activity was supported by the city council and the number of operas reached up to 388 until the eighteenth century. On the other hand, there were also esteemed writers and composers who made the operas stand out with their valuable artworks such as Carlo Goldoni. Not even a century later, there was a large rise of dissatisfaction among the audience with the Venetian opera vis a vis European opera (de Blainville, 1743). During his Grand Tour in the last quarter of the eighteenth century, Johann Wolfgang Von Goethe attended some operas in the city of Venice which could “be only compared to itself” in his words; for instance, he appreciated the comedy performance *Le Baruffe Chiozzotte*, unlike the Crébillon’s *Electra* (von Goethe et al., 1962). The interest downturn in operas led *ridotti* to come on a strong option for tourists’ amusement (Davis & Marvin, 2004).

As it was heretofore, during the seventeenth century and onwards, courtesans were a crucial element of the tourism economy as many travellers mentioned in their diaries. Even though the city’s weather in the wintertime was not so appealing for tourists, the inclusion of the destination in their itineraries was derived from the access to the sex trade in Venice. “Liberty to wear a mask” along the carnival was consolidating the women in the city, and successively the notion of “Liberty of Venice”. The liberty of the city was also powering the liberty of its tourists when they were in the territory, so that, Coryate (1905) described the demand of tourists to Venetian courtesans who were famous in Europe. Unfavourable to declare it might be for many, the interest in pleasure tourism was also apparent in a great number of flocking tourists (Saint-Didier, 1680). Different from other European cities, the

masked beauty was imaging the carnival as erotic because anyone might end up with a woman who was from the wealthy upper class or a Venetian noblewoman. In fact, a gondola journey could route to the courtesan houses (de Blainville, 1743). The gondolier, who would be the bridge to Murano to increase the glass sales in the next centuries, could “presently carry you to some Curtezans house, who will best pay him for bringing her Customers, as if there were no other recreation but only with wemen” (Moryson, 1907). That activity could be a good source of revenue with fiscal policy, and it happened so that the state started to tax courtesans. The tax revenue direct from those courtesans could compensate for the lessening galley trade (Moryson, 1907).

Venice, the arrival point of coffee in Europe, also contributed significantly to the cafe culture. Of course, Piazza San Marco was the starting point of the journey in this regard as well, and Cafe Florian, which opened in 1720, is the world's oldest cafe that has remained open until now. However, it also became a meeting and socialising place for locals and tourists, which later overflowed into the square and became the basis for the culture of outdoor dining.

Just as it is today, Venice was an international hub or “contact zone” for traders or nobles coming from the East and West. Behind the Alps, European culture was turning into a more oriental form enriched by different ethnicities of Persians, Jews, Turks, and Greeks in the Adriatic frontiers (Evelyn, 1879). In the 26th chapter of Voltaire’s (1998) *Candide*, the demand for the carnival and the foreigners’ arrival to the city for that purpose were reflected by the supper with six strangers in their inn. The option to give up organising the carnival was seeming so difficult due to the high number of tourists, yet this was costing The Most

Serene Republic of Venice by bankrupting its wealthy nobles in *ridotti*. However, the decline of trade for the maritime republic withheld from taking more firm actions to be able to keep its tourism revenue for the nation (von Archenholtz, 1785).

Since the fifteenth century, Europe's one of the wealthiest regions with the great urbanisation on the mainland was also well-esteemed with its wool and silk manufacturing. The industry in Venetian territory primarily produced a good quality of fabric to export thanks to the "business and technological know-how" and the trade power of the Republic was a key facilitator to be dominant to be the capital of the fashion in the territory. However, the steady decline of the government culminated in a crisis affecting the whole urban industry (Panciera, 2006).

2.3. The Fall of Golden-Winged Lion

Until 1797, Venice existed as La Serenissima Repubblica (The Most Serene Republic) without "syndromes" providing security and welfare to its citizens. Thanks to its dominance in commercial activities in the Adriatic, the city's economy is not mainly based on tourism and visitors were coming more for business reasons. Nevertheless, gambling, masked balls, prostitution and corruption were taking place in the Venetian space with the late developments and the weakening maritime republic. While Napoleon's army was on the way to Venice, the last Council of Ten resolved itself as the republic was no longer able to repel the enemy. A world trembling with reverence heard of the death of the first city-state in Europe. The great Venetian treasury and precious objects were plundered by the army. Many paintings enriching Venice's long-lasting culture were sent to Musée Napoleon, today's Louvre (Berendt, 2005).

Previously, romanticism was not the theme of the city. The fall of the republic brought such an atmosphere while the city was en route to “living off tourism alone” (Davis & Marvin, 2004). Well-known artists and authors such as Lord Byron, Henry James, Charles Dickens, and Thomas Mann visited the fallen Venice; hence their references were more about melancholy, romance and mystery (Berendt, 2005). Another famous one was John Ruskin with *The Stones of Venice* which was the outcome of his eleven trips to Venice between 1835 and 1888. His description of the Venice landscape shows the well-preserved architecture for centuries (Ruskin, 1853). The book also reflects the decay in the romantic depiction and some scholars state that the city’s surrender to “hedonism and dissipation” (Berendt, 2005).

Napoleon’s ascendancy in Venice did not last so long, yet the maritime republic’s fruitful economy and wealth were looted by the French Republic. Indeed, there was uncertainty about whether it would be the Republic of Venice or not; however, what was certain that it would not be the maritime republic again as the Venetian navy and the heart of the industry Arsenale were destroyed. Almost no more than two decades later, Austrians took control of Venice and they tried to do so for the culture (Lane, 1973).

After losing its capital and administrative function, Venice was not able to sustain its festive culture in the ceremonial space of Piazza San Marco. Instead, the Austrian ruling came up with an innovative event for the piazza and the square hosted evening musical bands to sustain the social life culture led by the Austrian troops. Although these activities got reactions from some Venetians, as a matter of course, the concerts and the social life in piazza created a coherence later (Davis & Marvin, 2004). Venice with its mainland and other provinces in the further field was rich with raw materials and the production for the regional

market as well as the strategic seaport with a great source of income; therefore, Austria financially exploited the area without investing back in the economy. Coupled with the growing political and economic tensions in 1848, the civil unrest led to political upheaval by wisely catering for the needs of the lower class and promoting the law for the bourgeoisie under the leadership of Manin (Ginsborg, 1979). During the Austrian domination and later the rebellion, the traditional beach tourism in Lido became a nostalgia and leisure tourism in Lido was overtly prohibited because of the Austrian military danger (Davis & Marvin, 2004).

In 1860, the building of the Santa Lucia station began to connect the city with Milan via Padova and Verona. A year later, the Church of Santa Lucia was razed to create space for the station and its courtyard. However, it was the Austrian government that initiated the construction of the railway net and an underwater tube idea submerged to Lido from the mainland, which did not come to the realisation. Two decades later, another industrial development was the construction of a flour mill on Giudecca island and 24 hours non-stop working factory would provide a large amount of production for Europe and a great deal of employment for the city's economy.

Soon after in 1866, the fading *ancien régime* gave way to the unification of the Kingdom of Italy and the journey to becoming modern Venice started then. That century so far did not bring so much wealth, rather, it swept away Venice's political and economic power as well as Austria's failure to address the economic crisis and high taxation. In addition to the loss of the naval arsenal and maritime commerce, the reduction in the trade with Trieste led up to the inclination to the Lombard market (Laven, 2011). As the demographic and economic downward continued, the spending by the city and Venetian nobility remained low.

The demand for gondola rides tumbled and it turned into the demand for tourists by the gondoliers, who were chastised by the Grand Tourists for their rudeness. The disappointing tourism profitability for gondoliers, compared to the old times, was noticeable also regarding the fair exchange rates as stated in the travel writings. Henry James, who was hosted by Palazzo Barbaro's *piano nobile* during his work on his novels, referred to the overflow of travellers and the popularity of collections about Venice (James, 1908). Having said that, the city left some travellers and nobles disappointed as well as the legendary gondola “as an inky, rusty old canoe” that takes their customers to the piazza for promenade. Austrian way of musical concerts kept its tradition for those attractive promenades to keep the social life, yet locals and tourists distinctively had different ways of acting except for gazing at each other (Twain, 2007).

The disagreement between Malamocco and Venice communes unbent, and that opened the doors back for the fashionable beach tourism by encouraging the capital for luxury tourism. In the next century, the unspoiled nature would evolve into a seasonal international tourism resort supported by the facilities of hotels, restaurants, and the most important eleven-kilometre-long Adriatic coast. The organisation *Società dei Bagni* for bathing moved the centre of mass tourism to Lido from the 1890s until World War II. Contrary to historic island's exceptional topography with limits, Lido was the ideal place to address the modern needs of facilities and amenities, as so the emergence of two major tourist hubs: the Hotel des Bains in 1900 and the Excelsior in 1906. Eventually, they would be called the *Compagnia Italiana Grandi Alberghi* or CIGA for short (Marchini, 1907; Zannini, 2014).

Even though the Venetian summers are unbearable and humid, bathing tourism in Lido created new and attractive seasonal tourism for summer.

In 1895, the first international art exhibition *Biennale* was staged to attract artists from all over the world and the attendance numbers doubled in 1908 from 224.000 (Favero & Moretti, 2017). *Biennale* aiming to promote cultural tourism was first communicated through the city's outstanding image of *Le Città in Festa* with Venetian festivals, parties, and different performances (La Biennale di Venezia, 1996, p. 17).

The city with urban spatial limits was not so compatible to meet the dimensional needs of the second industrial revolution and the infrastructure needs of immigrant inflow to the city. Following that, the demand was pushing a surge in the rents, and what is more, the waste disposal and the discharge of sewage into the canals accompanying the “urban decay” was triggering the sanitization problems (Favero & Moretti, 2017). Sooner, the romantic city becoming an ideal place to die made a name as *Death in Venice* amid the cholera epidemic (Mann, 2010). On one side the perished Venetians were suffering from the epidemic outbreak due to the low hygiene and were quarantined at Sacca-Sessola; on the other side tourists including Thomas Mann were still flocking to the historic centre and Lido owing to the government's concealing policy (Bosworth, 2014). In spite of the higher birth rate, Venice had the highest mortality rate in Italian territory at the turn of the century (Favero, 2014).

As it happened, the local government's strategy to keep the *élite* tourism was under criticism, which is the one side of the coin and the other side is pointed out below. On Marinetti et al.'s (1914) manifestation, tourists “foolishly contemplate, being happy to rot in their dirty water, to endlessly enrich the Company of the Grand Hotels” as CIGA hotel chain. The futurists' standing point was strongly against focusing on the picturesque image of the

city to promote tourism along with the decay coupled with the overly numerous and destitute inhabitants (Favero, 2014). From the same standpoint, Venice to “Save Venice” itself as the city withstood the decaying for ages, would be still there a century later (Berendt, 2005, p. 293).

Tourism gaining momentum after the unification of Italy was again, this time by a global issue, disrupted and the city was suddenly abandoned by the summer tourists because of the First World War. The threat of Austrian bombardment prompted the closure of port and industrial units and later the catastrophe of Caporetto in 1917 created a fear to run for cover in other cities causing Venice to depopulate to 40.000 inhabitants in just a year (Favero & Moretti, 2017).

