



# HERITAGE TOURISM AS A MEANS TO PLACE BRANDING

Case Study of La Línea de la Concepción

MASTER'S THESIS – TOURISM – AAU

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Deadline: 02-06-20

Characters: 120.900

Pages: 50

## Abstract

Research in place branding and practice of the concept are both growing. Academics are researching to understand its implications better, and practitioners e.g. local municipalities are working to attract more public resources and private investments to their place where heritage tourism often plays an important role in branding of the place. The issue, however, is that place branding often is viewed superficially and fragmented, leading to a need for more research on the understanding of the concept which in turn might benefit the practical applications.

This thesis evaluates place branding research and selects an approach to study the interconnection between heritage tourism and place branding, and how the former concept can be a means to the latter. A case study in the Spanish city of La Línea de la Concepción is used to explore the phenomenon.

In this research, four in-depth interviews with three participants of the heritage project reveal its process of development, the involved stakeholders' roles, and their views toward it which then is analyzed and discussed in relation to the selected place branding approach.

Different themes arise from the above. A local non-profit organization is included in the project's development, thus forming a partially bottom-up approach. The project leaders aim to create awareness of the bunkers to the residents of the city to engage them in their maintenance, development, and external reputation. This, along with the bunkers' tourism qualities and the stakeholders' long-term vision, can improve visitor experience in the city, contributing to the effort of establishing a better image than the city currently has.

The study is useful for future understanding of destination branding as a sub-concept to place branding, and the potential of cultural heritage to provide value to both residents and visitors of a place.

## Content

Abstract .....	1
List of figures .....	4
Introduction .....	4
Cultural heritage .....	5
Heritage project in La Línea .....	5
Place branding .....	6
Purpose of the study .....	7
Literature Review .....	7
Place branding .....	8
Origins of place branding .....	9
Clarifying place branding concepts .....	10
Place branding critique.....	11
Approaches to place branding .....	12
City branding model.....	12
The internal brand of a city .....	14
Main priority in place branding .....	16
Key elements to attract visitors to a place .....	16
A holistic place branding approach.....	17
Gap in the literature.....	18
Heritage Tourism .....	19
Origin.....	19
Importance of heritage tourism in place branding .....	20
Methodology .....	21
Different approaches to a study .....	21
Research Philosophy .....	21
Research design.....	25
Role of the researcher .....	25
Research methods .....	26
Secondary research.....	26
Primary research.....	27
Data analysis.....	32
Validity and reliability.....	33

Research approach .....	34
Analysis .....	34
Stakeholder map - the involved stakeholders in the heritage project .....	35
<i>Ruta de los Búncers</i> .....	35
<i>The Destination management organization</i> .....	36
<i>Culture department of the municipality of La Línea</i> .....	37
<i>PHL</i> .....	38
Importance of stakeholder inclusion in tourism development .....	38
The stakeholders' roles and the process of the heritage project .....	38
Passion of the project leaders .....	40
Limitations of the municipality .....	41
Sub-conclusion.....	43
La Línea in the eyes of the stakeholders .....	44
History of the bunkers.....	44
La Línea as a place to visit .....	46
Potential of the bunkers.....	47
Creating awareness.....	49
Symbolic meaning.....	50
Vision.....	52
Sub-conclusion.....	53
Discussion.....	54
Conclusion .....	57
Reference list.....	60
Articles .....	60
Books.....	67
Internet links.....	67
Documents .....	67
Appendix .....	68
Project interview – appendix 1.....	68
Interview guide – appendix 2 .....	77
ARB interview – appendix 3 .....	78
DMO interview – appendix 4.....	83
Culture DP interview – appendix 5 .....	87
Data analysis – appendix 6.....	89

## List of figures

Figure 1: The evolution of place branding and its key factors (adapted from Ma et al., 2019, p.11).....	9
Figure 2: City branding model (adapted from Kavaratzis, 2004, p. 67).....	13
Figure 3: A framework for research (adapted from Creswell, 2014, p. 35).....	22
Figure 4: Basic beliefs of alternative inquiry paradigms (adapted from Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p. 109).....	23
Figure 5: Four worldviews (adapted from Creswell, 2014, p. 36).....	24
Figure 6: The research process (adapted from Driscoll, 2011, p. 157).....	28
Figure 7: Data analysis in qualitative research (adapted from Creswell, 2014, p. 247).....	33

## Introduction

The city of La Línea de la Concepción (La Línea) emerged in the early 18th century behind the fortifications that the Spaniards built to prevent the Brits from conquering more of Spain after England had occupied Gibraltar in 1704. Hence, La Linea originated as an opposition to Gibraltar. Today, there is peace between the old adversaries, but while Gibraltar economically is striving due to low taxes for companies and 10-million visitors per annum (a vast majority of these going through La Línea to cross the border), La Línea has been struggling for years. Although the location of the rather small city of 60.000 in population is fantastic, just south of Costa del Sol and with untouched coastline, it sees very little investment. 10.000 Linenses (locals from La Línea) work in Gibraltar, but the city still has a 35 percent unemployment rate (Arroyo, 2017). Lastly, La Línea is known as one of Spain's most dangerous cities due to the import of drugs from Morocco (Fotheringham, 2018). This has left La Línea with a bad image and a place considered by few as a potential tourism destination. How many tourists visit La Línea yearly is unknown, as the destination management organization (DMO), which is part of the municipality, does not have the economic resources to buy the data of tourist arrivals from the Spanish government.

## Cultural heritage

The two fortification systems, a fort (a ruin nowadays) from 1704 and a total of nine bunkers from the Second World War, are national heritage in La Línea today. However, the ruin only has a small sign of information and many of the bunkers are trashed and vandalized with graffiti. This makes them an unattractive tourist site and the municipality has not done anything about it. Perhaps because of this, the majority of Linenses seem not to have any connection to their cultural heritage, upon which their city is actually built (DMO interview).



Four of the bunkers lie in the park, Parque Princesa Sofia. At night it becomes a place for drug addicts to hang out.

According to literature, culture is the engine of economic development in many places, as it helps to enhance the attractiveness of destinations (Fan, 2014., Timothy, 2018). History and cultural heritage are therefore often found to be an integral part of the identity of a place and its landscape. So, when developing the tourism scene in a destination, a place *“incorporates relevant local cultural characteristics”* (Konecnik and Go, 2008 as cited in Fan, 2014., p. 279). Heritage tourism research has also shown that cultural heritage can encourage social solidarity within a place as according to Timothy (2018). Furthermore, Uriely et al (2002) state that identification for locals with what is promoted can generate positive attitudes toward tourism development.

## Heritage project in La Línea

The DMO of La Línea and a local non-profit organization with a passion for the city’s fortification have desired to establish a project of the fortification for some years. Finally, all though small-scale, such a cultural project has been launched involving one of the bunkers (Project interview).

This thesis studies this heritage project because it sparked an interest in the author who recently lived in La Línea for six months, working three of them as an intern in the DMO.



Parque Princesa Sofia is located between the center of La Línea and the frontier to Gibraltar. The pictures show the bunker which forms the heritage project. It will be transformed into an interpretation center displaying the 'other side of the story' of WW2, as opposed to what millions of tourists each year explore at the Rock of Gibraltar, as seen in the background.

### Place branding

As indicated in the title of the thesis, place branding and heritage tourism are the topics of the study providing the framework to do research on the heritage project of La Línea. With the interpretation center being of cultural heritage and tourism development, heritage tourism is obvious. Place branding is chosen because of the author's personal interest of the topic, and personal interest in La Línea as a place to live and visit.

Place branding focuses not only on visitors, but just as much on residents, whose life quality is affected by the decisions of the government of the place. One of these decisions is tourism development. In this respect, if locals can identify themselves with what is being developed and promoted, they will embrace tourism in their place which then improves the experience for visitors and ultimately the image of the given place (Klijn et al., 2012., Kavaratzis, 2004).

Cultural heritage plays a big part in tourism which has a central role in place branding. Heritage tourism is seen as a means to place branding, and this is why the latter concept draws more attention throughout the study.

## Purpose of the study

Besides the author's personal interest, the heritage project in La Línea is relevant to study as it is a case of tourism development in a place with both a poor image and economy. The purpose of the thesis is to explore the heritage project from a place branding perspective. The aim is to investigate the place branding elements in the heritage project.

Lastly, the author believes that a case study on place branding and cultural heritage is important for several reasons. The study strives to add to the literature in the field of place branding by reviewing current literature and arguing for an approach that covers all elements of the concept. This can improve the knowledge for future tourism students, but also policy decision makers in towns or small cities like La Línea. The project therefore has great relevance for stakeholders in tourism development. Furthermore, the project is manageable due to the author's knowledge of La Línea and access to the DMO and the actors involved. This makes the heritage project realistic to study in-depth with the time available and despite the COVID-19.

## Literature Review

A review of current literature gives background information which is required to establish the extent and significance of a study's research problem. It also contextualizes the study and its discussion (Gruba & Zobel, 2017).

As mentioned, by investigating place branding elements in the heritage project of La Línea, the thesis focuses on the two themes place branding and heritage tourism. The reason that it is place branding and not destination branding, is that the aim of the thesis is not only to investigate how the heritage project can affect external stakeholders (e.g. tourists or investors), but also the internal stakeholders of La Línea, referring to the city's residents.

The objective of the section is to select a holistic place branding approach. By holistic, the author refers to a tourism approach by local municipalities that covers both the external and internal stakeholders of the place, and in a sustainable manner. This approach is then utilized to investigate the place branding elements of the heritage project in La Línea.



The place branding review is more extensive than the heritage tourism review due to place branding being a more complex phenomenon, and because place branding is the primary point of interest in the thesis.

## Place branding

As the global economy developed over the recent decades, countries began competing with countries, regions with regions and cities with cities, to attract public resources, policy support, a talented workforce, and private investment (Acharya & Rahman, 2016). According to Klijn et al. (2012, p. 500), *“Place branding is one of the best-known applications of branding in the public sector”*, which is an important factor in the competition to attract the above mentioned. Place branding is a broad, multi-disciplinary research domain which covers a large variety of topics and disciplines, including urban planning, marketing, public policy, and sociology (Lucarelli & Berg, 2011).

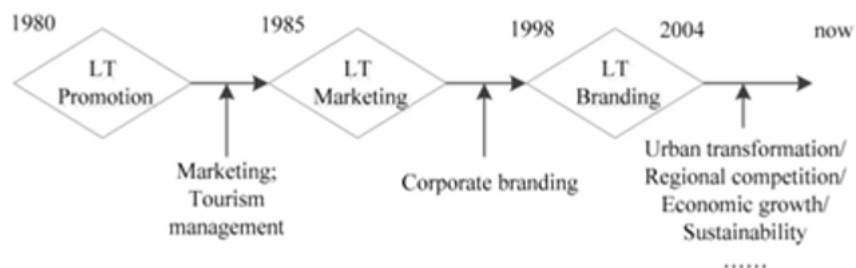
Place branding is a rather new phenomenon with 40 years of existence, but still with an evolution of change (Braun et al., 2014., De Noronha et al., 2017., Zenker et al., 2017). Furthermore, it is an umbrella term covering multiple concepts, which is why according to Ma et al. (2019, p.1), *“state-of-the-art knowledge about place branding as a concept is still fragmented and poorly understood”*. One example of this, is that many studies *“...seldom comprehensively explain the conceptual distinction between various strands of place branding research...”* (Ma et al., 2019, p. 2). A general definition of place branding has because of the above still not been accepted (e.g. Lucarelli & Berg, 2011, Vuignier, R, 2017, Hankinson, G, 2011). Ultimately though, according to Braun (2011, as cited in Klijn et al., 2012, p. 500), and much in accordance with Acharya and Rahman (2016) from the beginning of the section, *place branding is aimed at attracting residents, companies, tourists, or investors to a place.”*

The essence of place branding is therefore rather simple, but it is complex to practice due to the governance process with many different actors involved. A majority of these have crucial roles for the activities in the place to become successful. Quite often the actors have different perceptions about the place, the desirable solutions to problems, and different ideas about the desirable image to be communicated (Greenberg, 2008., Kavaratzis, 2008., Loken et al., 2010).

With the many elements in play in place branding and multiple stakeholders involved, one can understand why a generally accepted definition for the term has not yet emerged. This literature review does not seek an ultimate definition, but rather to evaluate the different approaches to the concept, and in the end choose the most interesting and relevant to study the heritage project. Before this, the origins of place branding are explained briefly along with some clarification of the different terms within the discipline. This is necessary to evaluate place branding adequately.