2.4. How Did Venice Become Venice?

After facing the Austrian forces, the 1920s was the beginning of the golden age of consumer tourism (Davis & Marvin, 2004), and that would be lately realised by Venetians when the tour buses poured their East European tourists, who got a chance to travel abroad, into Piazzale Roma (Zannini, 2014). The whole way to be modern Venice as an overtourism destination, which is elaborated on that part, was a result of tourism and cultural tourism policies followed especially after the First World War as a showcase of “radical transformation of the perception of the city island of Venice, which then became a city unlike any other” (Favero & Moretti, 2017). The developments fostering tourism growth would first turn Venice into a city of “museums and cultural venues” and later a vibrant museum itself (Calcagno et al., 2013; Bosworth, 2014).

As discussed in Butler’s (2006) Tourism Area Life Cycle, the rejuvenation of the tourism area is possible if the facilities and services are adapted to or enlarged following the emerging tourism growth. Regarding the ready Venetian tourism capacity with long years of

experience, we may say then that twentieth-century developments and tourism policies which supported the facilitators of overtourism rejuvenated the decline of tourism growth that came with the fall of the republic, war etc., only if analysed in a longer timeline as in that study. The first phase to be the city of museums and cultural events, before being a vibrant museum, was the post-war period as Zannini (2014) distinguished the tourism growth in Venice into two stages.

Meanwhile the first world war and epidemic made the conditions tougher for the inhabitants, and the elaboration of Porto Marghera was approved in 1917 in a way to promote Greater Venice (Bosworth, 2014). The annexation of Marghera, to be followed by Palestrina in 1923, enabled the “reallocation of the Venetian working population to the new industrial area” to open more room for tourism (Favero & Moretti, 2017). Together with the urban policy to revive the city’s image, fascist tourism and cultural policies played a key role to shape the city’s future in the 1920s and 1930s under the *Progetto Venezia* (Project Venice). Behind the propaganda of that time, there were two influential business minds: Giuseppe Volpi, who was the head of CIGA hotels with his media power of *Gazzetta di Venezia* and introduced electricity to Venice, and Vittorio Cini, who was also from Venetian Group to accompany Volpi with his strong industrialist mindset. Despite their strong “human reclamation” propaganda to offer employment to the poor residents (Favero, 2014), two politicians were not so welcomed by Venetians or at least based on their family expectations (Berendt, 2005, p. 69). In contrast to futurists' criticism as mentioned above, their focus was so peculiarly on Venice that Volpi and Cini’s projects fed the facilitators of mass tourism and they were able to attract different industries by land reclamation. Ironically, one of these industries in Marghera built cruise ships which brought millions of hit-and-run tourists to the lagoon every year.

In 1926, Ruskin's (1853) vapid Mestre was annexed to the city of Venice and the connected suburb would perform better to support the destination's accommodation demand (Bosworth, 2014). On the other hand, promoting Lido and CIGA projects made the destination landscape equipped with all required facilities to draw the prosperous customers. For instance, the design of golf and tennis facilities to provide human entertainment took shape already before 1920. The tourist airport of Lido, so-called for private parties and exclusive dinners, was built in 1926 (Davis & Marvin, 2004). Another connection making the ancient city easily accessible peculiarly to the modern excursionists and turning a satellite of the two suburbs of Mestre and Marghera was the construction of *Ponte della Libertà* in 1933 (Ferraro, 2012).

To make the city a mass cultural venue, the fascist regime financed institutions and artists by bringing art exhibitions and events into life. For the sake of renaissance revival but transcending the elitism, several strategies were employed such as: excluding the bureaucrats, involving the existing institutions or organising new art festivals. Volpi paid great attention to the tourism facilities and accommodation sector to integrate into the festival and the administration worked on the train and touristic deals to attract more visitors (Favero & Moretti, 2017). By this way, Venice International Music Festival was established in 1930's September with its low gainfulness. Just after in 1932, a new pavilion 'Venezia Pavilion' was introduced in addition to the Biennale to display the Venetian handicrafts such as glassworks, lace, and luxury objects by offering Venetian experience to everyone (Stone, 1999). Coincidentally, the period between 1930 and 1950 witnessed the innovative glassblowers with the knowledge of different techniques for centuries (Berendt, 2005, p. 120) as an outcome of the learning effect. On the heels of the Venezia Pavilion in the same year, the International Film Festival was inaugurated to be organised at CIGA's Hotel Excelsior Lido;

thus, beach tourism was combined with the cinema culture. A great amount of publicity even with Hollywood stars was deployed to reach the middle-class dwellers. The screening tickets were quite expensive for the visitors, however, the festival attendance reached 60.000 in 1937. During that period, Venice became a focal point for camera lenses and many films were made to shine the city as a cinema city, which was just an interim period not to begin over (Favero & Moretti, 2017). Of course, the Venetian culture was harvesting its rich history and it was time to bring back its theatre culture; therefore, the Biennale expanded its touristic activity with Theatre Festival in 1934 to emphasise the Venice-themed performances, especially with Goldoni (Stone, 1999, p. 190). All these developments prove that the fascist regime's cultural policies got more attention to the city by intensifying international tourism.

Other than private interests and reasons to move to Venice, some state institutes and lots of state personnel relocated to Venice between 1943 and 1945. The roaring enthusiasm for Marghera brought also common housing problems as the part of workers were coming from neighbouring areas. To ease the issue, Eugenio Miozzi's plan was to construct and allocate more social houses to the residents for economic growth. Notwithstanding, this was not the case due to the interruption of the Second World War and the issue surged with the rush to the island. Against the bombing of Northern Italy, Venice was safe home to the people from the mainland opposite to the First World War as if the glamour city was "untouchable" (Favero & Moretti, 2017). As the migration of refugees persisted, Venice reached a record population of 174.808 inhabitants in 1951, according to ISTAT statistics. Undoubtedly, this would be followed by the exodus in the years ahead.

Lido was the main character of tourism replacing Venice for the period of 1890 and 1950, namely from the consolidation of tourist facilities in Lido to the post-Second World War. Not only from the viewpoint of space, the tourism altered but also in terms of tourism

seasonality, which the continuous festival high season during the maritime republic expanded to the summer. However, Lido's beach and culture tourism dominance over Venice lasted until the 1950s (Davis & Marvin, 2004, p. 167). Afterwards, the return of Venice making ground over Lido can be addressed by the use of “*centro storico*” (historic centre) in the 1960s (Bosworth, 2014). Furthermore, the average stay duration dropped year by year.

The overcrowdedness of the city is clearly revealed in Lean's (1955) *Summertime* with overflowing tourists and residents at the city's “living room” Piazza San Marco and the city's traditional contact zone as “half of Venice is in Piazza San Marco” even(t)ings. Yet, the *listòn* social evening promenade culture moved out from the piazza in these years by leaving its seat to the tourists. Many films of the period focused on the fascination of American tourists with Venice and the Venetians' complaints about the tourists and revenue ratio like today's hit-and-run tourists were existent as in one of the glass shopkeeper's statement “but after Venice was not in my shop this afternoon or I would be a rich man”. Furthermore, the romance with tourists by offering a slice of heritage turned into dissatisfaction with the overtourism impacts from the gondolier Bepi to Alberto Sordi talking about Venice Syndrome (Risi, 1958; Pichler et al., 2013).

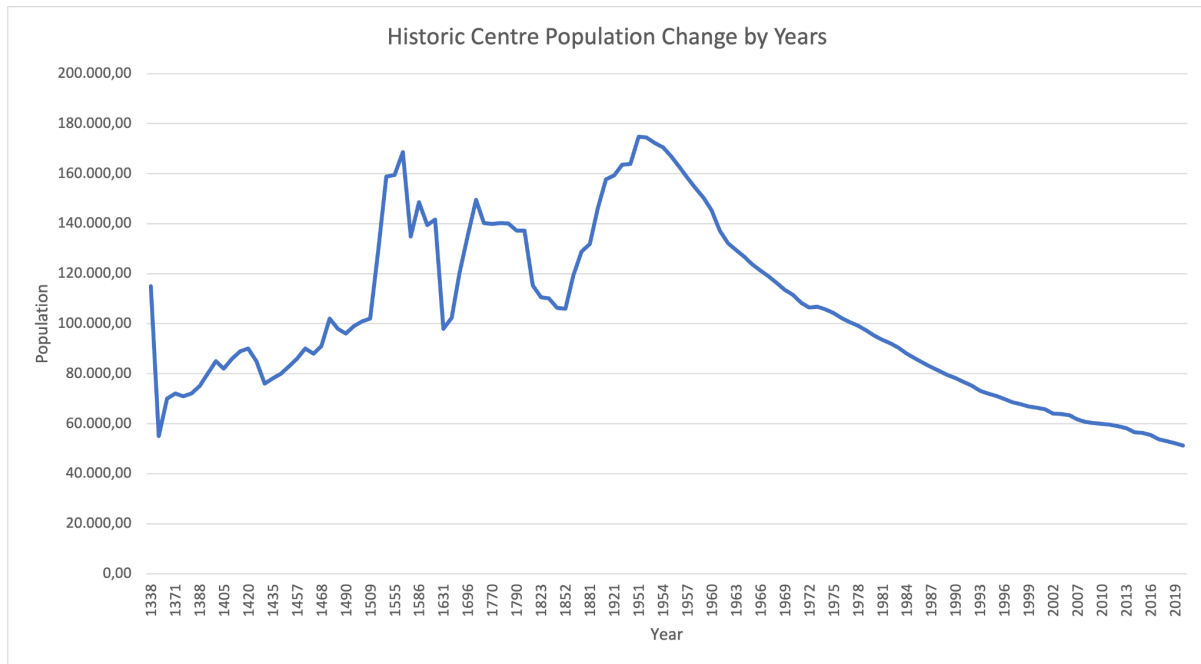


Figure 4. Venice Historic Centre Population Change between 1338 and 2019. Source: Beltrami (1954), Derosas (2002), Favero (2004), ISTAT (<https://demo.istat.it>). Elaborated by the author.

Just in twenty years starting from the population peak of 1951, the exodus of the historic centre went on and on at a dramatic level by gradually losing half of the inhabitants based on the ISTAT data. The exodus to the mainland and population decline was prompted by the increased living costs and a lack of jobs. The impoverishment in the last two millennia left the city deprived of contemporary updates as a matter of limited space (Berendt, 2005, p. 37). The inhabitants who were able to pay the high costs of renovating the houses were staying in the city or the residents were moving to the mainland to buy a new house instead of spending restoration and time owing to the long bureaucracy (Favero, 2004). The historic city's *piazza* and labyrinths, which had been deserted by its residents, were flooded by tourists. The rising stars of the Venetian landscape, luxury hotels were appearing one by one

such as Hotel Cipriani and lately Palazzo dei Dogi with five-star private services and luxury water taxi connections to any point. The new Marco Polo Airport located at Tessera between Venice and seaside resorts was opened in 1961 to attract tourists by facilitating accessibility. Having said that, the next decade would bring forth more hit-and-run tourists with less quality (Davis and Marvin, 2004).

Coinciding with the city's off-season for tourists, the rhythm of Venice was hitting the city as *acqua alta* (high water) starting from November to February. Yet, the seasonality for both tourists and high water got changed around the 1980s due to the policies and climate change (Davis and Marvin, 2004, p. 192). In 1966, extreme and record-high water hit the city and flooding reached 194 centimetres with the terrain underwater and swimming objects. Fortunately, the city was still between the water and the sky yet it was the turning point for Marghera. Rather than being “human reclamation”, Volpi’s Porto Marghera turned into being problem for the lagoon and its ecosystem instead of protecting the ‘old’ (Fincardi & Tabet, 2014). Therefore, the opposition came from the public and the idea of urban development was interrupted by deindustrialization. However, the construction of Petrolchimico 2 was completed in 1972 to generate the nation’s %80 fine chemicals (Zucconi, 2014).