### Origins of place branding

Place branding has gone through three phases in its 40 years of practice. This conceptual evolution is illustrated as a timeline below in figure 1. The abbreviation 'LT' stands for location type which implies place, city, destination or urban (Ma et al., 2019).



**Figure 1: The evolution of place branding and its key factors (adapted from Ma et al., 2019, p.11)**

LT promotion started in 1980 and *“takes place in the periphery of place branding research and is not nearly as important as it once was”* (Ma et al., 2019, p. 11).

*“The origin of this body of research can be found in tourism management and focused on the governance of the city image and used promotion as an instrument to advertise cities as popular travel destinations”* (Ma et al., 2019, p. 11). Only cities which were highly dependent on tourism and holiday resorts engaged in this process, with the aim to attract different visitor segments to their destination. It was and still is a discipline that *“pays less attention to the actual development of cities or regions”* (Boisen et al., 2018 as cited in Ma et al., 2019, p. 11).

From 1988 to 2005, place branding research experienced a change, as it *“was influenced by new disciplines such as business management which paid attention to the application of marketing strategies on cities”* (Kavaratzis, 2004 & 2007., Ashworth, 1990., as cited in Ma et al., 2019, p. 11).

This was due to a transition of governing from a managerial to an entrepreneurial position and the increasing competition from globalization and continuous urbanization (Boisen et al., 2018., Harvey, 1989., Sevin, 2014).

*“Consequently, places need different marketing strategies to gain a competitive advantage and reputation”* (Acharya, 2016., as cited in Ma et al., 2019, p. 12). *“LT marketing stresses the application of a coherent, visible, attractive and unique set of marketing strategies and tactics designed to make cities more attractive. In this way, LT marketing substantially influenced actual urban development”* (Boisen et al., 2018., as cited in Ma et al., 2019, p. 12).

The last and current phase of the evolution of place branding is LT branding which is the concept of place branding as it is known today, and has developed key concepts such as brand identity and brand image (Anholt, 2010., Keller, 1993., Govers, 2009).

LT branding goes much further than LT promotion and LT marketing by not only selling cities or places, but aiming to align cities’ visions, missions, and strategies using a more systematic perspective (Milicevic et al., 2017., Hankinson, 2010., Boisen et al., 2018). *“The goals of branding activities are not just to obtain current resources but to manage and influence the long-term reputation of the location and focus on attitudes within (city) organizations and target groups”* (Boisen et al., 2018., as cited in Ma et al., 2019, p. 12). *“In addition to making the place more attractive, LT branding thus also helps cities to experience a transition”* (Ye & Bröjner, 2018., as cited in Ma et al., 2019, p. 12). Many places therefore use branding activities to try to acquire a strong reputation to become attractive (Dinnie, 2010., Hospers, 2010).

#### Clarifying place branding concepts

Based on Govers (2009), Ma et al. (2019, p. 13) state that *“place branding... has seen its spatial scope broaden and come to include research on town branding, city branding, regional branding, and national branding”*. Based on this, in this author’s view, place branding can be adapted slightly to fit the location where it is used. In the case of La Línea, a city, place branding and city branding is viewed as the same in this thesis. Also, *“city branding forms the core element of the place branding research field”* (Ma et al., 2019, p.13). So, when a city branding model by Kavaratzis

(2004) is used later in this section, it illustrates how place branding forms in a city, which is fitting to the case of La Línea.

As seen in figure 1, three terms stimulated and developed the evolution of place branding: marketing, tourism management and corporate branding (Ma et al., 2019). The term corporate branding is about companies and their products and has many similarities with place branding such as long-term development, various stakeholders, and dynamic concepts (Kavaratzis, 2009). Aspects of corporate branding can be applied to place branding, but the two disciplines are not identical. By employing corporate branding, tourism planners would need to treat the place *“as the whole entity of the products, in order to achieve consistency of the message sent”* (Kavaratzis, 2009, p. 30). Cities are more complex than companies, and corporate branding would therefore oversimplify the many aspects that all together shape a place (Andersson, 2014).

#### Place branding critique

Finally, *“critics have claimed that place branding is but a vague term”* (Ma et al., 2019, p. 13), doubting, according to multiple authors, *“whether place branding achieves its stated aim of in-depth redevelopment and will eventually be able to change the core identity of the place”* (Ma et al., 2019, p. 13). This author believes that this doubting view perhaps stems from insufficient understanding of the essence of branding.

As according to Klijn et al. (2012), brands are perceptual entities because they are communicated to potential consumers who then construct their own subjective meaning of it before they experience it. This means brands become contested if the ideas constructed by consumers differ from their view of reality, thus recreating or changing the meaning, associations, and perceptions of the given brand. Any place that seeks to redevelop its core identity must therefore first understand that brands are co-created by consumers and ultimately limited to how they perceive the place. Control over the brand, as often assumed in the more traditional literature on branding as according to Klijn et al. (2012), is therefore an illusion. Based on this, this author does not see place branding as a vague concept but rather a complicated one difficult to master.

## Approaches to place branding

The purpose of this sub-section is not to outline in detail the practical techniques used by cities to brand themselves, but to end with one place branding approach to investigate the place branding elements of the heritage project in La Línea.

To elaborate on what place branding is and aims to do from the introduction of the section, Kavaratzis (2008) states: *“brands communicate selected functional, physical, and emotional attributes of the place, thus giving it specific meaning. Associations are created that add particular psychological and emotional meaning to it”* (As cited in Klijn et al., 2012, p. 500). This is a crucial element to *“creating a favorable image of the place and differentiating it from competing places”*, a sub-goal of place branding, according to Kavaratzis (2008, as cited in Klijn et al., 2012, p. 500).

A place with a positive image and different from competing places, increases the likelihood of attracting residents, companies, tourists, or investors. With tourism being such a powerful sector, it plays a big part on how both internal and external stakeholders perceive the place. Therefore, tourism is automatically a crucial part in the governance of place branding.

## City branding model

The city branding model by Kavaratzis (2004) is used to illustrate how place branding develops in a city by the many elements and stakeholders it contains. According to Kavaratzis (2004, p. 66), the first step to understand city branding *“lies in the realization that all encounters with the city take place through perceptions and images”*.

Because of this, *“it is indeed the image of the city that needs to be planned and consequently marketed”* (Vermeulen, 2002 as cited in Kavaratzis, 2004, p. 66). *“It is the interaction of the ‘external’ with the ‘internal’ city that Graham (2002) describes which becomes the focal point for city branding”* (Kavaratzis, 2004, p. 66). What in the end makes place branding so complex is that *“everything a city consists of, everything that takes place in the city and is done by the city, communicates messages about the city’s image”* (Kavaratzis, 2004, p. 67). Many dynamics are therefore involved in city branding, and they have both functional as well as symbolic meaning (Kavaratzis, 2004).

Every government wishes to control the image of their place. In the city branding model shown below, the image communication box represents how the government of a city desires the image to be perceived by the consumers. This is known as brand identity and is in its most simple form a place's promise to its potential consumers (Temporal, 2002., Kapferer, 1992., Keller, 1993., Keller & Lehmann, 2006). Brand identity is a crucial first step in the process of establishing place branding, because as Keller et al. (2002, p. 6) state: *"you have to know who you are before you can convince anyone of it."*

Once a government knows the above, it can communicate the desired image through three distinct types of communication, namely primary, secondary, and tertiary (Kavaratzis, 2004).

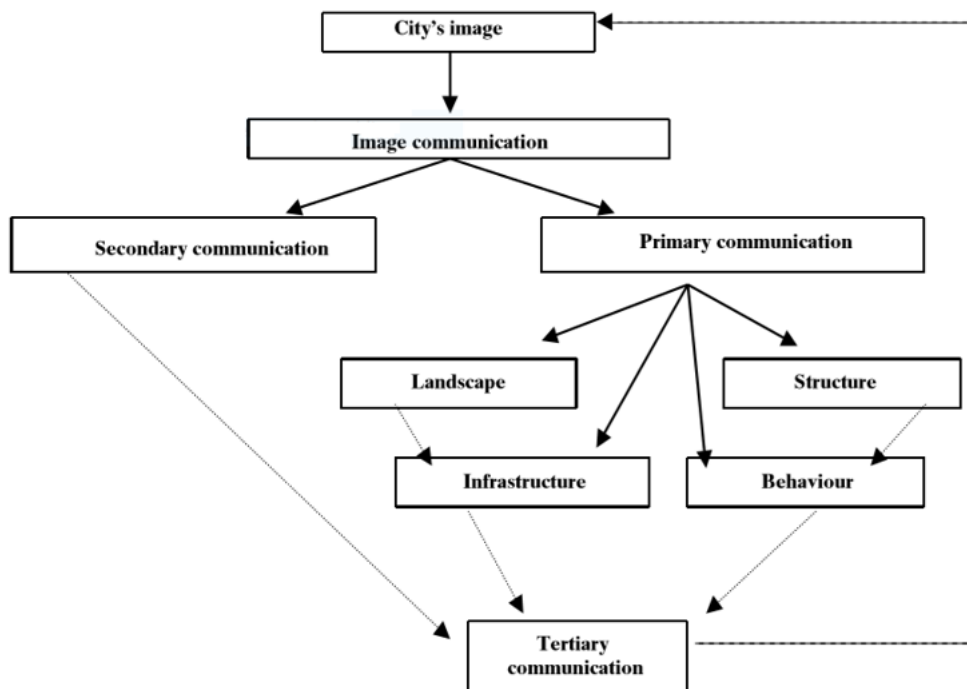


Figure 2: City branding model (adapted from Kavaratzis, 2004, p. 67)

The following three points are from Kavaratzis (2004, pp. 67, 68, 69).

- *"Primary communication relates to the communicative effects of a city's actions when communication is not the main goal of these actions. It is divided into four broad areas of intervention."*
- *"Secondary communication is the formal, intentional communication that most commonly takes place through well-known marketing practices... It is largely the same as what is*

*meant by the promotion component of the traditional marketing mix and it has been so far the one marketing variable that cities have adopted with great ease.”*

- *“Finally, tertiary communication refers to word of mouth, reinforced by media and competitors’ communication. It is linked with the rest by an interrupted line, as it is not controllable by marketers...”* The consumers of the city process the dynamics of the city in their minds and form their personal perception of it. All the perceptions that exist of the city are what makes the city’s image, hence the co-creation as mentioned in the place branding critique sub-section. *“...The whole branding process and the other two controllable types of image communication have as a goal to evoke and reinforce positive tertiary communication”.*

To put the case of this thesis in perspective to the city branding model, the image communication, or brand identity, of La Línea is formed by the mayor of the city Juan Franco and his administration. He has a 10-year plan which is explained in the sub-section *the DMO* in the analysis. The heritage tourism project is in the landscape box in the primary communication. *“‘Landscape strategies’ refer to fields of actions and decisions that are relevant to urban design, architecture, green spaces, and generally public spaces in the city. The increasingly popular use of public art is also included in this category, together with heritage planning”* (Kavaratzis, 2004, p. 67).

#### The internal brand of a city

One main key to the success and implementation of sustainable tourism development in a community is the support of stakeholders, (e.g. example citizens, entrepreneurs, and community leaders) (Gunn, 1994). A stakeholder can be identified as *“any group or individual who can affect or is affected by”* tourism development in an area (Feeeman 1984, p 46). This makes residents in a place an important group as they are affected by the actions in the city, but also as shown in the city branding model affects the development of the brand. According to Byrd (2007, p. 6), decisions made by the municipality in tourism development are *“...perceived by the local community as not being reflective of community interests and opinions”*, when these are made from the top down, where so-called experts make decisions.

Due to this perhaps, multiple authors, as according to Jørgensen (2015, p. 152) in his article *“Developing a city brand...”*, state that *“increasing attention has been paid to the importance of stakeholders, stakeholder engagement, stakeholder relations, stakeholders support and strategic interests in order to avoid stakeholder resistance.”* Kavaratzis (2012) concludes that effective place brands are rooted in the involvement of stakeholders, and Braun et al (2013) have analyzed the literature concerning the importance of residents in place branding. They argue that the existing residents should be prioritized as they form the most prominent audience for place branding. This is due to several factors, as engaged residents in a place can: *“lead to increased ownership of the brand and therefore more sense of responsibility for its development, management and external reputation”* (Braun et al., 2013, p. 21). Such positive behavior by locals toward visitors is self-promotion which is *“...both (the) easiest and most effective...”* for a place. *“...A place is sending messages to itself. The purpose is the fostering of a civic consciousness and self-confidence. This is both an end in itself and a necessary precondition for external marketing”* (Ashworth, 2001 as cited in Kavaratzis, 2004, pp. 69-70).