The average overnight stay slumped from three nights in 1949 to two nights in the 1970s indicating the shift from elite to mass tourism (Zannini, 2014). It was Venetians who understood the role of entertainment and culture in the tourism sector already centuries ago, but also outsiders were beginning to notice as well. For instance, the closure of the American embassy in Venice did not result in just a closure but opened a new door for cultural tourism. In the 1970s, Guggenheim served as a stand-in for the American consulate to arrange banquets and then a museum (Berendt, 2005, p. 167). In addition, alfresco eating became a brand-new tourist service, and also a norm even in the distant corners other than in Piazza

San Marco. Replaced by restaurants, the city's stores for its residents would disappear one by one or they were being transformed into souvenir shops. However, beginning in the 1980s, souvenir stores began to stock a salient product not commonly seen in the preceding two centuries: Carnival masks. In 1979, the old tradition of *piazza* Venetian Carnival was born out of the ashes two centuries after Napoleon's arrival in the city. The rebirth of the carnival was an outcome of the effort to regulate the seasonal tourism presence in Venice (Favero, 2014). The essential objective of the carnival was to attract winter tourists and increase the "sedentary and quality tourists" by investing in the whole city, not only in the tourism industry; thus, winter tourism doubled already in the 1970s (Bressanello, 2010, p. 11). Contrary to the local government's tourism policy, mask businesses became the target of anger due to the sacrifice of the city to flourishing tourism. In fact, the revival of the carnival not only altered tourism seasonality but also caused changes in local regulations. The carnival time vandalism might be completely acceptable as a policeman warned a resident "During Carnival, maestro, everyone is a public nuisance. The rules are different. Come back and do this again next week. Then maybe we'll arrest you" (Berendt, 2005).

One of Biennale's flagship events, the Venice Biennale of Architecture was established in 1980 to host the architecture projects in an international atmosphere. With the rise in the usage of private television in daily life, the Venice Film Festival saw a resurgence in popularity, which generated an accommodation capacity problem upon the high demand. As Lido was already occupied by quality tourists, the film festival audience expanded their accommodation search radius all over Venice. The saturation of the hospitality system reached a critical threshold and the conflict erupted in the 1980s (Favero & Moretti, 2017). From the aftermath of the Second World War to 1982, Lido and historic centre tourist

numbers increased a hundred percent, whereas the numbers for the mainland, which was designed to handle mass tourism in terms of hospitality, rose ten times (Zannini, 2014).

Venetians' most famous night, the *Redentore* was glamorised with the fireworks under the decision of the city council in 1978. In the next decade, Venetian power over the festival was diminishing and the stakeholders' effort with additional events along the day was conversely ending up with the exacerbation of the crowds and decline of inhabitants. However, the locals and politicians like Augusto Salvadori sought ways to draw attention to respect the city (Davis & Marvin, 2004). Only two years after UNESCO's designation of Venice and its lagoon as a World Heritage Site in 1987, the local government made a bold move to stage Pink Floyd on the basin of San Marco to be streamed all over the world during the *Redentore*. As a result of the British group's staging at the festival, the ongoing debate over the city's tourist capacity and the control of the masses became intensified. After seeing the effect of the concert on *piazzatte*, the opposition to Expo came from the green movement; however, business minds were in favour of Expo and tourism with better administration. Furthermore, a prominent Socialist Party politician De Michelis was a supporter of the design of Marghera as a science and technology venue and Arsenale as a culture and science park (Bosworth, 2014).

That era in question played a big role in transforming the historic city into a vibrant museum in respect of economic reliance on tourism, depopulation, and policies. The central fascist government with the strong local lobbying, Volpi's projects and cultural tourism policies characterised the city heading toward consumer tourism. Innovating new kinds of events and reviving the traditional festivities helped to attract hit-and-run tourists, and most importantly, employing the carnival back prompted winter tourism. Especially after the 1980s, having various players in the market and internationalisation as a destination impeded

cooperation despite the proximity. Coupled with the tourism saturation, the restoration costs in a space with limits accelerated the exodus to the mainland with better housing conditions.

2.5. A Vibrant Museum: Venezia Non è Disneyland

A new era for the world tourism industry began in the 1990s marked by the low-cost charter flights and the inclusion of the lower middle class in the tourism industry. The same case for Venice was already on the run with many kinds of events to “taste” the culture (Favero & Moretti, 2017) and different segments of tourism services supported by the touristic facilities. The carrying capacity method to evaluate the maximum tourist capacity, which is discussed above in the first part, was calculated as 20.750 daily visitors by Costa and van der Borg (1988) at the time of the study conducted. Once applied the same method by summing up the excursionists with the residential tourist number which is explained by the municipality as definitive data, the number of daily tourists visiting Venice was already over the carrying capacity, alarming the overtourism; and as of 2019, the capacity was overreached four times than ideal.

One of the last draws to increase the tension in Venice against tourists was the cruise ships giving place to see the city from the sea. During the 1990s, the Port of Venice was extensively restored using millions of euros of funds from the national government and the European Union. In the last decade of the century, the port provided a considerable amount of revenue and offered employment. Apart from the material and logistic activity, the cruise industry was also part of that trade, and the ships were getting more massive over time. To enlarge the revenue pie, the Port of Venice took a step to modernise its facilities for the tourists (Davis & Marvin, 2004).

While the historic centre was still continuously losing inhabitants, the marketing image of the city was equally going up in the international arena. A plethora of cultural

projects accompanied the museumification like museums and foundations. In 1995, the island of San Servolo was allocated for the Venice International University (VIU), a body in partnership with international institutions. The story of globalised research institutes is just like Venice, no regular student or degree seeker registers but the university hosts exchange students from seven countries every semester in a come-and-go way. To be close to Venice, the abandoned and crumbling islets of the city drew the attention of a number of possible purchasers due to the proximity (Davis & Marvin, 2004). In 1992, the steady rise of excursionists reached a critical level and the day-trippers composed %83,1 of all visitors (Van Der Borg, 1996). Four years later, Venetians' Fenice Opera House, where they were over than tourists in number, would be destroyed by fire and Americans' Save Venice would mobilise to fund the restoration. Yet, it would take almost seven years to reconstruct it as it was because of the unsolved incidents and the bureaucracy (Berendt, 2005).

As a rule of imbalance to replace disappeared residents with tourists in Piazza San Marco, the Carnival hosted 700.000 people and Woody Allen was a guest with his show in 1996. Corriere della Sera captioned a headline blaming 125 thousand Venetians for the glory of hoteliers and businesses while Carnival's management marketed the event to reconstruct the Theatre La Fenice building. Volkswagen's sponsorship idea for the carnival took advantage of the labyrinth as a Disneyland to make visitors collect the stamps passing by the city's narrow streets (Bressanello, 2010, p. 148). Instead of gazing around, feeding the outnumbering pigeons as a source of fun was one of the interactive experiences in the *piazza*. In 1997, the municipality legislated the "kill-the-pigeons law" to take control of the pigeon overpopulation as it is one of the most common tourist activities, nevertheless, the management of Venice's flying rats pigeon population was not so simple for a tourist city (Davis & Marvin, 2004, p. 77). The internalisation of the city and being exposed to the global

fast consumption culture were obvious also over another animal member of the Venetian cast and crew, rats. A rat poison company had to add a new element ‘plastic’ as a non-food-like fast food to their formula for Venetian rats in addition to pesto, pasta, espresso, Nutella (Berendt, 2005). Given that rats imitate human feeding patterns, the influx of tourists and the loss of inhabitants with the culture were felt to varying degrees.

The initiatives of cultural events in Venice were an important contributor to the shift to be a museum city, and in this direction, another step was taken with the establishment of the Venice Dance Biennale in 1999. Approved by locals, the Venetian way of joy in a couple of shakes “ends up by becoming a tourist attraction”. This is also obvious with the evolution of *Vogalonga* tradition, a long rowing race, which was created in 1975 to hand down the next generations and manifest the motorised boats and their damage to the city. After a short while, the event organised during the high season was outnumbered by foreigners or just tourists and lost its original meaning, rather became a tourist attraction (Davis & Marvin, 2004).

Following the first half of the century's innovation investment by the masters, it was time to reap the fruits of the Murano glass, one of the main tourist products of the city (Berendt, 2005). Though, glass objects dressing shop windows were just a trap for some visitors. To gear up the sales, a broader strategic plan was introduced. The monopoly of the biggest glass producers moved towards collaboration with travel agencies to funnel the customers before tourists arrive at the city and many found themselves in overpriced glass shops (Davis & Marvin, 2004). As seen in Pichler's (2013) documentary, the same system was also employed by the City Council to attract the tourists in San Marco to Murano glass shops, as well. Tourists were transported at no cost, and gondoliers or water taxi drivers were paid back with the commission of glass sales.

Local shops closing one by one were being replaced by the world-known brands en route to the gravity centre of overtourism. The touristification of the landscape forced the local shops to go out of business and new ones were there just for the Venice label with their luxury products to exhibit as a part of the museumification process. Even while the sales of luxury shops such as Louis Vuitton, Verscase or Prada are not directly proportional to the masses of crowds, having their names on tourists flowing calli and taking pride of place is enough to ensure their renown (Davis & Marvin, 2004, p. 99). As a result, the allure of tourism drove the local artisans and daily necessity merchants away, which were replaced with tourist-oriented services.

The Disneyfication process, as a syndrome of continuous tourism development, brought forward the concept of a reservation system, still a matter of debate, for the city. For the first time, the concept was practised between 2002 and 2005 with 180.000 Venice Cards (Van Der Borg, 2017). The City Council's decision brought two versions of the card as Blue and Orange and the difference was the priority access to the museums, public transportation, and public restrooms (New Venice Pass, 2002). Herein, the technological innovation on the destination level with the city cards was the stepping stone to a smart tourism destination (STD). Yet, the organisational management of the concept and the incorporation with the stakeholders would be a challenging part of the concept. Today, the same smart tourism management tool is called as Venezia Unica card primarily in coordination with the mobility system ACTV to manage mass tourism.

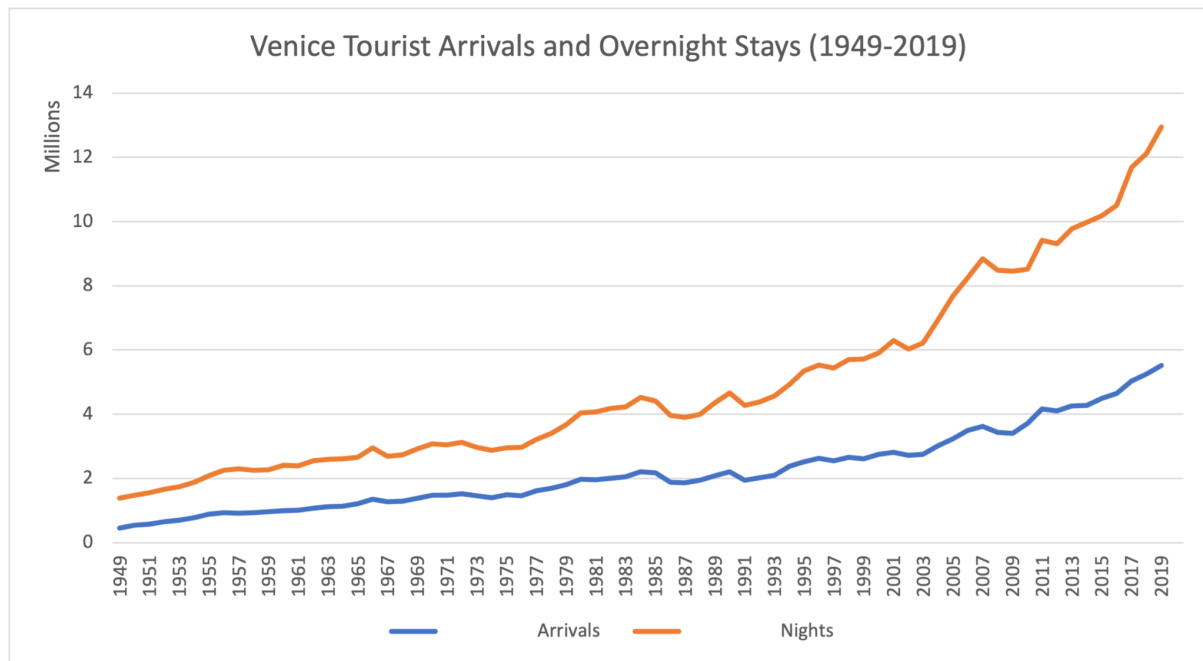


Figure 5. Venice Tourist Arrivals and Overnight Stays Between 1949 and 2019. The data includes the historic centre, Lido and the mainland, excluding Litorale del Cavallino as it became comune in 1999. Data is obtained from Comune di Venezia and elaborated by the author.

The tourism area development of Venice showed great growth in terms of tourist numbers during the 2000s, with total visits surpassing 20 million in 2008. In that growth, the role of spreading information technologies was undeniable, of course, and the *laissez-faire* attitude left the doors open for the museumification of the historic city while the population was, and continues, declining. The internet accessibility facilitated acquiring the information, accessing the tourism products, and influencing other people by driving overtourism. The supply of accommodation services online was diversifying the hospitality offers such as rooms, private apartments, and bed and breakfasts for demand-side. While the supply of accommodation services led to cheaper offers by easing the excursionist problem and helped

locals to take their pie from tourism (Van Der Borg, 2017), that opportunity to offer a “Venetian experience” caused more Venetians to empty their houses.

The developments in the mobility systems exposed the city flow of tourists; so, Marco Polo Airport became one of the busiest airports in Italy (Zannini, 2014). The low-cost airlines and charter flights connecting more cities increased the day-tripping. The emerging day-tripper problem was coupled with proximity tourism, especially the arrivals from Germany, Austria, and Switzerland (Van Der Borg, 2017). To cap it off, there were also tourists arriving by the sea with the gigantic cruise ships stealing the authenticity of the city. From half a million in 2002 to one million in 2007 and almost two million passengers at the peak of its history in 2013, cruise ships not only carried masses of tourists, but they also brought their beds, lunch and other necessities to the lagoon. Upon the environmental hazard of the ships and economic damage by cruise excursionists, the movement of *No Grandi Navi* came into existence to protest the massive cruise ships. Although the docking cruises to the Port of Venice paid around 30.000 euros each, the revenue did not contribute directly to the local economy because of third parties and the involvement of the national state at the macro-level (Brambilla, 2021) and the unsustainable cruise tourists’ low interaction with local shops at the micro-level (Momigliano, 2021). Given that the ministry allocated a 5,6 million euros budget to the port authority for the management and the maintenance of canals, the cruise industry at its peak year in 2013 produced 290 million euros in revenue and the cruise tourists spent around 19 euros on average in the historic city (Momigliano, 2020). At that time, the port becoming the second busiest port in the Mediterranean after Barcelona was still “planning ahead to meet all the demands of the future” (Pichler et al., 2013). Upon that, the government formed a body called the *Comitatone* to make the industry sustainable, yet there was no outcome as a strategy in 2018 (Pesce et al., 2018).



Figure 6. Hostility against tourists: Immigrants Welcome. A sticker on a busy tourist route.

Overwhelmed with tourism saturation and housing problems, the Venetians staged their social unrest with a funeral for the city. While the city housing commissioner held the birth and rates responsible for the situation, the social activist group Venessia's claim was the poor management policies for the exodus that turned the city into a museum by losing its identity (Donadio, 2009). The hostility against tourists and social conflict gained momentum over the years peculiarly with the supply of Airbnb accommodation by individuals. Once Airbnb entered the Italian market in 2016, the real boom in accommodation supply happened and so non-hotel accommodations called private rooms more than doubled in three years (OCIO, 2021). Civil society is the source of many social innovations (Brandsen et al., 2016). Accordingly, Venice and its lagoon in coordination with UNESCO and regional provinces

published a management plan for the period 2012-2018 by framing a sustainable tourism strategy. As highlighted by the report, the cooperation problem under the common tourism policy, the day-tripping and seasonal issues, the lack of technological innovation from tour operators, the traditional positions against the consumers, and concentration on the specific locations were some of the weaknesses of the tourist system. To overcome the visitor congestion, the optimization of tourist flows was aimed at the valorisation of the historic city (Comune di Venezia, 2014).

The twentieth century's cooperation issue despite the spatial proximity (Favero & Moretti, 2017, p. 468) was still ongoing based on Città di Venezia's (2017a) SWOT analysis, becoming the clogged vein of the city. Despite the tourist jump after 2003 and the post-2008 financial crisis, the municipality decided to follow the strategy of launching new events during the low season period, which is only January based on the monthly tourist numbers. The positioning of the city branding was set to attract talents, investors, and students. In terms of spatial context, encouraging the expansion of tourism on the mainland was aimed at the management plan 2016-2018 (Comune di Venezia Settore Turismo, 2017).

The social unrest reached an unbearable level and the locals' response to teaching how to behave to tourists, later on, that led the municipality to adopt the same strategy with the rules illustrated on boards (Bosworth, 2014), which would be applied by some touristic Italian cities such as Florence. At the civil society level, one of the most prominent examples is *Venezia NON è Disneyland* (Venice is not Disneyland) community, which gave name after this section covering from the 1990s till today, and it highlights that Venice is also a real city where people live and not a museum. At the destination management level, after surging overtourism impacts, the municipality set a course for the #EnjoyRespectVenezia call strategy for tourists to clarify what not to-dos in the city. The awareness campaign encourages tourists

to be careful and respectful of the local values, heritage site and environment (Città di Venezia, 2017b).

As no one is happy with hit-and-run tourists, a policy aiming to cut down the cruise tourists flow was ruled to ban the huge cruise ships from the historic centre of Venice (Giuffrida, 2021). Coming back to its Middle Ages times with the policy of prohibiting the big ships (Momigliano, 2021), vessels bigger than a certain size are not allowed to pass by the San Marco basin or Giudecca Canal. From the environmental perspective, though, the cruise ships docking at the industrial port of Marghera will bring almost the same damage (Momigliano, 2020). Besides, the city applies a tourist tax for residential visitors and the amount varies on the season. To comprehend and control the tourist circulation, the municipality developed the Smart Control Room system under the PON Programme Metro 2014-2020. The project aims to monitor and manage mobility for modelling growth in a sustainable way (Città di Venezia, 2017a). Moreover, the program with phone tracking technology even enabled the local government to get an insight into the Venice tourism business in terms of tax evasion (Bertasi, 2022).

With an eye on the hit-and-run tourists as a key factor for overtourism and the tourism industry, the most daring step in contemporary times was taken by enforcing a taxation law for day-trippers to be applied in 2023 as the residential tourists were paying once they arrived at their hotel or lodging. Excluding the residents and residential tourists, the proposed policy aims to charge day-trippers from 3 to 10 euros, based on the season, with electronic turnstiles (Thackray, 2021). Another proposed project is the City Card to limit the number of excursionists with the reservation system for free without turnstiles but to be controlled at random points (Bartoloni, 2022). On the other hand, with their request to abolish municipal tourism tax between 2022 and 2025, the low-cost airline Ryanair established its new base at

Marco Polo Airport as of the time this study was conducted. The new base introduced 17 new routes and 340 weekly flights granting 100 new jobs and a 300-million-dollar investment (Venezia Airport, 2022).

Being a label or setting for the new events and cultural initiatives, Venice turned out to be “a theme park” with its constant depopulation. The city’s overdependency on tourism supported by the *laissez-faire* approach toward tourism poured on the speed for the museumification. Although the new supply of accommodation opportunities enabled them to take their pie from overtourism, that was not for the hit-and-run tourists who just contributed to the overcrowding. The hostility is not only against tourists but also against the “taxi drivers, the gondoliers, and the hotel and restaurant owners. They run Venice” (Berendt, 2005) or against the people who “sold off cheap to the hoteliers, water taxi operators and shopkeepers” (Kington, 2009). As tourists became an important brick of Venice (Kay, 2008), the lack of coordination and “ambidextrous management” (Seraphin et al., 2018; La parola, 2018) made Venice all seasons high vibrant museum.

3. De-Seasonalization of Overtourism: Carnival Breaks Through the Fog

Seasonality in tourism is one of the axis and elements different from the phenomena of place. While the demand for a place can be fixed with diversification of tourist flows or regulation with the cap practices, the concentration on time might be harder to balance the tourism demand for a place in a specific period of a year. Two poles of seasonality are high season, which is desired by the business economy to increase their occupancy, and low season, which is seen as a problem with loss of revenue from the supply side. At the tourism destination level, the models by Christaller (1964), Doxey (1975) and Butler’s (2006) about tourism development show that the high demand for a destination brings more tourists. As

shown in the economics of overtourism part, the overuse of the destination results in costs, damage and welfare loss in the society (Nepal & Nepal, 2019). The emergence of seasonality in tourism destinations corresponds to the involvement stage in Butler's (2006) Tourism Area Life Cycle model. The seasonal tourism peaks cause changes in locals' life, touristic services, and other facilities at the destination (Milano et al., 2019). The high season in art and cultural destinations is more prolonged than the ones with the coastal or mountain resorts (Visentin & Bertocchi, 2019), and the case of Venice is both an art and a coastal city.

In spite of the economic benefits of tourism as mentioned earlier in this study, the low season provides an unignorable break for destinations' environment and the residents. Perceived as a major problem, seasonality is often handled by the supply side, and it is aimed to extend the visitor flows all along the year. From the tourism area perspective to address the high season tourism exceeding the carrying capacity, attracting tourism in the off-season does not result in a decrease in the tourists' number at the high season or during congested times, instead, it significantly increases the total number of visitors (Butler, 2001). In the case of Venice, that is quite similar to launching the modern carnival for the revival of winter tourism. Coupled with the humid weather, the winter season remained as home to Venetians until the 1970s. The tourism in Venice was powered by the beach tourism well-known Lido and the Biennale events on various themes. The ancient tradition of The Most Serene Republic, the Carnival was celebrated starting from the twelfth century until the arrival of Napoleon. The celebration of the Carnival attracted many Grand Tourists, provided entertainment to the pilgrims and became a part of Venetian identity symbolising freedom with anonymity. As described in Voltaire's (1998) *Candide*, the Carnival brought together

curious carnival attendants not only from Europe but also from the East by being a contact zone for international people. Venice was devoid of its open-air festival for two centuries and finally, in 1979 Piazza San Marco regained its most exciting festivity of the year. Venetian winter tourism doubled in the 1970s and masses of people occupied the square to be part of the carnival which involved the mass media, sponsors, cultural events, costumes and masks. As Butler (2001) argued about the nature of seasonality, Carnival did not solve the tourism congestion of high season but rather expanded the overtourism for a longer period. Today, Venice attracts 11 months of peak tourism including winter tourism. Modern Carnival's journey from the festivity for children to a mass event intensifying the saturation is elaborated below.