The above stresses the importance of creating a strong internal brand. According to Govers (2011), this requires creating conditions for local brand ambassadorship by building the tourism brand based on the identity of the place. By identity, Govers (2011, p. 230) refers to *“local people, culture, heritage, symbolism, leadership, a cooperative sense of belonging, and heterogeneity”*.

Successfully constructing an image that in general is viewed positively by local stakeholders is a complex task. It is a process of forming a *“reputation that has to be earned and it is more about strategy, substance and, symbolic actions than communications (promotion)”* (Anholt, 2008 as cited in Govers, 2011, p. 229). Place branding must be a long-term strategy to deal with the complexity of a city and because of this, Andersson (2014, p. 151) suggests *“that place branding research can move beyond a routine explanation of the adaption of corporate branding to places, into a wider understanding of societal, political, spatial and economical structures that in interplay create what is known to be place branding.”* Such understanding could be a foundation for governments to practice a place branding approach where substance and symbolic actions aim to improve the quality of life for all potential consumers, but especially those living in the place.



## Main priority in place branding

In the article *from city marketing to city branding* (2004), Kavaratzis states: *“this study begins with the belief that the single, ultimate goal of city marketing is to increase living standards for city residents”* (p. 71). He then explains his perspective on place branding further by quoting Ave (1994): *“‘... (place branding) evaluates the benefits and costs of a specific project for the whole urban community, not just for the direct beneficiaries or the users of the action carried out. This requires a government action directed at discovering the needs of citizens and groups who cannot speak for themselves. It also requires flexibility to change, an ability to gather new possibilities along the way, and an evaluation of the finished service’s effect on the whole city with a view to successive improvement”* (Ave, 1994 as cited in Kavaratzis, 2004, P. 70).

Attracting tourists, investors, and future residents is a goal in place branding, but it cannot happen at the cost of neglecting locals’ needs and thus not improving or worsening their quality of life: *“City branding is understood as the means both for achieving competitive advantage in order to increase inward investment and tourism, and also for achieving community development, reinforcing local identity and identification of the citizens with their city and activating all social forces to avoid social exclusion and unrest”* (Kavaratzis, 2004, p. 70).

Besides Kavaratzis, other authors such as Ashworth, Govers, and Andersson seem to support this type of place branding approach, based on viewed literature of the topic.

## Key elements to attract visitors to a place

Even though this author believes that residents should be the priority in a place branding strategy, attracting tourists is an important factor to gain revenue. As mentioned, a favorable tourism image is a brand that gives specific meaning to both internal and external consumers. Different key terms are in this regard often mentioned in place branding research such as authenticity, identity, local brand ambassadorship, recognizability, and uniqueness (e.g. Govers, 2013., Needham, 2006).

In the aspect of attracting tourists, recognizability and uniqueness are considered important elements by many place branding researchers such as Danesi, (2006), Lees-Marshment (2009), and Loken et al. (2010). According to them, the more recognizable and unique a brand is for consumers, the more effective will it be. Ren and Blichfeldt (2011) state in their article,

*“challenging simplicity in place branding”, that contemporary destination branding and marketing strategies assume “that relying on one or a few identities of the destination is the most efficient way to attract visitors” (P. 432). This is due to the belief that this will lead to the destination to be viewed as unique (Gilmore, 2002., Anholt, 2007., 2008), and that the clarity deriving from the recognizable brand ensures that the place stands out from others (Ren and Blichfeldt, 2011).*

This might be true but as Ren and Blichfeldt (2011, pp. 422 & 423) points out: *“quite surprisingly, not much research has focused on potential tourists’ perceptions, and use, of destination material during their up-front vacation decision-making processes. As a result, we (i.e. academia) do not know whether the conception of potential tourists as people who need and want to draw on simplified images is right or wrong”*. They further state (P. 422) that the assumption of clarity in a brand *“may well be said to rely on an uncorroborated understanding of the tourist as a mass tourist... It may be erroneous to presume that any given tourist always prefers to be confronted with simplified images and unique selling propositions... The question remains, if an accomplished traveler might not in fact be attracted to less homogeneous, uniform, and well-groomed places and brands. Could it be that the post-modern tourist is especially drawn to complex places seeing these as more intriguing?”* In this regard of travelling and exploring places, authenticity becomes a key term.

Timothy and Boyd (2018, p. 178) are under this impression as well: *“...People are becoming more sophisticated in their travel tastes and desires; many are showing more interest in the deeper meanings of places, local identities and their own connections to the places they visit.”*

#### A holistic place branding approach

Branding a clear identity to represent a place is an approach that draws much from corporate branding, treating the given place *“as the whole entity of the products, in order to achieve consistency of the message sent”* as stated earlier in this section as according to Kavaratzis (2004). He also argues that marketing implementation in cities has resulted in a tendency toward ‘sameness’, which then diminishes local identity. Balmer and Greyser (2002) add to this argument that considering the identity of a place to be a monolithic phenomenon is a narrow premise.

According to Andersson (2014, p. 143), the reason behind the above could be due to the following: *“Researchers like Dinnie (2004) and Hankinson (2001, 2007) argue that conceptual frameworks promoted in the place branding research literature are often developed by practitioners and consultants, working with place branding using concepts and techniques adopted from corporate branding (see also Kavaratzis & Ashworth, 2005; Kotler et al., 1993).”* According to Andersson, this procedure develops a kind of ‘best practice’ concept which is negatively meant because it generates a ‘paradox of similarity’, as places grow more and more alike using the same branding strategies. The consequence of this is that the complexity of a place becomes neglected and leads to oversimplification.

Concluding this literature review on place branding research by several authors, this author sees a holistic place branding approach as one respecting the complexity of a place when developing tourism. This consists of local decision-makers prioritizing residents in the tourism development of the city, a place offering tourism attributes that can be explored, and not only focusing on a few tourism attributes to gain a clear image.

### Gap in the literature

Furthermore, as mentioned in the introduction of the place branding section, place branding is an umbrella term which is why according to Ma et al. (2019, p.1), *“state-of-the-art knowledge about place branding as a concept is still fragmented and poorly understood.”* One example is that many studies *“...seldom comprehensively explain the conceptual distinction between various strands of place branding research...”* (Ma et al., 2019, p. 2). As stated in the beginning of the literature review, this thesis covers place branding and not only destination branding due to the interest of also investigating how the heritage project can affect the internal stakeholders of La Línea. However, in the research of place branding, much literature on destination branding, a sub-concept to the former, was found to both represent place branding as a whole, and contradict the essence of place branding of focusing just as much on the internal stakeholders of a place. This author therefore experienced the gap in the literature of place branding still being fragmented and poorly understood according to Ma et al. (2019). This gap cannot be fully closed however, if place branding research viewing external stakeholders as the main priority keeps being published. There is a need of an overall agreement of the essence of the concept of place branding. If the main idea

of place branding is to first prioritize citizens and then gain economic revenue, then destination branding could become much clearer as its essence would be to create a strong brand identity with respect to the given place's complexity.

This is how this thesis aims to investigate the case of the heritage project in La Línea, and thus, displaying the interconnection between place branding and its sub-concept of destination branding.

## Heritage Tourism

According to Timothy (2018, p. 178) the generally accepted definition of heritage is *“that which we inherit from the past, use today and pass on to future generations...”* One would perhaps think that heritage tourism then simply is the utilization of these inherited historic resources to attract visitors to a place. However, more aspects are included in heritage tourism.

### Origin

A timeline of heritage tourism research as shown below is based on Timothy's (2018) short piece *Making sense of heritage tourism: Research trends in a maturing field of study*.

**1930s – 1970s:** cultural resources were acknowledged as recreational and educational assets by academic observers of tourism, leisure, and culture.

**1980s:** Heritage tourism as an explicit type of tourism did not get acknowledged, defined, and researched until this time. The field saw a rapid rise in academic interest in the **1990s**. It merely consisted of descriptive accounts of supply and demand. This changed, due to a heightened interest in cultural heritage as a tourism product, to analytical research, focusing on theoretical and conceptual development. This included cultural experience, people's relationships with the heritage they consume, identity reinforcement through heritage visits, and intra-group solidarity.

This trend developed further during the early **2000s** with ...*“efforts to understand cultural heritage tourism on a deeper level, such as the experiential dimensions between people and the resources they visit, as well as the broader societal implications of heritage-based tourism”* (P. 178). *“The subject is of increasing interest from a range of disciplines and its study is perceived as useful for understanding social behavior of individuals and society as a whole”* (Hewison, 1987., Nuryanti, 1996 as cited in Poria et al 2003, p. 239).

This led to a different understanding and management of heritage tourism. Researchers began to also see it as a social phenomenon instead of something solely for tourists, and argued that one of the benefits is that *“the relationship between the local residents and the heritage presented can influence the locals’ attitudes toward development”* (Uriely et al. 2002 as cited in Poria et al., 2003, p. 239). Uriely et al. (2002, p. 859) used the term “heritage proximity”, *“used to define the perceptual distance between residents and heritage promotion in a particular location”*.

Research also began to challenge the perception that all tourists visited heritage sites only to “gaze” and suggested that people began looking for emotional and deeper experiences (Urry, 1990., Poria et al., 2003).

The above represents an increasingly holistic view of heritage tourism and the development of the field. Although scholarship became increasingly sophisticated, Timothy (2018) states that heritage tourism research is still in the early stages of maturation, due to “one-off case studies with limited theoretical strength and generalizability still dominate most academic research...” However, *“bigger picture research is starting to emerge, and concepts are being developed that emphasize both the products being consumed and the people who consume them”* (P. 179).

In the following sub-section, heritage tourism is viewed in relation to the above stated and the place branding approach found suitable to the case of La Línea.

#### Importance of heritage tourism in place branding

History and cultural heritage are often found to be an integral part of place identity and its landscape, due to it being a unique characteristic of a city. And as far as gaining revenue, culture is the engine of economic development in many places, as it helps to enhance the attractiveness of destinations (Fan, 2014., Timothy, 2018). So, when developing a destination brand identity, a place *“incorporates relevant local cultural characteristics”* (Konecnik and Go, 2008 as cited in Fan, 2014, p. 279).

As mentioned, place branding is also oriented toward residents, and according to Timothy (2018), heritage tourism is viewed as a discipline that can benefit both internal and external stakeholders of a place. This is to its potential to *“sharpen the city’s image and play a constitutional role in the perception of the city by its own residents...”* (Van der Burg and Russo, 2005 as cited in Fan, 2014.,

p. 280). In this aspect, Uriely et al (2002) state that identification for locals with what is promoted can generate positive attitudes toward tourism development, and according to Timothy (2018), social solidarity can be encouraged through cultural tourism experiences (Timothy 2018).

The issue, however, can be *“resident attitudes toward tourism development in heritage sites, where only part of the local population is affiliated or identifies with what is being promoted”* (Uriely et al., 2002, p. 859).

## Methodology

The methodology section constructs the framework of how the thesis intends to do research to gather material. Along with the literature review, this collection of data creates the analysis. This section therefore presents the chosen philosophy, design, and methods so the findings presented in the analysis can be perceived as trustworthy by the reader.

### Different approaches to a study

The approach of a study is the *“procedure for research that span the steps from broad assumptions to detailed methods of data collection, analysis, and interpretation”* as according to Creswell (2014, p. 31). He further mentions that the process of this contains philosophical assumptions, research design, and research methods along with the nature of the research problem or aim of the study, the researchers’ personal experiences, and the audiences for the study.

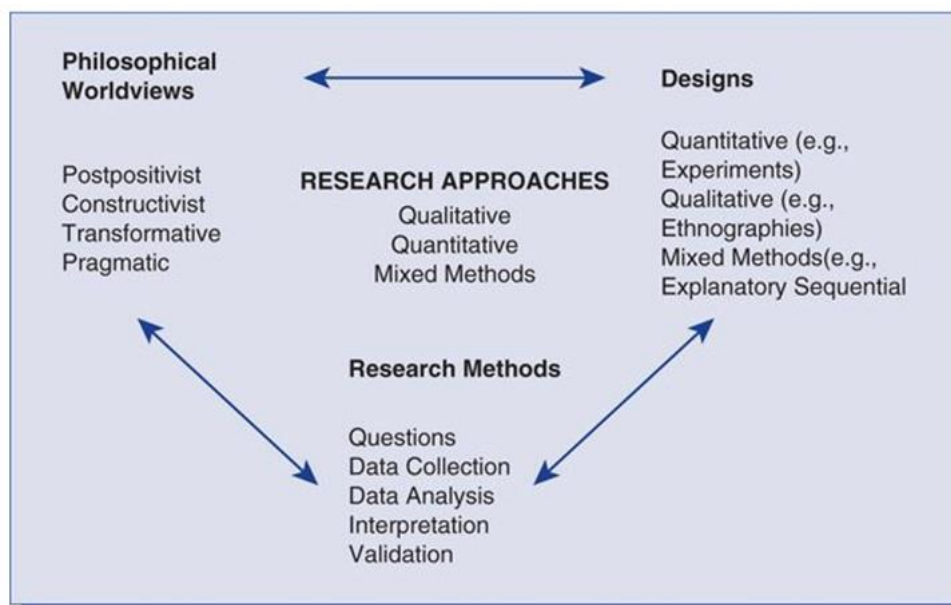
The three approaches to research are qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods. The first two represent different ends on a continuum and the latter resides in the middle of this incorporating elements of both approaches. *“Often the distinction between qualitative research and quantitative research is framed in terms of using words (qualitative) rather than numbers (quantitative), or using closed-ended questions (quantitative hypotheses) rather than open-ended questions (qualitative interview questions)”* (Creswell, 2014, p. 32).

### Research Philosophy

A paradigm, as called by Guba and Lincoln (1994) and McGregor and Murnane (2010), or a worldview, as called by Creswell (2014), is *“...a set of assumptions, concepts, values, and practices*

*that constitutes a way of viewing reality...*” (McGregor & Murnane, 2010, p. 419). When conducting and evaluating research, a researcher must be conscious of which paradigm is being applied because *“...they influence the practice of research and (therefore) need to be identified”* (McGregor & Murnane, 2010., Creswell, 2014, p. 35).

In the figure below, the interconnection of the different worldviews, designs, and methods are illustrated, and how they form one of the three research approaches in the middle (Creswell, 2014).



**Figure 3: A framework for research – the interconnection of worldviews, design, and research methods**  
(adapted from Creswell, 2014, p. 35)

According to Creswell (2014, pp. 35 & 36), *“although there is ongoing debate about what worldviews or beliefs researchers bring to inquiry, I will highlight four that are widely discussed in the literature: postpositivism, constructivism, transformative, and pragmatism.”*

According to Guba & Lincoln (1994, p. 109), *“the basic beliefs that define inquiry paradigms can be summarized by the responses given by proponents of any given paradigm to three fundamental questions, which are interconnected in such a way that the answer given to anyone question, taken in any order, constrains how the others may be answered. We have selected an order that we believe reflects a logical (if not necessary) primacy:”*



- the ontological question: What is the form and nature of reality and, therefore, what is there that can be known about it?
- Epistemological: What is the nature of the relationship between the knower or would-be knower and what can be known?
- methodological question: How can the inquirer (would-be knower) go about finding out what ever he or she believes can be known?

Below is illustrated the three fundamental questions and the four paradigms. Note that Guba and Lincoln do not have the exact same worldviews listed as Creswell.

<i>Item</i>	<i>Positivism</i>	<i>Postpositivism</i>	<i>Critical Theory et al.</i>	<i>Constructivism</i>
Ontology	naive realism— “real” reality but apprehendable	critical realism— “real” reality but only imperfectly and probabilistically apprehendable	historical realism— virtual reality shaped by social, political, cultural, economic, ethnic, and gender values; crystallized over time	relativism—local and specific constructed realities
Epistemology	dualist/objectivist; findings true	modified dualist/ objectivist; critical tradition/community; findings probably true	transactional/ subjectivist; value- mediated findings	transactional/ subjectivist; created findings
Methodology	experimental/ manipulative; verification of hypotheses; chiefly quantitative methods	modified experi- mental/manipulative; critical multiplism; falsification of hypotheses; may include qualitative methods	dialogic/dialectical	hermeneutical/dialectical

**Figure 4: Basic beliefs of alternative inquiry paradigms (adapted from Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p. 109)**

For this study to investigate the place branding elements in the heritage project, the attitudes, and opinions of the involved stakeholders in the project must be discovered. The critical theory and constructivism have some values in common but according to Guba and Lincoln (2014, p. 113), the purpose of inquiry in the critical theory worldview “*is the critique and transformation of the social, political, cultural, economic, ethnic, and gender structures that constrain and exploit humankind, by engagement in confrontation, even conflict.*” Constructivism is “*understanding and reconstruction of the constructions that people (including the inquirer) initially hold, aiming toward consensus but still open to new interpretations as information and sophistication improve*” (P.



113). The constructivist approach is adopted as guiding philosophy in this thesis. The answers to the three fundamental questions are given below, explained briefly, and showing how through this worldview, the thesis can reach its aim (Guba and Lincoln, 2014).

- Constructivism's relativism assumes that multiple, apprehendable, and sometimes conflicting social realities are the products of human intellects, but that these may change as their constructors become more informed and sophisticated.
- Transactional/subjectivist assumption sees knowledge as created in interaction among investigator and respondents.
- Constructivism's hermeneutic/dialectic methodology is aimed at the reconstruction of previously held constructions. The final aim is to distill a consensus construction that is more informed and sophisticated than any of the predecessor constructions (including, of course, the etic construction of the investigator).

The major elements of the four different worldviews are presented below as according to Creswell (2014., p. 35). Here, constructivism is also included as in Guba and Lincoln (1994).

Postpositivism	Constructivism
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Determination</li> <li>• Reductionism</li> <li>• Empirical observation and measurement</li> <li>• Theory verification</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understanding</li> <li>• Multiple participant meanings</li> <li>• Social and historical construction</li> <li>• Theory generation</li> </ul>
Transformative	Pragmatism
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Political</li> <li>• Power and justice oriented</li> <li>• Collaborative</li> <li>• Change-oriented</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consequences of actions</li> <li>• Problem-centered</li> <li>• Pluralistic</li> <li>• Real-world practice oriented</li> </ul>

Figure 5: Four worldviews (adapted from Creswell, 2014, p. 36)

To elaborate more on constructivism, *“the goal of the research is to rely as much as possible on the participants’ views of the situation being studied. The questions become broad and general so that the participants can construct the meaning of a situation...”* (Creswell, 2014, p. 37).

According to Creswell (2014) this is made possible with a qualitative approach by having the belief that *“individuals develop subjective meanings of their experiences— meanings directed toward certain objects or things”* (P. 37). The meanings are varied and multiple, and formed by interaction with others, which is why constructivism also is called social constructivism. A key element for the

researcher is therefore to look for the overall complexity. In this thesis, the meanings of the participants are toward the heritage project and La Línea as a place to visit.

With the approach of social constructivism, a theory can only be developed at the end of a project after all meanings and views of the participants have been analyzed. This is further explained at the end of the methodology section.

### Research design

Within a qualitative approach (or a quantitative or mixed methods approach), a researcher also decides on a certain type of study which provides specific direction for the procedure of the project. This study's research design is a case study where the *"researcher develops an in-depth analysis of a case, often a program, event, activity, process, or one or more individuals"* (Creswell, 2014, p. 43). As mentioned, the in-depth analysis of the heritage project in La Línea requires interpretative research of the project's stakeholders. This process involves the researcher to have encounters with the participants which *"introduces a range of strategic, ethical, and personal issues into the qualitative research process"* (Locke, Spirduso, & Silverman, 2013 as cited in Creswell, 2014, p. 237). This includes avoiding bias, explaining the reader the connection between the researcher and the study, and reach a level of trustworthiness in the results presented. These issues are important to address for a researcher as they are impossible to avoid in a case study which typically is an intense experience for the researcher as the person brings personal values into the study (Creswell, 2014). This is very relevant in this research, as the author has a relation to the city of La Línea and thereby also certain views on the place.

### Role of the researcher

The past experiences for the researcher in La Línea shaped the idea and then purpose of the thesis. These experiences gave a unique insight and preunderstanding to explore the heritage project. On the other hand, this also presents the risk of bias, if the researcher unreservedly lets these views control the interpretation of those of the participants and then *"actively look for evidence to support their positions, and to create favorable or unfavorable conclusions about the sites or participants"* as according to Creswell (2014., p. 237). It is crucial to be conscious of this issue for the researcher in the data collection, and for the author in the analysis of the findings.

## Research methods

With the philosophical worldview and design of the thesis in place, the procedure of the research moves from broad assumptions to the detailed methods to collect data. *“The choice of methods turns on whether the intent is to specify the type of information to be collected in advance of the study or to allow it to emerge from participants in the project”* (Creswell, 2014., p. 45). Due to the qualitative approach of a case study, where the assumption of subjectivism sees knowledge as created in interaction among investigator and respondents, the information that the researcher seeks can emerge from the participants. Whatever themes or patterns that emerge from the observation of the participants behaviors, are what the researcher interprets. In this process, which occurs in the analysis, the researcher seeks to establish the meaning of the participants’ views on the heritage project in La Línea. Finally, the findings can be distilled to reach the aim of the study.

Before the data collection procedure is explained, a short sub-section of secondary research is presented as this also plays a crucial part in the thesis.

## Secondary research

According to Driscoll (2011) in her article *Introduction to primary research*, a project should begin with secondary research prior to primary research, to provide understanding of the topics of the study. In this thesis, the literature review on place branding and heritage tourism constitutes secondary research. This knowledge is then applied to support or counter-argue the collected data in the analysis section. Furthermore, understanding the topics of the study, will also help *“narrow down your interest area and eventually develop a research question or hypothesis”* (Driscoll, 2011., p. 158). An example of this in this thesis is the title of the project *heritage tourism as a means to place branding*. Different working titles were used before and during the study process as a ‘road sign’ for the author, and after studying the literature of the topics, it was understood how heritage tourism and place branding are connected and could be applied to the case study of La Línea.

Finally, secondary research on the DMO of La Línea and the heritage project is limited to non-existing.

## Primary research

As opposed to what can be found in a book, database or journal, primary research is collected firsthand by the researcher. According to Driscoll (2011., p. 154), *“the ultimate goal in conducting primary research is to learn about something new that can be confirmed by others and to eliminate our own biases in the process.”*

## Ethical considerations

As mentioned earlier in the research design sub-section, a researcher must address specific issues regarding the process of data collection.

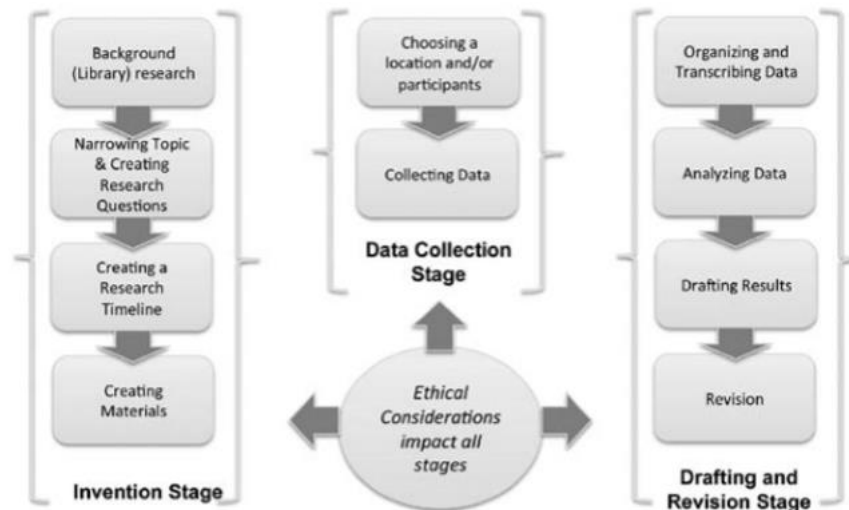
Respondents must participate voluntarily. In this thesis, one potential participant expressed enthusiasm about the project and conducting an interview. The researcher on more than one occasion tried to make a final agreement, but for whatever reason it was not possible in the end. A researcher must find the balance of pushing for valuable data and respecting potential participant's privacy.

Further, respondents must agree on all terms that the researcher may desire, such as voice recording etc. Confidentiality and anonymity are other factors to consider as respondents may reveal embarrassing or damaging information. In these cases, participants' identities should be kept anonymous when writing the results (Driscoll, 2011). This is not relevant in this thesis, however. Researcher bias as mentioned earlier, *“might be present in the way you ask questions, the way you take notes, or the conclusions you draw from the data you collect”* as according to Driscoll (2014., p. 156). This is viewed further in the sub-section regarding the interviews conducted.

These ethics were considered by the researcher before, during and after research was conducted. The process of conducting research in the thesis is demonstrated below.