3.1. A Brief History of Modern Carnival

The start of the modern Carnival is often referred to as the year 1979 yet but there was more before that. In 1963, the mayor of the city attempted to bring back the carnival with the participation of 19 international universities, contests and a final ball to attract tourists in winter yet the idea did not go live. The island of Burano was the first to introduce the roots of modern carnival to the Venetian lagoon, doing so in 1967. A year later, the event returned stronger with funding and preparation and the support from public agencies helped keep the carnival of 1969 going. In 1978, a group of students from Accademia improved the carnival masqueraders for the Carnival of Burano, besides that, eggs and flour were the elements to make it entertaining. There was an issue that worried the cooperative of gondoliers, the mayor and other noble bidders: how to prevent the masses of crowds? The answer was a little bit of institutionalisation. The Carnival arrived on the mainland the following year as the

Carnival of Campalto with “allegorical floats”. Along that journey, the Carnival at the historic centre broke through the fog in 1979 thanks to Radio Vanessa spreading the word in default of financing. The mayor of the time Mario Rigo brought up the low-season tourism issue for winter but neither the hotel association nor other stakeholders were disposed to collaborate. However, the amateur spirit brought together 21.700 participants. A year later in 1980, theatre and carnival were intervened and all 6-day programs of 120 performances sold out. Until the reconstitution of the carnival, the tourism in Venice was made up of the period from April to September so the rest of the year was for Venetians (Bressanello, 2010). Therefore, the tourists were not used to experiencing the high tide in Piazza San Marco (Davis & Marvin, 2004, p. 192).



Figure 7. 1980 Carnevale del Teatro. Carnival Breaks Through the Fog Exhibition (17 February - 15 May 2022). Ca' Giustinian. Historical Archives of Contemporary Arts. La Biennale.

In the following years, the theatre was one of the key elements to attract the tourists and appeal to more tourist segments. Organised by the Biennale, the carnival of 1981 hosted around half a million people, fifty thousand residential visitors at the hotel and nine countries on the carnival programme. The tourism department distributed 30 thousand guides to the visitors. Already in the third event, the carrying capacity was on the carpet, so the need for more hotels and open shops at night was stressed out. In 1982, the department of tourism took the carnival over as increasing the local protests for the degradation. Regarding the many young people sleeping at the Piazza San Marco and massive celebrations in the narrow and ancient streets, the loss of control over the tourist flows raised the issue of reconsideration of culture and tourism policies. Upon the 800 thousand visitors consisting of 52 thousand residential tourists, the last day afternoon of the carnival in Piazza San Marco was only limited access to the residents. After the peak visitors, the local management opted to form a dedicated agency, and the carnival attendance dropped in subsequent years. The shops began to remain open till 2 a.m. due to visitor concerns. With the start of the new tourist season, 45 new mask and costume stores opened. As the theme of the Carnival was changed each year, the event of 1985 hosted “Paris in Venice” by offering concerts and events in *La Fenice*. The Carnival's inability to alter the event's formula was beginning to show indications of weakness on the streets. So much similar to the modern overtourism complaints in Venice, Former RAI TV reporter Ferruccio Gard correlates the happiness of the participants who wore euphoric and lavish costumes with the possibility of finding a place to pee. The event administration did not want to draw all of the attention to the historic centre, the decentralisation strategy was implemented by organising another programme in Mestre to

mitigate the participant flow from the mainland. The Carnival was extended to early January in 1988, but this had little influence on the similar emptiness of the hotels the following year. The average carnival attendance in the 1980s was approximately 500 thousand people (Bressanello, 2010).

Starting from the 1990s, the *acqua alta* (high tide) became known to the growing number of tourists, and that thrilled some visitors with the joy of standing with plastic boots at the centre of the *piazza* while some were dissatisfied with the interruption of their tours (Davis & Marvin, 2004, p. 192). A one-month-long carnival was shortened to 18 days in 1990, and the construction of the stage was forbidden owing to the damage it caused. Two years later, the event took the shape of a Venetian delight, with rock concerts in the squares, street theatres, and classical music in museums. The event was organised by a private organisation, which meant that hotels, restaurants, stores, and cultural institutions had to work closely together. Despite the lack of significant earnings, the city's advertising and publicity were targeted at boosting tourism. The Carnevale di Venezia srl corporation was founded in 1994 with the ascent of the left-centre administration, and overnight stays reached 700.000 people. "A New Theatre Season for Venice" ran from February 7 to March 3, but it was the atmosphere, not the content, that made it a success. Volkswagen's sponsorship in 1997 and the following year decentralised the dominance of Piazza San Marco via the streets while also promoting street art. The decentralisation strategy was extended beyond the historic centre streets to the new town of Mestre, with events held in Piazza Ferretto beginning on the last day of Venice Carnival. Following the hit of 700.000 participants, the formation of the

Consortium returned the investment, and the decentralisation approach proved effective (Bressanello, 2010).

The 17-day carnival in 2004, which included music, theatre, and dance, drew 1.2 million visitors to Venice, but attendance the following year was just a fourth of that. The event management's statement was to defend the quality of life of the Venetians, which the hoteliers association did not agree with. The hoteliers association argued that the carnival was a gold mine, but that what was extracted was just bad quality coal. The year 2006 was an important turning point for the identity of the carnival and the theatre festival was separated from the carnival and shifted to the summer period. The municipal police were tasked with the most difficult work of this event; in this era of loosening the rules, it was difficult to balance whether the police should focus on the complaints of city residents or on the concerns of visitors and their demand for more space. Following the 2007 event, which was attended by 800,000 people, inhabitants of the city voiced their opposition to public financing, and the event agency was consolidated under the name Venezia Marketing and Eventing. Furthermore, the tourist-driven carnival celebrations expanded across all city streets with the launch of the “Sensation” theme, a desire to taste the splendid city in six senses, in order to improve the city branding and reduce congestion in San Marco, the busiest tourist district (Bressanello, 2010).

3.2. Winter Tourism Today

The Carnival of Venice, like in the past, has drawn visitors not only from other nations but also from different continents. The event generated a mystery in the past and still now, making it appear that the poor are rich, and the wealthy are servants, with the reality

buried under the masks. Carnival participants all have a different story: a young person coming regularly since the age of 10, someone going to Versailles every year to get inspiration for their costumes, some spending four months on the design of their costumes and performances so as to be in the final contest round (Altun, 2020). Aside from the carnival's allure, the thrill of the costumes, and the program, the most essential factor as a background was Venice itself, which drew so many visitors to San Marco during the humid and foggy Venetian winter. The Carnival in Venice first attracted the residents, a few years later the tourists and sponsors flocked, and in the end, the television and tourism policies made it the Carnival of Venice (Bressanello, 2010). The idea to revive the winter tourism did not reduce the number of tourists during the peak season, rather it recreated the dead month of February and prolonged the tourism season together with the hotel rates.

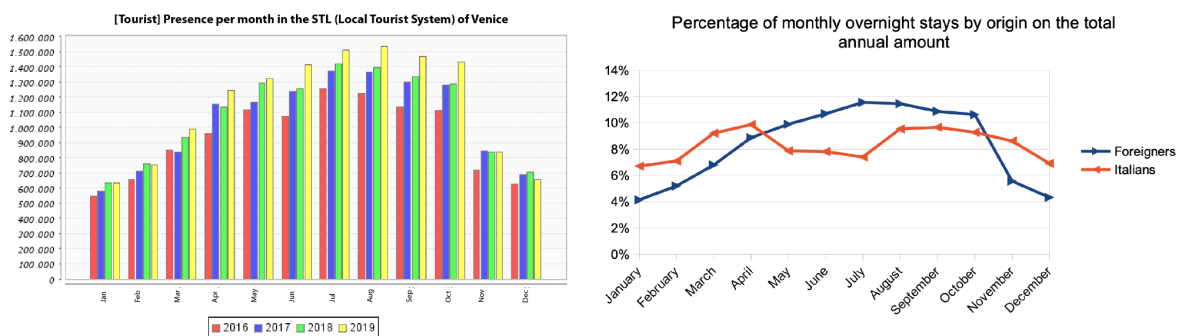


Figure 8. Presence per month in the STL of Venice and 2019 Percentage of monthly overnight stays by origin on the total annual amount. Source: Regione del Veneto (n.d.), Città di Venezia (2020).

Tourism and cultural policies helped Venice to get its position as a tourist city making the tourism primary industry and the launch of the modern Carnival strengthened that by

extending the seasonality to the dead winter. Even after the 2008 crisis, continuous tourism enabled the city to breathe economically, but not so much socially (Bressanello, 2010). As seen above in the figure and according to the Città di Venezia's (2020) annual tourism report, eleven months of the year are addressed as high season, therefore the ecosystem and inhabitants do not have a chance to rest under the burden of intense tourism (Milano et al., 2018), which in turn amplifies the impacts of overtourism as a stress factor (Rosenow & Pulsipher, 1979; Dodds & Butler, 2019b). Again, as stated by Città di Venezia (2020), 5 percent of all visitors came to the city just for the carnival reason in 2019. In respect of the overnight stays, Italians favoured Venice over the foreigners during the 2019 Carnival season, which ran from February 16 to March 5. However, it is not possible to measure proximity tourism, regarding that the carnival tourism is mostly preferred by Italians since there is no data for burdensome daily tourists.

4. Tourism Change: Hit-and-Run Tourists

The twentieth century witnessed a great touristification of Venice, and in the end, the city turned out to be based on a tourism economy (Seraphin et al., 2018; Barry, 2021). As indicated through the tourism economic history, the ready infrastructure of the hospitality sector helped to accelerate the growth of tourism development in terms of luxury tourism such as CIGA hotels and the liberalisation of house renting in relatively recent times such as Airbnb (Salerno & Russo, 2020). Starting with the fascist cultural policies, the serial launch of new art events, cultural initiatives and mobility developments transformed the destination into mass tourism. The introduction of additional Biennale events, in particular, made the city appealing to a wide range of tourists, even allowing them to bring Venetian art home with

them (Favero & Moretti, 2017). The average duration of stay steadily decreased from 3 nights in 1949 to 2 nights in 1970 together with the transition from elite to mass tourism (Zannini, 2014). At first glance, the steady increase in the tourist numbers caused a problem in the social and spatial context. In that sense, the carrying capacity calculations of various scholars were as follows: 20.750/day by Costa & Van Der Borg (1988), 22.000 by Canestrelli & Costa (1991), 35.000/day by COSES (2009) and 52.111/day by Bertocchi et al. (2020) as the models to calculate varied from physical to mathematical. Taking the municipality's statistics into consideration, it might seem that the total number of tourists might match the carrying capacity, notwithstanding, that numbers miss a tourist type: hit-and-run tourists. The prediction for the number of day-trippers in 1991 was 6 million (Canestrelli & Costa, 1991). While they might be useful for the destination image at some point to create demand, hit-and-run tourists turn into a social cost for an economy dependent on tourism. As discussed in the tourist types of that study, they do not contribute to the local economy as much as residential tourists and they bring their sandwiches with them. Coupled with the tourism monoculture, the flow of hit-and-run tourists poses a threat to long-term sustainability (Van Der Borg & Russo, 2001).