## Research timeline

Just like the writing process in a project, the research process must be planned to be performed effectively, stay on track, and to manage time (Driscoll, 2011).



**Figure 6: The research process (adapted from Driscoll, 2011, p. 157)**

The author's interest in La Línea as a city and place of tourism led to background research on the topics of heritage tourism and place branding. This new knowledge then narrowed down the scope of the thesis and formed a greater idea of its overall aim. The researcher interviewed tourism planner Inmaculada Sanchez of the DMO of La Línea to gain background knowledge of the project, its purpose, and which stakeholders were involved. This interview is referred to as Project interview. Another interview was planned with her when the researcher had the material ready. Inmaculada Sanchez mentioned another stakeholder involved in the project, Ismael Ruiz of the non-profit organization Association Ruta de los Búncers who was then contacted and informed about the thesis. An interview was agreed, and Ismael Ruiz mentioned two other stakeholders that could be of interest for the researcher to interview. These were Encarni Rodriguez of the Culture Department of the Municipality and José Martínez Téllez of Protección Histórica Linense who were then contacted, informed, and interviews agreed when the researcher had the material created. The process of creating the materials was based on the newly obtained knowledge on the topics of the thesis. The researcher prepared an interview guide for the interviews as seen in appendix 2. How the interviews were then performed is explained in the following sub-sections. When data was collected, it was organized and transcribed immediately after as the researcher had experienced from previous projects that this manner is by far the most effective, as the encounter with the respondent is still fresh in the memory. After this, when it was suitable in the study process for the researcher, the data were analyzed, drafted, and revised. In this process, key notes

and themes highlighted from the findings were sent to the participants to provide them the opportunity to comment on the interpretations the researcher had drawn from their interview.

One conclusion from the research process is that as it went on, the researcher learned more and more about the heritage project in La Línea which led to changes and modifications in the creation process of the material to the participants. The design turned out to be emerging.

Creswell (2014) states that four basic types of procedures to conduct research exist in a qualitative study through unstructured or semi-structured forms. These are observations, interviews, documents, and visual materials.

### *Observation*

According to Creswell (2014., p. 239), a *“qualitative observation is when the researcher takes field notes on the behavior and activities of individuals at the research site.”* Due to the interpretation center, which forms the heritage project, only being in its first phase of construction, this was not possible. What could have been a productive method, however, could have been an observation on the site of the bunker where the interpretation center will be built with one of the project leaders. This firsthand experience with a participant in that person’s natural setting would make him or her comfortable to have a natural conversation of the project. Had it not been for the pandemic of the COVID-19 which made research in the field impossible and took place before the researcher had chosen participants in the research process, this researcher would have liked either an unstructured or semi-structured interview at the research site with only a few questions prepared with one of the project leaders. The encounter would have been recorded and the aim would have been that due to the nature of the informal conversation, it would have provided aspects that might not had occurred otherwise to the researcher in a formal setting. This style of loose interviewing also requires good attending and observation skills from the researcher (Creswell, 2014).

### *The in-depth interview*

A qualitative interview can consist of interviewing face-to-face in-person, over the telephone, in focus groups or via E-mail (Creswell, 2014).

Since the researcher lived in La Línea at the time, all interviews were planned to occur at the natural setting of the participants, hence their workplace or at a café if they preferred. The researcher did make one interview like this before the state of alarm in Spain due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This was an unstructured open questioned interview at the DMO of La Línea. It was the second step in the entire process of the thesis, shortly after the decision to write about the heritage project. The interview was conducted in English as the participant spoke it decently, and the aim was for the researcher to understand the frame of the heritage project. The interview is referred to as (Project interview) and its transcription can be found in appendix 1. The researcher discovered that the original heritage project, which would cover the entire fortification system of La Línea in collaboration with the region of Andalucía, had been put on hold due to legal disputes. This was originally the project that the author wanted to write his thesis about. It was then explained by the DMO that another much smaller heritage project was in development managed by only locals in La Línea.

An interview guide was then prepared for the researcher to interview the participants of the study. Two interviews were conducted as semi-structured over telephone. The participants were first sent Emails in advance explaining the purpose of the thesis and with the prepared questions, so the participants knew what they were getting into and further that the researcher would like to record the conversation. The interviews were conducted in Spanish to make the participants comfortable which would create deeper answers as opposed to if they had been conducted in English. When transcribing the two interviews and translating them into English, a native speaker assisted in the process whenever the researcher had doubt of a translation.

To control the interviews over telephone, the researcher strived to be as direct as possible with concise questions in order not to confuse the participants and to make sure every question was answered one at a time (Driscoll, 2011). The questions were open-ended due to the interest of gaining insight of the participants' views and the meaning they had constructed in their minds about the heritage project. To avoid bias, the researcher made sure not to formulate any leading questions to affect the participants' answers.

The final interview was conducted over Email. The researcher preferred to conduct all interviews over telephone to be able to record them as evidence in the material, and, furthermore, an

interview through Email is not a conversation, and it therefore eliminates the possibility for the researcher to ask for elaboration or create new questions on the spot. However, the participants were informed that answering the questions sent to their Email in writing would also be greatly appreciated in order not to 'scare' any participants away. The interview turned out to be satisfying with deep responses from the participant who also was very open to answer any extra questions that would spring off to the researcher based on the participant's answers.

#### *Documents & audio-visual material*

A private document of the author's prior project on La Línea was used. The title of the project was: *La Línea de la Concepción as a tourism destination: how the local stakeholders view their city as a place of tourism*. Here, six local stakeholders each representing different parts of the tourism scene of La Línea were interviewed. Tourism planner Inmaculada Sanchez of the DMO was one of the participants. The project is referred to as (La Línea semester project). In the analysis of this thesis, some of the participants' answers from that project are used to better explain the tourism scene of La Línea and the city as a place to both live and visit. These answers can be seen in appendix 7 where the major findings of the study are highlighted in a table. Finally, pictures of the bunkers in La Línea are used to illustrate the landscape of the heritage project. Some are from Google and some from the DMO of La Línea's Facebook page. No further audio-visual material is used.

#### *Critique of the data collection*

The researcher had a big decision to make when discovering that the original heritage project in collaboration with the DMO of the region of Andalucía had been indefinitely suspended: change the study of the thesis or do research on the other heritage project of a much smaller scale. Due to the interest of La Línea, being on the location of the study, and having the relation to the DMO and their network of contacts, the researcher decided to stick with the topic. The consequence has been that only a total of four stakeholders were identified due to the size of the project. According to Creswell (2014), a study with a qualitative approach should have about five to six participants, although this is solely an estimate from his part. Three of the four stakeholders agreed to participate, and the researcher acknowledges that this is a low number of respondents in a thesis. However, the author stands with the decision of writing the thesis on the heritage project in La



Línea as it is an interesting and important case study as explained in the introduction. Furthermore, the benefit of conducting interviews with only a few participants is that their involvement in the project can be analyzed in-depth to form a strong analysis.

### Data analysis

This sub-section is used to show how the data collection was analyzed to make sense of the participants' responses. An interview guide for conducting the interviews can be seen in appendix 2. When the interviews were transcribed, they were read through several times to *"provide a general sense of the information and an opportunity to reflect on its overall meaning"* (Creswell, 2014, 247). In the process of coding the data, the first phase consisted of writing down different specific words or short sentences in a document for each interview. This was first performed with the regard to describe the interview, and then with the regard to highlight specific words that the author felt could represent a deeper meaning or a certain pattern. From these two new documents, key notes were categorized. Each category was given a theme that represented its idea. These themes were then inspected to see which interrelated both in the regard of agreement and contradiction within the respondents. Finally, the themes were compared to key notes from the literature review to interpret the data in the light of place branding theory.

Below is illustrated this process of data analyzing in a figure by Creswell (2014, p. 247). The process starts from the bottom, but once themes have been developed, the researcher can always go back and revise to look for new findings and interrelations. In the data analysis appendix, the key notes and themes found from the data analysis can be viewed. Key notes and themes are also highlighted from the literature review and put in the appendix, for the reader to see what themes the analysis consists of.

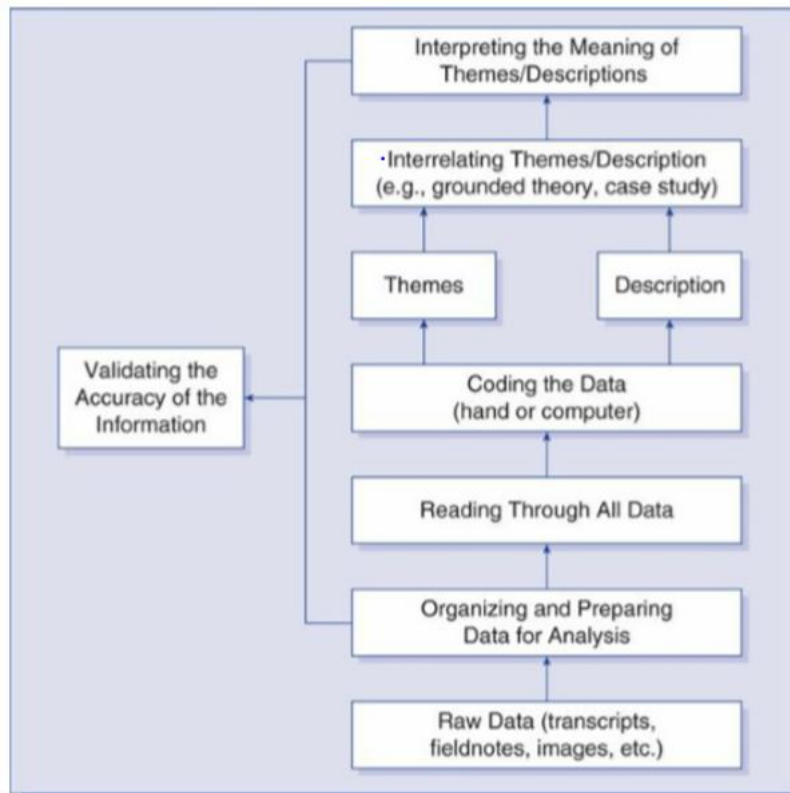


Figure 7: Data analysis in qualitative research (adapted from Creswell, 2014, p. 247)

### Validity and reliability

The procedure of the methodology section is to display a thoroughness and seriousness in the research of the thesis to gain credibility and trustworthiness from the reader. This is extra important in a qualitative research approach that relies on subjective constructions throughout the study (Brink, 1993).

According to Gibbs (2007), “*qualitative validity means that the researcher checks for the accuracy of the findings by employing certain procedures, while qualitative reliability indicates that the researcher’s approach is consistent across different researchers and different project*” (as cited in Creswell, 2014). Based on Creswell (2014), different approaches have been used in this project to display the validity and reliability:

Since the study only consists of three participants, the method of triangulating their information was used as shown in the data analysis. The participants’ responses were examined, and themes identified and interrelated to the participants to build a coherent analysis.

When the themes were identified they were sent to the participants to present them the opportunity to comment on the interpretation of the interviews by the author. This was done to determine the themes accuracy.

The thesis strives to use *“a rich, thick description to convey the findings”* (Creswell, 2014, p. 251) both linguistically and by providing photos of the bunkers’ landscape. Furthermore, the researcher explains his background in the city of La Línea and affiliation to the DMO to display honesty and reflection on how this background shapes the interpretation of the findings.

### Research approach

To study the heritage project in La Línea, a qualitative approach, and that of a social constructivism, is adopted to interpret the views of the participants. The thesis is a case study analyzing the heritage project in-depth, and the researcher uses reflexivity to be aware of position of bias. The analysis of the themes from the data analysis and the literature review generates a pattern of meaning used to reach the aim of the thesis. The thesis therefore uses an inductive approach developing a theory of the heritage project at the end of the study. However, a deductive thinking also plays an important role in a qualitative research approach as explained in Creswell (2014, p. 234): *“Deductively, researchers look back at their data from the themes to determine if more evidence can support each theme or whether they need to gather additional information.”*

### Analysis

For the author to be able to analyze the participants’ subjective meanings conducted from the qualitative interviews, the stakeholder’s roles in the project must first be understood. The analysis section is divided into two parts; first, the involved stakeholder organizations and the participants representing them are presented in a stakeholder map, and their roles in the heritage project and the process of it are then analyzed. This provides a deeper understanding for the second part to analyze the findings of the data collection.

## Stakeholder map - the involved stakeholders in the heritage project

What makes the stakeholder analysis of the heritage project interesting in the eyes of the author, is the composition of the stakeholders involved consisting of the Culture and Tourism Departments of the municipality and a non-profit organization with a passion for the military history of La Línea.

### *Ruta de los Búncers*

The information in this sub-section is from the interview, simply referred to as ARB, with the participant representing the above-mentioned organization. The interview can be found in appendix 3. The organization does not have a web page, it only communicates through its Facebook site.

In 2008, the then counselor of culture in La Línea Alfonso Escudra wanted to dig up the bunkers, clean them, and display their true worth as heritage of the city. This project never became a reality, however, due to budget cuts for the culture department, and then a change of government in 2010.

A few years later, a group of residents in La Línea, inspired by the vision of Alfonso Escudra, created a non-profit organization called Asociación cultural Ruta de los Búncers (from now on referred to as ARB) with the purpose of giving La Línea a cultural and touristic space in the city.

The main objective is to create awareness of the citizens of La Línea that the heritage of the bunkers must not be lost and forgotten since it is part of the history of La Línea and their lives. The second objective is to make a meritorious recognition to the army and personnel that defended the zone against the alleged invasion of the Brits and French.

The association consists of five directive members, two associates of honor, and different collaborators who all are the financers of the organization. There are no persons employed.

One of the five directive members is Ismael Ruiz who dedicates much of his free time to the association and the heritage project. *"I was born in 1972 and during my childhood (in La Línea) these military constructions always caught my attention... during my university years I began to involve myself more in the history of the zone and I then made a trip to Normandy to know the*

*Atlantic Wall* (a bunker system from the Second World War) *more in depth, and there the idea stroke me of one day promoting an interpretation center in La Línea*" (Ismael Ruiz, ARB).

Ismael Ruiz represents the ARB in the thesis.

#### *The Destination management organization*

A second stakeholder is the tourism office in La Línea that works as the DMO for the city. The information in this sub-section is from the interview, simply referred to as DMO, with the participant representing the organization. The interview can be found in appendix 4. The DMO does not have its own web page but is included in the web page for the region of Cadiz ([cadizturismo.com](http://cadizturismo.com)) and the one for the county of Campo de Gibraltar ([turismocampodegibraltar.com](http://turismocampodegibraltar.com)). These do not contain any kind of tourism policy for La Línea however. The DMO of La Línea communicates its initiatives through its Facebook page.

The organization's objective is to maximize the tourism of the city and develop it as a sector that can give a boost to the economy of the city. It collaborates with the DMO of Cadiz (La Línea is in the province of Cadiz), the government of Andalucía (La Línea is in the region of Andalucía), and the municipality of La Línea. The DMO in La Línea is a public organization and the mayor's tourism counselor is therefore working in the tourism office for a minimum of four years until next city election. The DMO's budget is limited to what the municipality can afford, and as mentioned in the introduction, La Línea finds itself in an economically tight spot. An annual tourism budget of just 17.000 euros for the DMO shows the limited funding to develop activities to boost tourism. In comparison, the original fortification project funded by the government of Andalucía as mentioned in the sub-section *research process* was going to consist of a budget of 1.000.000 euros (Project interview). Tourism is not a main priority at the moment, but it is *"the future of the city"*, as stated by the mayor of La Línea Juan Franco in the interview conducted in the prior project by this author (La Línea semester project). The mayor explained that he has a 10-year plan for the city consisting of first clearing the city's debt, then cleaning the city, and after that building more hotels and improving tourism overall.

One employee from the DMO is dedicated to work on the heritage project as a project leader along with the ARB. This person is tourism planner Inmaculada Sanchez who is the participant in this thesis representing the DMO. *"The idea of the project has been under way for some time.*

*Before I worked in the tourism department I worked in culture and I have known the people that now work in the organization Ruta de los Búncers for a long time and we have had the idea of shaping one of the bunkers into a museum and now finally all the pieces came together and I think it is an important project” (Inmaculada Sanchez, DMO).*

Besides Inmaculada Sanchez, the DMO consists of one more tourism planner, a secretary, and the tourism counselor of the municipality, Mercedes Atanet.

#### *Culture department of the municipality of La Línea*

Just like the municipality has a department for tourism, it has one for culture which is the final participant of the heritage project in the thesis. The information of the department is from the interview, simply referred to as Culture DP with the participant of the department. DP stands for department.

Since the bunkers in La Línea are cultural heritage, this department had to approve the project. It is unclear to the author if the culture department finances the entire project or combined with the tourism department, but according to Inmaculada Sanchez, *“it is the municipality one hundred percent (that finances it)” (DMO).* Furthermore, it is not a costly project by any means to the municipality as according to the culture counselor, Encarni Rodriguez: *“Practically, there is no need to support anything (economically). The municipality allows for the bunker to be used and pays the duties of maintaining and cleaning them. The material that they (the project leaders) are going to need for the interior, they already have” (Culture DP).*

As the culture counselor, Encarni Rodriguez was the person that approved the idea of the project when the association Ruta de los Búncers proposed it to the municipality. *“The association (Ruta de los Búncers) got in contact with me and it seemed like a good idea to me because all that history (of the bunkers) is something good and from there we began to stay in touch, also with the tourism delegation” (Culture DP).* Encarni Rodriguez is not involved directly in the development of the project like the two former stakeholders presented, but given her job position and the nature of the project as cultural heritage, it is interesting and important to gain insight on her views to analyze the project as a whole.

Finally, the organization Protección Histórica Linense is another non-profit organization in La Línea. On their Facebook page, they call themselves a cultural association whose purpose is to protect, study and disseminate the municipal heritage of La Línea de la Concepción in all its aspects: history, architecture, sculpture, painting, popular characters, etc.

Like the Culture Department, PHL is not directly involved in the project, but due to the field of heritage in La Línea their view on the project could have been interesting to explore.

Unfortunately, the contacted representant of the organization José Martínez Téllez was in the end not available to participate in the research of the thesis.

#### Importance of stakeholder inclusion in tourism development

According to Byrd (2007, p. 6), based on Choi & Sirakaya (2006), Inskeep (1991), and McCool (1995), *“if tourism development were planned improperly it could destroy the very resources (e.g. economic, environmental, and social) that are the foundation of tourism in a community. For tourism development to be successful, it must be planned and managed in a sustainable manner”*. In this aspect, *“one main key to the success and implementation of sustainable tourism development in a community is the support of stakeholders (e.g. example citizens, entrepreneurs, and community leaders)”* (Gunn, 1994 as cited in Byrd, 2007., p. 6). Taken from Freeman (1984., p. 46), a stakeholder is identified as *“any group or individual who can affect or is affected by tourism development in an area”*.

The mentioned economic, environmental, and social resources are keys in place branding as mentioned in the literature review, which makes stakeholder involvement and the management of it a crucial part as well. In the stakeholder analysis below the focus is on the stakeholders involved who can affect the tourism development in La Línea, and in the second part of the analysis section the stakeholders affected by tourism are included.

#### The stakeholders' roles and the process of the heritage project

There are two stakeholders in the heritage project that function as project leaders: the tourism planner of the DMO, Inmaculada Sanchez, and Ismael Ruiz of the ARB. The culture counselor and the tourism counselor are 'monitors' who must approve the stakeholders' initiatives and be kept

satisfied so they can vouch for the project in the municipality. However, due to the small scale of the project and the very limited amount of money that it costs, the counselors do not monitor the project strictly.

According to tourism planner Inmaculada Sanchez, she receives sufficient support from her manager, the tourism counselor Mercedes Atanet: *“every time you want to do something, then you have to go and talk with the people in the town hall, no? Because they have to be the ones negotiating”* (Project interview). In this aspect, Inmaculada Sanchez states that Mercedes Atanet does what she can to assist the project through her position in the municipality: *“She (tourism counselor Mercedes Atanet) has been very, very active... talking with a lot of people (in the municipality) to know the routes (sources), different routes in La Línea and to generate this is like an engine, as soon as you put in all your (effort)... things start moving”* (Project interview).

According to Ismael Ruiz from the ARB, he is also satisfied with the support that the project receives from the municipality: *“The municipality supports us a lot in its different departments of Culture and Tourism and so does the Mayor. Without his motivation this would not be possible since he is the one who gives the go-ahead... The municipality will provide us with the essentials so that it (the museum) is in optimal opening conditions, such as: electricity, maintenance, security, etc. We maintain meetings and network contacts very regularly”* (ARB).

Based on the above, it can be interpreted that the two project leaders receive both support and freedom from the municipality to develop the project. This is something Inmaculada Sanchez has not experienced much of before, and which is the reason that a project involving the bunkers has not been planned before, even though it is fairly cost-free for the municipality: *“...almost every fourth year there are new politicians elected with different goals. Earlier we have not had people that paid attention to this idea of a project”* (DMO).

The acceptance of letting the ARB form a major part of, yes, a small project, but still, cultural heritage of the city, shows a willingness by the municipality to involve local stakeholders of La Línea in the development of the city. This, identifying stakeholders and involving them, is according to Hardy and Beeton (2001) the main step toward achieving community partnerships and collaboration within tourism. It must be mentioned however, that it was the ARB that initiated the contact to the municipality, but the involvement factor is displayed. The inclusion of



stakeholders in tourism development is viewed as highly important because it builds on the store of knowledge and capacities of all stakeholders (Byrd, 2007). Further, this manner neglects the 'top-down' decision making approach which often is *"...perceived by the local community as not being reflective of community interests and opinions"* (Byrd, 2007, p. 6).

By forming a partnership with the ARB, and if this is managed properly throughout the process, several positive outcomes could become present. This is according to the article of Byrd (2007), *Stakeholders in Sustainable Tourism Development and their Roles: Applying Stakeholder Theory to Sustainable Tourism Development*.

The collaboration between the municipality and the ARB allows the non-profit organization to use its knowledge of the bunkers and the passion they have for them, to give the heritage project a dedicated effort. This increases the probability that *"the quality and legitimacy of the decisions are improved"* (Byrd, 2007, p. 9)

From the municipality's point of view, collaborating with the ARB benefits them in numerous ways: it expands the capacity of its DMO as they save time to focus on other projects and initiatives, contrary if they were to do the project themselves, and they also save money by not having to hire professionals. The ARB are also locals of La Línea, so if their trust to the municipality increases, an outcome of proper stakeholder involvement according to Byrd, they will most likely spread positive word of mouth in La Línea as referred to in the literature review as tertiary communication. Lastly, proper stakeholder involvement in sustainable tourism development also includes that *"public values and opinions are incorporated in the decision-making process"* (Byrd, 2007, p. 9). Being that the ARB are locals of La Línea and a non-profit organization with no competing interest to gain revenue, the decisions in the project are reflective of the public's interests at least to a certain extent (Beierle & Konisky 2000).

#### Passion of the project leaders

When asked, *what does the heritage project mean to you?* Both project leaders, Inmaculada Sanchez of the DMO and Ismael Ruiz representing the ARB, used the word dream in their answers. *"A dream that in the end comes true, since being from La Línea I have observed that culturally we are losing what little we have left and that it had to be stopped in any way. It is something I have been chasing for many years"* (Ismael Ruiz, ARB).

The same has Inmaculada Sanchez as mentioned in the presentation of the DMO. She also sees the project with a cultural interest like Ismael Ruiz because it can benefit both residents and visitors of La Línea: *"It is a dream of mine. I see a lot of potential and a lot of importance in the project as a tourism offer and something for the population of La Línea to identify themselves with."* (Inmaculada Sanchez, DMO).

With both project leaders having waited for a project like this for years, and with the same idea of why it should be launched, their shared responsibility can reduce conflicts, but also generate new ideas in the future to improve the fortifications in La Línea as cultural heritage and a tourism attribute (Byrd, 2007).

#### Limitations of the municipality

The last point in the stakeholder analysis touches on the municipality's role. Despite that the heritage project seems well organized with support and freedom to the two project leaders who further seem to be on the same page, there are two topics that could cause conflicts long term.

Inmaculada Sanchez and the ARB both enjoy support from the tourism and culture counselor, but this only seems to be to some extent. According to Ismael Ruiz, the ARB communicates with the municipality as mentioned earlier, but they do not work with them, rather, they only *"stay in contact to maintain the legalization of the assignment of the bunker to launch the project"* (ARB). This can also be related to the freedom and trust the municipality puts in the ARB, and due to the small scale of the project, but it could be bound to cause conflict due to non-optimal communication.