In Butler's (2006) tourism area life cycle, the compound of total visitors is indicated and the revised version by Van Der Borg and Russo (2001) demonstrates the balance of residential tourists and excursionists. While the number of residential tourists climbs down first during the tourism area development, the total number of daily tourists follows the trend afterwards by exceeding the residential tourists. As a result, the tourism destination declines due to the diminishing economic activity (Van Der Borg & Russo, 2001). Even though the

control room of Venice has been in effect for a while, the current official statistics do not include the number of the excursionists yet there are some estimates. In terms of the percentage of daily tourists, Manente and Rizzi's (1993) study calculates it as 65.05% whereas Salerno and Russo's (2020) estimate is around 70%. According to the hotel operators association, the same group of daily tourists produce 30% of the total tourism revenue (Brambilla, 2021). The combination of beach tourism and culture tourism gave wing to the complaints of hit-and-run tourists by the end of the 1970s. The tourists were able to find different kinds of tourist needs they want in such a concentrated place (Davis & Marvin, 2004) and the consequence became a change in the tourist mix by attracting more hit-and-run tourists (Russo, 2001). That category of tourists grew in number with the easier accessibility and mobility services. In the 2000s, the issue of excursionists climbed after cruise tourism. While they had a few hours to sightsee, they gazed around and maybe bought a few souvenirs, returned to their cruise ship for the meal and sleep. That does not guarantee the spending on local shops by providing a more stable stream of revenue and the growth of hit-and-run tourism exacerbates the instability of the local business in Venice. Therefore, the municipality stresses the revision of the tourism supply (Città di Venezia, 2017a). Having said that, controlling residential tourists on the demand side can be managed with the price mechanism, but it is more difficult to control hit-and-run visitors who do not utilise services. (Van Der Borg & Russo, 2001).

Table 1

Yearly Visitor Change to Museums and Exhibitions in Venice

Museums	2015	2018	2019
Fondazione Musei Civici	2.229.928	2.458.108	2.286.611
State Museums	759.590	787.606	758.606
Foundations and Collections	428.138	427.218	354.607
Other museums	564.049	554.421	565.330
Total	3.981.705	4.227.353	3.965.154
Total Change to 2015		6%	0%

Note. Museums and exhibitions with yearly regular data were included, and churches with free admission were excluded. Elaborated by the author from Città di Venezia, 2020, *Annuario del Turismo dati 2019*, <https://www.comune.venezia.it/sites/comune.venezia.it/files/immagini/Turismo/Annuario%20del%20turismo%202019.pdf>.

Table 2

Venice Yearly Tourist Arrival Change

Year	2015	2018	2019
Tourist Arrival	4.495.857	5.255.499	5.523.283
Total Change to 2015		17%	23%

Note. Elaborated by the author from Regione del Veneto, (n.d.), *Sistema Statistico Regionale Movimento Turistico Nel Veneto*, https://statistica.regione.veneto.it/banche_dati_economia_turismo.jsp.

A considerable amount of literature has been published on the cultural tourism of Venice and these studies show the role of cultural tourism policies to form the city as a vibrant museum (Russo, 2001; Favero & Moretti, 2017; Bertocchi et al., 2020). A common

tool to measure the tourism pressure on the cultural destination is to see the change in the tourist numbers and museum visitors (Zannini, 2014; Amore et al., 2020). To get clear and reliable data, museums with annual visitor counts are included, whereas churches with free admission are excluded. From 2015 to 2018 and 2019, the total number of visitors increased successively by 17% and 23% (Regione del Veneto, n.d.) yet the change in the total number of visitors to the museums remained at 6% and 0% in sequence (Città di Venezia, 2020) as elaborated on Table 1 and Table 2. The increasing tourism does not affect the cultural tourism revenue and visitors simply pass-through narrow streets causing congestion. Nevertheless, the data demonstrated above consists of overnight tourists only excluding the day-trippers. Once the excursionists are added, the scenario gets even more dramatic.

The hit-and-run tourists showing a habit like window-shopping tourism increased the overtourism pressure in terms of the carrying capacity, had more social costs than overnight stays (Van Der Borg & Russo, 2001), and became a danger to the local tourism business. The prohibition on cruise ships docking at the Port of Venice prevented the city from becoming directly vulnerable to hit-and-run tourists; at the very least, the ships were able to anchor at the Port of Marghera, which was a relatively short distance away (Giuffrida, 2021). On the other hand, further initiatives to curb the hit-and-run tourists have been introduced recently as of the time that study was conducted. The regional government adopted a plan in March 2021 aimed at reducing hit-and-run tourists for more “slow tourism” (Momigliano, 2021). The stress intensity factor for overtourism, daily tourists are being addressed to control with the projects in use such as the control room and the projects in embryo such as the city booking system.

5. The Limits of the Space: How Will We Live Together?

Overtourism is frequently linked with the temporary or seasonal excessive tourist numbers in the area as we have seen at the beginning of this study among different overtourism definitions. Looking at the phenomenon in a qualitative way rather than a quantitative one, the spatial context is another key element in evaluating overtourism. When the resident to annual tourist arrival ratio is taken into consideration, Venice performs on top with its 2019 score of 1:21,3 which was 1:16,3 in 2014 in Oklevik et al.'s (2019) study. In that sense, *la superficie* (the surface in English) of fish-shaped Venice has some limitations to provide enough space for everyone with its unique topography different from the mainland. The issue of limited space and the topography contribute a lot to forming the perception of overtourism particularly among the residents and this limited space is widening for tourists, though, decreasing per each with the rising tourist numbers.

The city of Venice and the settlements in the lagoon were significantly built by Ancient Romans, and many resources point out the fifth or sixth centuries for the establishment of the infrastructures including roads and drainage systems which were adapted to that complex environment (Madricardo, 2021). The wooden poles dug down into the clay were used to construct and fortify the ground, so, the wooden poles and platforms worked well by preventing decomposition without exposing to the oxygen and forming a strong consistency with salty water. The wood and water hold a special place in the Venetian space and the current infrastructure is still based on the same. Even the houses stand out still on the bricks and walls, some like osmotic from that time, as stressed in Pichler et al.'s (2013) documentary *The Venice Syndrome*. The restoration and reconstruction are part of the identity

of Venice in spite of the demanding bureaucracy which was associated with some “restoration comedies” in the literature (Davis & Marvin, 2004; Berendt, 2005). However, reconstructing *com'era, dov'era* (as it was, where it was) way, which supports the tourists' monoculture viewpoint by keeping its eighteenth-century outlook (Madden, 2012, p. 282), is one of the points criticized by locals since it is not bringing any permanent solution to the issues. That reconstruction cycle continues to raise the level of the sinking city seven centimetres higher providing an extra 30 years of a lifetime against the flooding (Berendt, 2005). A bit different from Italian routine as no Vespa or Fiat 500, also having no road for the cars absolutely makes the city pedestrian and keeps the silence, which is a complete recreation activity for the visitors even in the seventeenth century based on Evelyn's (1879) description. No engine wheel lifestyle gives the democratic soul as anything happening is unveiled and can be seen with the naked eye. As nothing can be easily hidden, the stink of the water and mud makes itself felt more in the low tide period, as it is complained about also heretofore like in Salerno's *Anonimo Veneziano* movie and today. Nevertheless, whether they are excursionists or residential tourists, the uniqueness of the topography attracted tourists with its alluring landscape. Even if they have a few hours to see the city, which became more usual for modern tourists, they enjoyed getting lost for pleasure in the labyrinthine streets and narrow *calli*.

Yearbook of Tourism Data 2019 (2019) shows that almost half of the tourists arrive by plane, one-fourth of them arrive by train and so on. Besides, many Germans and Austrians come by car or camping car to Jesolo and take a water bus to San Marco. The tourists start their journey from Piazzale Roma, Santa Lucia Train Station or some other water-bus stations

for those taking boats. They stand with their traditional maps or Google Maps to find their excursion and probably try to pass from Piazza San Marco, Rialto or Accademia. To solve the issue of getting lost, some tourist information offices were placed in the most touristic points at the end of the twentieth century (Davis & Marvin, 2004). As the street signs with simple arrows are almost composed of only *Per S. Marco*, *Per Rialto*, *Piazzale Roma* or *Alla Ferrovia* in Venice in contrast to other cities' direction signs, tourists are the most likely to find themselves asking a Venetian for the direction—if they are lucky to find one. Even if they are able to get recommendations for the direction, it will be inescapably *sempre drio* (keep going straight in Venetian dialect) which is unclear for many. Finding a true Venetian in the tourist route could be more difficult than one trying to sell something because they would be on their way with their secret passages. In case of an appearance and traffic of tourists in narrow streets, the hostility against the tourist can be observed by the residents or maybe even tourists.

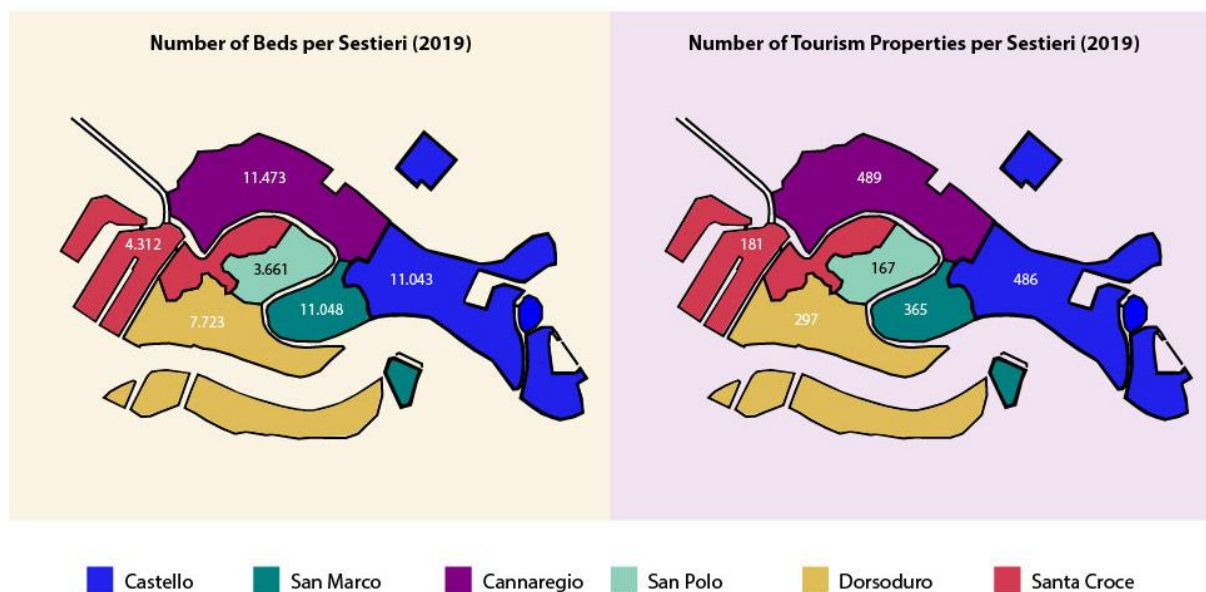


Figure 9. 2019 Number of Beds per Sestieri and Number of Tourism properties per sestieri.
(author's elaboration on the data of the Municipality of Venice for the date of 01/01/2020:
<https://dati.venezia.it/>)

In the spatial context, Bertocchi & Visentin's (2019) findings state that the *sestieri* (districts in Venetian) of San Marco and San Polo hold a large extent of tourism activities and attractions; therefore, they have a lot to do with tourists. The Airbnb dataset shows that the densest areas in terms of Airbnb beds for 2019 are San Marco, San Polo, and followingly Cannaregio and Castello. The data acquired from the municipality of Venice's dataset for the year 2019 shows that all the districts are welcoming the tourists and Cannaregio, Castello and San Marco successively lead them both in the number of the beds and touristic properties such as hotels, pensions, B&Bs etc. Once they check in to their accommodations, the tourists head to occupy Venice's well-known interest points: Piazza San Marco, Rialto and Accademia. The tourists funnelling into the narrow corridors are attracted by also touristic shops for which "the Venetians are especially talented at the art of window dressing" as Davis and Marvin (2004) gave an example from a guidebook called Exploring Venice by Fodor's. While the tourists wait for the queue of other tourists to move on the overcrowded busy streets, they make window shopping in front of the shops.