Furthermore, the municipality only covers the part there is to clean the bunkers for graffiti, provide electricity and insurance, flood, and humidity problems (ARB). According to Ismael Ruiz: *"As soon as the bunker is prepared to us, all expenses will come from the members of the board, honorary members and collaborators (the people that forms the ARB)"* (ARB). Inmaculada Sanchez stated that the municipality finances the project one hundred percent but she extended her answer by saying that *"unfortunately, they have their limits and we can only work as much and as fast as they allow us to"* (DMO). The above stated can be interpreted to be an obstacle for the project leaders to generate and fund new ideas to further develop the interpretation center.

Since the bunkers are cultural heritage of La Línea and property of the municipality, they have the final say in all details of the heritage project and thereby the power of its process and development. As mentioned in the presentation of the DMO, tourism is the priority only in the final stage of Mayor Juan Franco's 10-year plan for La Línea. This priority is due to the tight financial budget due to the city's debt, which is the first step to handle in the 10-year plan. The municipality's resistance to support the heritage project more financially is a consequence of the city's debt which puts constraints on the budget.

The above leads to the next point that eventually could become a conflict. The lack of further support from the municipality to the heritage project is the reason Inmaculada Sanchez gives when answering the question of, *is there a plan containing long-term goals for the project?*

*"No there is not. The main thing is that these years, the city has other priorities. Cleanliness and security of the city. The city and the mayor have many things to take care of. Infrastructure as well is a thing that must be developed..."* (DMO).

Ismael Ruiz is more specific in his answer to the same question, stating that when the bunkers are completely clean, all the material for the exposition can be exposed. *"We want everything to be completed within a period of no more than five years, but this does not mean that it will remain closed until that date, quite the contrary, from minute one of handing over the keys to the transfer of the bunker one will be able to visit, since although without material it is worthy of study and visit"* (ARB).

The heritage project then does have a long-term plan within the term of five years, but it is only stated by one of the project leaders, and a bit vaguely as well. However, one can argue that this makes sense since tourism in La Línea will only be prioritized in the last stage of a 10-year plan. The heritage project then forms part of an overall long-term plan.

Lastly, it seems that the involved stakeholders are aware of this, which is important as they will not be disappointed by a lack of commitment from the municipality and the lack of objectives aimed for the project. In fact, tourism planner Inmaculada Sanchez views the municipality's decision with positivism: *"...But all this (the priorities of cleaning and securing the city) will help the project of the bunker in the future. And when these aspects are more structured, then the*

*maximization of the tourism in the city can begin to become a big priority. Until then we are going to work on what we can to develop the tourism in the city” (DMO).*



The entrance to the bunker of the heritage project. The first part of the process has been done which was to empty it for water.

### Sub-conclusion

The two project leaders of the heritage project both strive to achieve the same; promote the cultural heritage in La Línea to keep it ‘alive’ and pass it on to future residents and tourists. The project leaders receive support and freedom from the culture and tourism counselor to develop the project. The willingness by the municipality to involve a local stakeholder like the ARB and form the project as a partial bottom-up, can lead to multiple positive outcomes for both sides due to proper stakeholder involvement as according to Byrd (2007): positive tertiary communication by the ARB in the community of La Línea due to increased trust in the municipality, public values, and opinions incorporated (to a certain extent) in the decision-making process, increased quality in the project, reduced conflicts, and generating new ideas. However, the struggle of the municipality with the city debt is an obstacle to receive more support than absolute necessary for the heritage project. An important point in this aspect though, is that the project leaders seem to understand and accept the situation and priority of the municipality, and are ready to work hard to do what they are capable of with the heritage project, until cultural and tourism development become a focal area to develop for the municipality.

## La Línea in the eyes of the stakeholders

The second part of the analysis section focuses on the participants' views on the heritage project but also on La Línea as a place of living and visiting. This is performed to shape a deeper analysis of the heritage project, the place it is located and the people that surrounds it.

## History of the bunkers



View to La Línea, Gibraltar, and the Mediterranean Sea from a worn bunker in lonely terrain.

As mentioned in the introduction of the thesis, La Línea came to existence because of the fortification system built as the frontier to Gibraltar. During the Second World War, a new fortification system of bunkers was constructed, as Spain contemplated joining the German forces with the plan to invade Gibraltar due to its strategically important position.

Because this might would have changed the history of Spain dramatically, Inmaculada Sanchez is of the opinion that: *"...The bunkers are cornerstones that the young generations today have seen all their lives and the elder generations have seen some of them been built but there are still people that still do not know them very well. Why were they built and why were they important? La Línea is a small city but it formed part of some very important history and these bunkers are a testimony to that..."* (DMO).

The two other participants have the same view of La Línea's history as culture counselor Encarni Rodríguez expresses: *"the military heritage of La Línea, and in this case the bunkers, are historically some big unknown factors... There are people that look at the bunkers in different ways. The bunkers have a historic value. We are used to see them all our lives. Maybe we are taking them a bit for granted as just another part of the landscape... they mean something given that the origin of the city is military* (Culture DP).

According to Ismael Ruiz, *"...There are many that do not know why they are there (the bunkers) and think that they were built for nothing and it is the exact opposite, they were very important"* (ARB). He further states that today, many Linenses *"...see the bunkers as a dump or a nuisance rather than a tourist and cultural treasure to exploit."*

These views from the participants that many residents do not know the bunkers and some even perceive them as junk, displays that the bunkers do not form part of La Línea's internal image, at least to a sizeable part of Linenses. Based on this, it can be interpreted that the locals in La Línea have little heritage proximity to the bunkers. Why is this though when, as stated in the introduction and in the heritage tourism literature review, history and cultural heritage are often found to be an integral part of a place's identity and landscape, due to it being a unique characteristic of a city?

The reason could be because the bunkers do not serve any functional, physical, or emotional attributes as brands do according to Klijn et al. (2012). Non-functional because their purpose has never been re-created so the locals could have joy of them, no physical attributes because they have not been taken care of, leaving them unattractive, and no emotional attributes because so many people seem to not know their history. If the bunkers have never offered any value to the Linenses, the associations constructed in their minds toward the bunkers are not any forming a positive image. Furthermore, this has been the situation of the bunkers for decades. One would assume that the longer the tertiary communication stays the same within a place, the truer the construction of the phenomenon or object becomes, leaving the bunkers' non-positive image quite stable.

## La Línea as a place to visit

The same can be said about La Línea's image as a city, due to drug smuggling import from Morocco, although the word non-positive is an understatement in this regard. It is known as one of Spain's most dangerous places and has for many Spaniards become the black sheep in the family, if not in all of Spain, then certainly on the south coast. In this author's prior project, one of the main findings of the research was the unified opinion that the city's image is in a bad state, this due to the drug related problem, but that the press also overly dramatizes reality.

Furthermore, *"all but one (of the six participants) stated that their personal perception of La Línea is that it is a wonderful place to live"* (La Línea semester project, p. 21).

Ismael Ruiz of the ARB and culture counselor Encarni Rodriguez were not participants in the above project, but the latter is of the exact same opinion: *"People hear about the bad image of the city, but when they come here, they experience that it is not how the press displays it. We have everything here but most of all, we have good people"* (Culture DP).

When Encarni Rodriguez states *"we have everything here"*, she refers to: *"a very good tourism offer. 14 kilometers of beach, places to eat, restaurants superb, museum, many places to see. There is future potential. La Línea calls for attention."*

Both Ismael Ruiz and Inmaculada Sanchez agree on La Línea's potential as a tourism destination: *"I have always thought that La Línea has not taken advantage of this treasure since it is the only city in the zone (of the county Campo de Gibraltar) that, once you arrive to the center, and without moving in vehicle, there are: beaches, archeological remains, green zones, museums, hotels and hostels, etc."* (Ismael Ruiz, ARB interview). And, according to Inmaculada Sanchez (DMO): *"When someone discovers this (the potential of La Línea as a destination), it can really develop. We have 11 km's of untouched beaches and the location is unique. What La Línea needs is investment to develop the city and then the tourism. The infrastructure is a big problem for example."*

As mentioned earlier, Inmaculada Sanchez is aware that the municipality has other goals that must be reached before tourism development can be the main priority in La Línea. She works for the DMO with the attitude of: *"until then we are going to work on what we can to develop the tourism in the city"* (DMO).

Since cultural heritage according to Timothy (2018., p. 178) is *“that which we inherit from the past, use today and pass on to future generations...”*, it could in many cases be a resource that tourism planners could work on and promote to develop the place’s tourism attributes and brand identity as much as possible, until the municipality has sufficient resources to establish further initiatives. This, plus the fact that, as according to Ismael Ruiz, the bunkers in La Línea are *“the only heritage that we have”*, underscores the importance of the current project and the potential impact it might have.

#### Potential of the bunkers

As mentioned in the literature review, according to Timothy (2018) and Fan (2014), culture has proven to be the engine of economic development in many places because it helps to enhance the attractiveness of destinations. Relevant local cultural characteristics therefore often become incorporated when places develop their brand identity. According to the involved stakeholders of the heritage project, as displayed in the *history of the bunkers* sub-section, the bunkers form a relevant local cultural characteristic in La Línea.

It can further be argued that the bunkers are authentic as they are of undisputed origin of La Línea, thus making them a part of the city’s identity. Recognizable as they fill in the landscape of the city as expressed by Encarni Rodriguez: *“the bunkers are located close to the border of Gibraltar, so many people will stop and look because it is something unusual to see in this kind of landscape”* (Culture DP). Lastly, bunkers are something rare and from the past: *“The bunkers we have are something unique in all of Spain”*, according to Inmaculada Sanchez (DMO). So, the bunkers contain, at least to some extent, the key elements that often are mentioned in place branding literature when a place tries to create a favorable tourism image, which forms an important part of place branding (Govers, 2013., Needham, 2006., Klijn et al., 2012). *“City branding is understood as the means... for achieving competitive advantage in order to increase inward investment and tourism...”* (Kavaratzis, 2004., p. 70).





With its 200.000 square meters Parque Princesa Sofia is big enough to almost hide some of the bunkers between its wide variation of trees and bushes. Along one side of the park lies the main road of the city of La Línea, Avenida del Ejército – Avenue of the Army.

According to tourism planner Inmaculada Sanchez, the interpretation center is also an effort to “... *maximize our tourism...*”, by “...*selling our history of culture in an exciting manner*” (DMO).

Furthermore, with the heritage project being created as an interpretation center, it welcomes tourists who look for emotional and deeper experiences rather than just “gaze” as explained by Urry (1990) and Poria et al. (2003). According to Ismael Ruiz of the ARB, the interpretation center addresses several potential visitors: “*The range is wide since it may interest tourism, archaeologists, architects, historians, schools, Institutes, Universities, military, hikers (since we are surrounded by an open field where it is full of military elements related to bunkers).*” More so, with the bunkers being history and in a very concrete way forming the identity of La Línea, the interpretation center could create an experience for the so-called post-modern tourist who is more interested “... *in the deeper meanings of places, local identities and their own connections to the places they visit*” (Timothy, 2018., p. 178).

However, the bunkers in today’s community of La Línea do not have any relevance as they do not form identity of the city in the eyes of many Linenses. The issue can then become, according to Uriely et al. (2002, p. 859), “*resident attitudes toward tourism development in heritage sites, where only part of the local population is affiliated or identifies with what is being promoted.*” Or

as Inmaculada Sanchez puts it: *"You can have the most beautiful place in the world but if the environment is not friendly, not welcoming, the experience is not going to be pleasant"* (DMO).

As evaluated in the literature review, tourism planning within a holistic place branding strategy focuses just as much on internal stakeholders as external. City branding is also understood as the means for *"... achieving community development, reinforcing local identity and identification of the citizens with their city and activating all social forces to avoid social exclusion and unrest"*, as according to Kavaratzis (2004., p. 70).

In this aspect, cultural heritage is viewed by researchers as not only for tourists to enjoy and explore, but also as a social phenomenon that through heritage proximity can play a constitutional role in the perception of the city by its own residents and encourage social solidarity (Timothy, 2018., Van der Burg & Russo, 2005). Thus, the biggest potential that the bunkers might possess is provide value to Linenses through heritage proximity. Furthermore, if there is identification for locals with what is promoted, it can generate positive attitudes toward tourism development (Uriely et al., 2002). This would increase the likelihood of improving visitor experience in La Línea which in the end would contribute positive word of mouth in the tertiary communication of the the city (Kavaratzis, 2004).

#### Creating awareness

According to Inmaculada Sanchez, *"the bunkers we have are something unique in all of Spain. People that find this kind of tourism interesting should come to La Línea. It is a way to maximize our tourism in a responsible and sustainable matter"* (DMO). As tourism planner of La Línea, Inmaculada Sanchez is working to improve the destinations attributes to attract visitors, but she expresses that this must be done in a responsible and sustainable matter. By this, she refers to how she sees the main objective of the heritage project: *"for the population (of La Línea) it is important that they are conscious of the bunkers and what they represent"* (DMO). This is due to her belief that the bunkers are cornerstones of La Línea's identity: *"this museum will help bring consciousness to the citizens of La Línea of the history of their city because the bunkers play a big part"* (DMO).