All these *calli* are somehow connected to a *campi* (fields) which provide breathing room in a city with very limited space. The role of the *campi*, which was home to the local social life with cafes, a playground for the kids and adults, and a food market for everyday necessities, went through a change. The dominance of social and commercial local shops in

campi faded into tourism saturation and the space inescapably accommodated itself to mass tourism. The *piazza* culture expanded to the *campi* and that is in evidence also in the spatial context. Davis and Marvin (2004) highlight that dining out is not in Venetians' culture and the outdoor tables are largely reserved for tourists in restaurants. The restaurants and bars replacing the stores also expanded over the public space to take profit from tourists by paying for *platiatici* or just simply setting up their tables there with umbrellas, particularly in the last three-four decades (Carrera et al., 2006). Stressing the three criteria of pedestrian passage, conserving a significant portion of public space, and minimising the level of noise; the municipality regulated the renting public space policy, which is applied proportionately to the size of the leasing business' interior space (Carrera et al., 2006). That sort of outdoor service appealing to tourists originated from the Piazza San Marco tourism sector as Café Florian, Quadri, and Lavena practised many years (Davis & Marvin, 2004). Nowadays, it is easily noticeable that the outdoor tables in *campi* take up a great portion of that spacious squares occasionally from the pedestrian way including the waiters shuttling from the kitchen to the tables. The aforementioned issue is visible in *fondamenta* by narrowing down the passage both from the canal side and building side.



Figure 10. Fondamenta with tables on one side.

Apparently, the Venetian small alleyways jammed with throngs of tourists have their own constraints and the space catered to the visitors just like the evolution of the city's outstanding tourism product gondolas. The shape and function of the gondola were a bit different than today as well as the fee of an iconic ride through the canals. The traditional gondola model in black, which was equipped with a cabin *felze* and two staff on board, was shorter and a bit larger than today's one (Saint-Didier, 1680). It was more nobles to whom gondolas were made available at first; however, the target group underwent a change in accordance with the tourism area development. The flock of Grand Tourists in mass reformed the space in gondolas, particularly after the late nineteenth century. The notion of narrowing streets was reflected in the seascape, narrowing space in the water tourism vehicles. Based on Saint-Didier's (1680) narration, the length was extended around one and a half metres and the

width was sized shorter. The comfy seats were replaced with annoying small chairs and the number of the gondoliers on board was dropped down to one as well as the removal of the *felze* (Donatelli, 1990). All these rearrangements were done to accommodate more guests onboard in the evolving tourism market.



Figure 11. 18th-century gondola equipped with a felze and two gondoliers, Modern gondola with 6 people and a gondolier. Left source: Museo Correr, FSR cart. 4/ 0107, Author: Furlanetto, Giacomo. Right source: Author.

The notion of overtourism was accompanied by another tourist need, or maybe problem, which is to find a toilet in a space with limits. A couple of locals at Pichler et al.'s (2013) Venice Syndrome documentary become curious about where such a mass of tourists would go to the toilet. The long-known issue has been notoriously on the carpet due to the under-supplied toilet facilities by the municipality. While the issue has been ongoing, tourism has left streets and public spaces behind with bad smells stanching like sewers, notably during the summer. As of today, there are twenty public toilets according to Venezia Unica

reports but still the opening-closing hours, the queues to use, limited availability of public toilets or hostility against tourists using restaurant toilets might be the source of the problem.

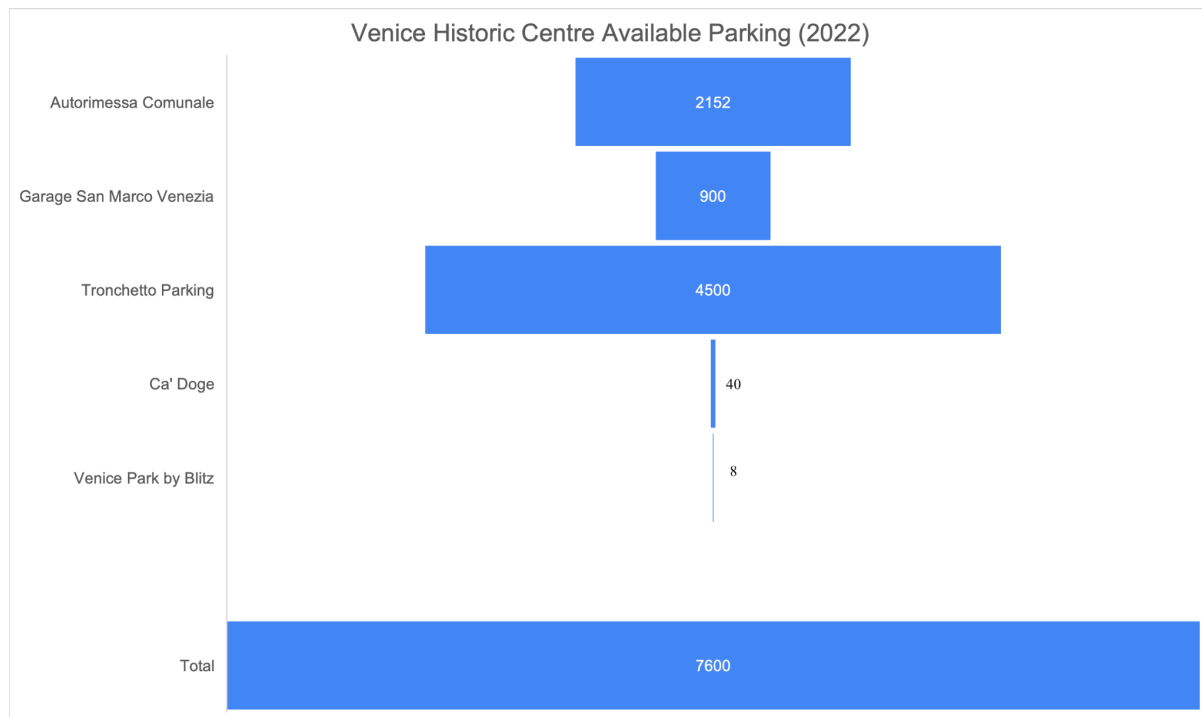


Figure 12. Venice Historic Centre Available Parking Spaces for Cars (Data obtained from their websites).

Even though Venice is not a city for wheels, it is possible to come by car to Piazzale Roma or Tronchetto which are the only points allowed. Not surprisingly, but unfortunately, that is not always possible for tourists to park their cars and even take a road to the Ponte della Libertà (Liberty Bridge) chiefly during the holidays or weekend tourist peaks overreaching the destination tourist capacity. Once the total 7600 available slots become all full, the local police apply a restriction to access the Ponte della Libertà for cars and tour

buses by redirecting them to Mestre for other available parking places. From Greater Venice, the visitors are required to take the bus, tram or train to reach the city.



Figure 13. Venice Accessibility Map (Source: veneziaunica.it).

The overdemand for the space led people to squeeze into a limited space; therefore, even sitting on the edge of the canal might make the tourists feel lucky, aside from finding room in the expensive cafes. Because of the low supply of public spaces which may end up with occupancy, there can be observed hostility against tourists such as wetting the ground (Davis & Marvin, 2004). The tourists who want to stroll in the Venetian pedestrian-friendly maze need to walk the whole labyrinth in lack of car transportation, and it leads to large crowds considering that the sea transport might not be so quick. Some urban studies put in evidence the overwhelmed physical carrying capacity powered by the inadequacy of road

signs, the intense tourist flows on the same routes and tourism concentration on a few iconic attractions (Gorrini & Bertini, 2018).

The city's urban plan has its own limit, and no doubt, there was no need at building the streets larger for Ancient Romans when the city was built. Having said that, the limited geographical space has run short in the presence of continuous tourism development and even the destination's tourism products and public space have, indeed, changed their spatial context as exemplified through the tourism economic history. Today, the overtourism has reached a high level of tourism pressure with the enormous growth of restaurants, souvenir shops and accommodation and that has concretely expanded through the veins of the city and all districts as analysed by Bertocchi & Visentin (2019). The geographical proximity of tourism attractions and services makes tourism management complicated for such a fragile architectural landscape. Therefore, the geographical characteristics of the city with difficulties to be handled from the overtourism perception along with the increasing tourism pressure.

6. Overtourism Impacts on Venice

The problems of Venice overall show similarity with the impacts of overtourism. While the number of tourists surges, the number of residents at the same level steadily goes down. Under the pressure of overtourism and the nature of the topography, Venice has been depopulating since 1951, and its population has dropped by more than a third. The depopulation is protested on some points of the city by the sign of 49.999 as of 2022. The residents relocated for a variety of reasons, but according to the comune statistics, the most common causes for individuals who moved were as follows: personal reasons, overtourism,

expensive living costs, limited job opportunities, the inconvenient city itself, residential services and the opportunity to rent the house (Walsh et al., 2021). The overtourism comes in second place as the motivation to leave the city for the former residents. During the exodus, not only the residents disappeared but also the cats in the streets did as the grandmothers were not there anymore (Berendt, 2005). As a result of the tourism saturation, city squares became nightlife hotspots for young people (Davis & Marvin, 2004), resulting in a rise in criminality and vandalism (Seraphin et al., 2018). While the tourism-driven shops opened one by one reaching over 18 in the city's most famous campo and Campo Santa Margherita was populated with young people; and today, “all the cities around the world you can find information [office] for young people, only in this city it is Informa Anziani, information [office] for old people” (Altun, 2021).



Figure 14. The Depopulation Protests in Venice: 49.999, A Local Shop Replaced by an International ATM.

Venice loses its identity by becoming a global village as wealthy foreigners purchase homes (Minoia, 2017) and some second homes' windows are opened just two times a year once the homeowners return for a short vacation (Pichler et al., 2013). The same gentrification problem moulds the local businesses into tourist-driven shops by losing daily life shops for residents (Mourby, 2017), any shop seen today might be transformed into a shop lightening tourists' wallets tomorrow. Over time especially after the 1970s, the facilities for residents disappeared, even in one of the less touristic districts, four fish markets and six vegetable markets in the 1980s dropped one for both today in Via Garibaldi (Pichler et al., 2013; Altun 2021). Moreover, the saturation affects the housing with the explosion of tourist beds in all the districts even on the mainland from 2015 to 2019. Therefore, the residents face a two-fold issue following the positive trend of the rising inflating housing market and the density of Airbnb beds (Walsh et al., 2021).

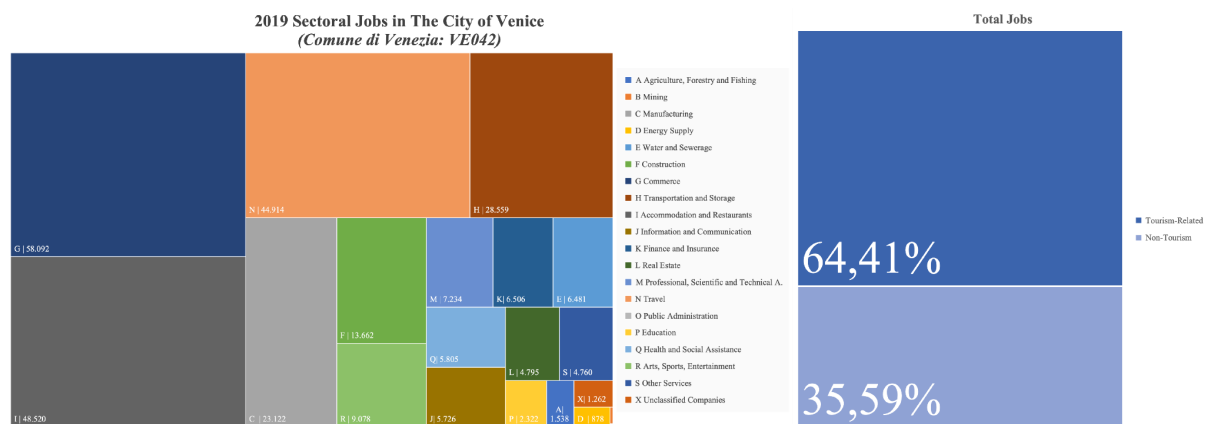


Figure 15. 2019 Sectoral Jobs in The City of Venice. Elaborated by the author from Camera di Commercio Venezia Rovigo (2019). The jobs data is composed of workers of the location, offices, and artisan for the year 2019 and tourism-related jobs include the categories of

commerce (excluding the auto industry), transportation and storage, accommodation and restaurants, and travel.

Overtourism dominating the social life also takes control of the local economy and job market being dependent on tourism. Becoming the city's one of the most important elements and also its own residents (Barry, 2021), the biggest share of the job market is composed of tourism jobs or tourism-related jobs, namely 64,41% of all jobs in the city of Venice are financed by tourism according to the chamber of commerce (Camera di Commercio Venezia Rovigo, 2019). As a result, job diversity in Venice is on thin ice and a lack of job diversity causes individuals to flee the city in search of work. The issue of job diversity also reveals that overtourism is not only about the demand of tourists, but also about the supply side. The motivation to protest against overtourism outcoming as tourismphobia might seem economic anxiety, adversely, even during the global economic crisis Venice was moderately affected in terms of purchasing power loss between 2007 and 2015. In general, Venice's GDP per capita is 109% of the European average with higher purchasing power standards. To this extent, Venice positions neither the richest nor the poorest overtourism destination, alternatively, hostile or anti-tourist attitudes are not only concerned about the economic perception but also the social and environmental impacts of overtourism (Alexis, 2017).

Another key aspect of sustainable tourism and also the sustainability of the fragile tourism destination is the environmental impact of overtourism exceeding the carrying capacity. Venice is confronted with a number of issues in addition to climate change, the

stubborn topography degrades with the mass overcrowding and over-visitation (Christ, 2016). The cruise vessels passing from Giudecca Canal and San Marco Basin vroomed and caused the historic centre to tremble (Pichler et al., 2013). The local factors worsened the environmental pollution with the waste disposal, canal and sewage problems (Van Der Borg, 2022). However, the covid time serenity and tourist-less deserted Venice provided a better example of how overtourism is impacting the ecological life of the lagoon (Braga et al., 2020).

7. Post-Overtourism: Degrowth

Sustainable tourism is a long well discussed subject in tourism and overtourism literature by rebalancing between limits and (over)use of the resources. Conversely, the sustainability rhetoric stays as a core value of growth to assist the ongoing order (Blázquez-Salom, 2019) and the World Travel & Tourism Council's perception to deal with the overtourism is to move toward the changes not addressing the root of the issue (McKinsey & Company, 2017). Other instances might also be found in this worldwide arena such as the eleventh edition of the UNWTO/WTM Ministers' Summit "Overtourism: growth is not the enemy; it is how we manage it" (UNWTO, 2017). As discussed in previous parts, the social unrest and strategies for overtourism address the growth perception of local and international stakeholders in power rather than the individuals and at the beginning of the twenty-first century, the degrowth conversation gained traction through social activism. Contrary to Orthodox growth or green-growth theories, de-growth strategies as social theory and innovative instruments call for reforming tourism policies and related innovative instruments (Fletcher et al., 2019). Having said that, degrowth does not entail subjecting

developed countries to poverty, no growth or a return to a patriarchal world (Latouche, 2007). The reduction of resource use and negative impacts is aimed via degrowth principles; accordingly, diverse forms of tourism are developed like slow, responsible, and pro-poor tourism (Andriotis, 2018). To achieve this at the destination, optimising measurements such as management plans, special taxes, and limits to the transport infrastructure and facilities are employed instead of maximising the number of tourists or being a growth machine.

In the Venetian context, the city of Venice launched a campaign called Detourism in 2014 to promote slow and sustainable tourism. The project provided alternative routes and travel itineraries to prevent crowds from congesting a place and overcome the tourism monoculture. The allocated budget for the project was 7.000 euros in 2014 and 14.000 euros in 2015 (Bertocchi et al., 2020). Likewise, stepping toward responsible tourism, the municipality introduced #EnjoyRespectVenezia awareness campaign to reduce the overtourism impacts calling the visitors and tour operators to be in good practice to the vibrant museum (Città di Venezia, 2017b). Another tool to apply that campaign in a good manner is the use of the city pass powered by IoT. VeneziaUnica program aims to support the idea of the Smart Tourism Destination to form a collaborative and integrative tourism destination by facilitating the management of mobility and mass tourism. In that way, that would be a good example for applying a price mechanism to attract quality tourists and limit the capacity for mass tourism. As an integrative project, the city established a control room to track the tourist flow in the city and get an accurate insight into the tourist presence. Most of these came to life during the tourism management plans and strategy development projects in the 2010s. On a wider perspective and regional level, Regione del Veneto on their tourism

agenda adopted the demarketing and slow tourism strategy to feature other tourist destinations as proximity tourism, which can be found on the region tourism promotion website (veneto.eu). Apart from soft policies, special taxes like tourist tax for the residential tourists are employed for the visitors but that was not so helpful for the hit-and-run tourists and cruise tourism. First, the cruises docking at the Port of Venice were banned recently and a special tax to charge day-trippers to enter the historic centre is planned for 2023, as of the time of this study conducted. In the historical context, unfortunately, it seems that the policies applied until today to mitigate or stop touristification are outdated, given the current situation and the impacts of overtourism.

Conclusion

Overtourism is a global problem to be handled locally in effective coordination with the stakeholders, considering various conceptualisations of the phenomenon demonstrated at the beginning of the study. The dichotomy of overtourism between economic benefits and socio-economic impacts in addition to the environmental one places the tourism destination in a more fragile stage. Indeed, Butler's (2006) Tourism Area Life Cycle frames tourism destination's confrontation with negative externalities along with the continuous growth after exceeding the carrying capacity, which is followed by the breakdown of visitor composition and decline of the destination. The case of Venice truly manifests itself as overtourism destination with the saturated residential areas and loss of identity-based on Milano's (2017) two key aspects of overtourism. Above that, the increasing tourism pressure is felt all along the year coupled with the hit-and-run tourists.

Returning to the question posed at the beginning of this study, it is now possible to state that Venice became Venice in the process to be, a so-called, vibrant museum or “a theme park” (Kay, 2008) with the cultural tourism policies, which are now extremely compelling to push them back on the reverse direction. Especially, Airbnb’s entrance to the market in 2016 left the residential areas vulnerable to the flock of tourists. Today’s “hands-off” perception to cope with the tourism impacts was formed in the late 1990s, when academic attention to carrying capacity was sparked, to place greater focus on stakeholders’ responsibility (Koenig et al., 2018). The turn into the tourism economy coincides with the boom of day-trippers in the 1980s (Russo, 2001) which was powered by the tourism deseasonalization and the revival of winter tourism with the modern Carnival in 1979. Environmental concerns in the 1970s were a result of the supremacy of the industrial economy in the 1950s, which marked the beginning of the exodus. Unlike World War I, the historic centre became a safe haven for refugees during World War II. Following the 1920s, fascist cultural policies were implemented, which brought mass crowds and consumer tourism to the city through promotional activities such as art events and festivals, and sowed the seeds of cultural tourism. Beach tourism gained prominence in the 1890s due to Volpi’s projects, and Lido developed into a luxury tourism centre with a variety of luxury tourism facilities in addition to the film festival. Before the fall of the maritime republic, Venice became a destination for Grand Tourists during the Renaissance era and a contact zone for the awaiting pilgrims to sail to the Levant in the Medieval Ages. The major source of wealth in old times was Venetian trade dominating the Adriatic by connecting the West to the East and its largest and most prominent Arsenale; nevertheless, the investigation of tourism economic history has shown

that the tourist experience of this period provided a learning effect for subsequent times and made the tourism infrastructures ready. After the fall of *La Serenissima*, Venice lost its trade and maritime power, and the city began to sell itself as a tourism product. Therefore, tourism has become the economy's primary engine, financing more than half of the market, resulting in a loss of job diversification as a dichotomy of overtourism.

Overtourism, which turned out to be Venice Syndrome, has taken over the city atmosphere not only seasonally but throughout the year, and of course, the deseasonalization policies implemented have a great share. The results of this study indicate that the revival of modern Carnival resulted in a resurgence of winter tourism doubling just in a few years, and so it is possible to say that the desasonalisation policies extended the tourism pressure all along the year, but it did not decrease the tourism pressure, on the contrary, the number climbed even higher. The city has become a setting for countless initiatives throughout the previous century and the deteriorating visitor composition has exposed to the flock of hit-and-run tourists, who have no significant economic contribution to the local business. This research contributes to existing knowledge of the low supply of space by demonstrating the increasing occupancy of public space for tourism-driven purposes by forming the overtourism perception. The overall research finding also points to the need for ambidextrous management and policy for tourism development in Venice, overtourism and most importantly potential overtourism destinations as highlighted also by Seraphin et al. (2018).

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- 24 March 2022. Venezia: quale turismo post pandemia?, Ateneo Veneto.
- 5-31 May 2022. Verso un'Europa Sostenibile. Consiglio d'Europa - Ufficio di Venezia.
- 5 June 2022. Venice Talks: Ambiente e Territorio, Innovazione e Sostenibilità.
- 11 June 2022. BELLEZZA, SOSTENIBILITÀ, INSIEME, A VENEZIA. Il New European Bauhaus nella città lagunare. Venice Urban Lab.