Ismael Ruiz of the ARB uses the words *“to disclose our most recent history”*, when describing the objective of the heritage project. He further elaborated: *“It is directed to the current citizen who more or less sees the bunkers as a dump or a nuisance rather than a tourist and cultural treasure to exploit. There are many that see that and do not know why they are there and think that they were built for nothing and it is the exact opposite, they were very important... Now (while the project is being developed) is the time to disclose and create awareness to the youngest ones in expositions, conferences etc., in the high schools and elementary schools and encourage so that when the museum is ready for visits, these students will finally visit it to know the real history and how it was...”* (ARB).

Culture counselor Encarni Rodriguez also sees the main objective as to *“create awareness of the military heritage of La Línea and in this case, the bunkers.”* Contrary to the project leaders though, she does not see a main target group that the project addresses: *“in general, the project is for everyone interested. There is no single target group”* (Culture DP). Since Encarni Rodriguez is a stakeholder on the ‘sideline’ this author does not view her slightly different opinion on the project’s objective as worrisome. If she had been a project leader or stated that she viewed the main objective as to attract tourists, then it would have required more attention, as it potentially could become a point of conflict.

### Symbolic meaning

According to Ismael Ruiz, by creating awareness of the bunkers, the ARB achieves that the bunkers have some kind of influence on locals from a young age: *“with this (creating awareness) one reaches that from a young age a motivation arises to maintain them (the bunkers) for the future”* (ARB). Based on participant Ismael Ruiz’ expressed views throughout the thesis, it can be interpreted that the ARB approaches the heritage project with the desire to use the bunkers today, but perhaps even more importantly pass them on to future generations. If locals learn of the bunkers from a young age and create associations to them that add particular psychological and emotional meaning (Klijn et al., 2012), the attachment they establish to the bunkers is more likely to stick with them. This would cause more Linenses to have heritage proximity to the bunkers. Braun et al. (2013) argue that the existing residents should be prioritized in tourism development as they form the most prominent audience for place branding. This is because

engaged residents in La Línea could lead to increased ownership of the bunkers causing “... *more sense of responsibility for its development, management and external reputation*” (Braun et al., 2013, p. 21).

As mentioned in the stakeholder map, the two project leaders have much of the same ideas and vision for the interpretation center which is seen in the following view by Inmaculada Sanchez: “*if the population is proud of the bunkers and of their city and its passed, it will influence things that are very simple but very important, e.g. taking care of the bunkers...*” (DMO). However, as a tourism planner of the city, Inmaculada Sanchez has also expressed interest in attracting tourists to La Línea through the project: “*This museum is a way of maximizing tourism in a responsible and sustainable manner*” (DMO). She elaborated further on the simple but important things deriving from locals feeling proud of the bunkers: “*...being friendly with the tourists, collaborating on creating a nice experience for the tourists. And I think these things are some of the most important in tourism because tourism develops itself from experiences in a place*” (DMO).

Her view that tourism develops itself from the experiences in a place is very similar to the view of Kavaratzis (2004., p. 66): “*it (city branding) is the interaction of the ‘external’ with the ‘internal’ city...*”. The ‘external’ referring to the tourists and the ‘internal’ “*everything a city consists of, everything that takes place in the city and is done by the city, (which) communicates messages about the city’s image*” (Kavaratzis, 2004, p. 67). Because of this, as stated in the literature review according to Vermeulen (2002), “*it is indeed the image of the city that needs to be planned and consequently marketed*” (Cited in Kavaratzis, 2004, p. 66).

Furthermore, Inmaculada Sanchez expresses: “*I see a lot of potential and a lot of importance in the project as a tourism offer and something for the population of La Línea to identify themselves with*” (DMO). Just like the ARB, Inmaculada Sanchez desires to create awareness of the bunkers by informing and educating the public (Byrd, 2007) on the history of the bunkers to increase the probability that more Linenses form a connection to them and perceive them as part of La Línea’s identity. It can therefore be interpreted that the project leaders are of the understanding that the heritage project “*... involves many different actors that... are part of the network that shapes and maintains the brand*” (Klijn et al., 2012, p. 515). Furthermore, by involving these actors, e.g. the residents, and succeeding to create a positive internal brand of the bunkers, the heritage project

may lead to increased effectiveness in terms of attracting target groups (Klijn et al., 2012), as stated by Inmaculada Sanchez: *“I see a lot of potential and a lot of importance in the project as a tourism offer...”*

This would be due to engaged residents’ feeling a local brand ambassadorship of the bunkers as according to Govers (2011). Locals in La Línea feeling a responsibility (heritage proximity) to the bunkers would influence the development and management of them. Furthermore, it can lead to positive behavior by locals toward visitors. As stated in the literature review, this effect causes self-promotion which is *“...both (the) easiest and most effective (promotion for a place)... A place is sending messages to itself... So, if these messages are fostered “...of self-confidence. This is both an end in itself and a necessary precondition for external marketing” (Ashworth, 2001 as cited in Kavaratzis, 2004, pp. 69-70).*

This self-confidence can be related to Inmaculada Sanchez’ view of Linenses’ relation to the bunkers: *“if the population is proud of the bunkers and of their city and its past, it will influence things that are very simple but very important, e.g. taking care of the bunkers, being friendly with the tourists, collaborating on creating a nice experience for the tourists... You can have the most beautiful place in the world but if the environment is not friendly, not welcoming, the experience is not going to be pleasant” (DMO).* The latter can be interpreted as Inmaculada Sanchez’ belief that self-confidence and pride toward the bunkers, or La Línea overall as a tourism destination, would be an end in itself since it is self-promotion to all potential external stakeholders, visitors, future residents, investors.

## Vision

As mentioned in the analysis of the process of the project by Ismael Ruiz, the only long-term goal is that everything within the project is ready in five years. Inmaculada Sanchez stated that there are no long-term objectives due to the municipality’s current priorities. However, she does seem to have a vision though: *“in Tarifa (town close to La Línea) they also have bunkers that they have plans for. So, a project like this is an element that can unite the region but at the same time one that identifies La Línea and differentiates it from the rest of the region” (DMO).* This way of thinking can be referred to the very first sentence of the place branding literature review, where, as according to Acharya and Rahman (2016), cities compete with cities and regions with regions to

attract public resources etc. Tourism planner Inmaculada Sanchez sees benefit in not just improving the tourism scene of La Línea, but also the one of a nearby town to strengthen the area just south of Costa del Sol, where a fierce tourism competition is never ending.

Lastly, all stakeholders envision the bunkers to play a bigger role in the tourism scene of La Línea in the future:

*“When this project really begins it is going to attract attention”* (Encarni Rodriguez, culture DP).

*“Absolutely, if not I am not even sure I would be working this job. It is cultural tourism of high quality and with potential to be very sustainable”* (Inmaculada Sanchez, DMO).

*“I am completely sure that it is going to be a national benchmark since the level of realism both of the material and the information is going to be very important”* (Ismael Ruiz, ARB).

Despite no long-term objectives for the interpretation center or the rest of the bunkers, which due to the small-scale of the project and the current non-tourism priorities of the municipality perhaps is understandable, the above statements display that the purpose of developing the interpretation center is to keep managing the bunkers’ presence and influence the residents’ attitudes toward their cultural heritage (Boisen et al., 2018). By trying to improve the bunkers’ image in La Línea on a long-term basis, it could contribute to make the city a more attractive place to live and visit. As mentioned in the literature review by Ye and Bröjner (2018), this could help a city experience a transition.

### Sub-conclusion

According to the stakeholders of the heritage project, the bunkers do not at the moment have relevance to most residents in La Línea. The reason Linenses do not have heritage proximity to their only cultural heritage, could be because the bunkers have not provided any functional, physical, or emotional value to the locals for decades (Kavaratzis, 2008).

Like the image of the bunkers within La Línea, the image of La Línea in the rest of Spain does not have a positive image. In general however, Linenses perceive their city as a wonderful place to live and visit, and until the municipality has the resources to prioritize tourism development, the ARB and the DMO of La Línea are going to develop the heritage project as much as they can.

Culture has proven to both being able to enhance the attractiveness of destinations and function as a social phenomenon creating symbolic value to locals (Timothy, 2018., Fan, 2014). Based on this and the participants' views that the bunkers are unique and easy to recognize, the heritage project contains key elements to create a favorable tourism attribute. The main objective of the heritage project as according to the project leaders, however, is to create awareness of the bunkers' history and importance in La Línea. By doing this, the probability of locals establishing positive associations toward the bunkers increases due to created specific meaning (Karavatzis, 2008). Residents with heritage proximity feel a responsibility for the bunkers' development, management, and external reputation (Braun et al., 2013). Engaged residents with a sense of local brand ambassadorship (Govers, 2007) then contribute to create a positive tourism experience in La Línea which is how tourism Planner Inmaculada Sanchez views maximizing tourism potential in a sustainable manner (DMO).

Finally, all participants expressed enthusiasm on the bunkers' role in the future. By managing their long-term reputation through the attitudes of the Linenses, it could contribute to La Línea experiencing a transition in becoming a more attractive place to both live and visit (Ye & Bröjner, 2018., Klijn et al., 2012).

## Discussion

By analyzing the views of the participants and discussing them in relation to the literature review on place branding and heritage tourism, this thesis has aimed to investigate the place branding elements in the heritage project of La Línea.

One of the major findings of the study is that the process of the development of the project is partially bottom-up as it was a public non-profit organization in the form of the ARB who came to the municipality of La Línea with the idea of the heritage project. According to the literature by Byrd (2007), the inclusion by the municipality of the ARB, can lead to positive tertiary communication due to their local aspect, and increased quality in the project as the project leaders from ARB and the DMO share the same vision and ideas.



According to all three participants, the bunkers are not relevant these days to most residents in La Línea which can be categorized as little heritage proximity (Uriely et al., 2002). According to Kavaratzis (2008), this could be because the bunkers through decades have not provided any functional, physical, or emotional value, as none of the participants stated anything resembling the contrary. With none of these three factors in play, symbolic or specific meaning do not arise, thus blocking for positive associations and perceptions to be created in the minds of locals (Kavaratzis, 2008).

Both project leaders state that the main objective of the heritage project is to create awareness of the bunkers to the population of La Línea. According to Ismael Ruiz, by creating awareness of the bunkers to locals from a young age, *“one reaches that... a motivation arises to maintain them for the future”* (ARB). According to Inmaculada Sanchez, she wants to create awareness of the bunkers because: *“I see a lot of potential and a lot of importance in the project as... something for the population of La Línea to identify themselves with”* (DMO). This “motivation” for, and “identification” with, the bunkers is a condition for local brand ambassadorship (Govers, 2011) since emotional value toward the bunkers creates stronger heritage proximity and leads to engaged residents feeling a responsibility for their development, management, and external reputation (Klijn et al., 2013). According to Ashworth (2001), locals performing positive behavior toward visitors is self-promotion which is both the easiest and most effective for a place due to the tertiary communication as illustrated in the city branding model by Kavaratzis (2004). Tourism planner Inmaculada Sanchez’ sub-goal of the heritage project is to attract tourists, and the internal brand of La Línea plays a big part in this: *“You can have the most beautiful place in the world but if the environment is not friendly, not welcoming, the experience is not going to be pleasant”* (DMO). This is the same approach as Kavaratzis (2004), who states that the first step in place branding is to understand that all encounters within a city all together shapes its image.

The interpretation center forming the heritage project has potential to be a sustainable tourism attribute based on the participants’ views and the review of place branding and heritage tourism literature. The bunkers are unique and recognizable, key terms to create a favorable tourism image (Kavaratzis, 2008), and in addition to this also authentic which is important to attract post-modern tourists seeking a more exploring experience (Timothy & Boyd, 2018., Ren & Blichfeldt,



2011). Furthermore, it is not an aim in the heritage project to develop and promote the bunkers to create a clear image of La Línea's tourism scene due to their uniqueness and recognizability which could attract more tourists. This method is found to diminish local culture by neglecting a place's complexity (e.g. Dinnie, 2004., Andersson, 2014., Kavatzis, 2004).

Lastly, all participants envision the bunkers to play a bigger role in the future of La Línea. By managing their long-term reputation and improving their image in the city, it could contribute to La Línea experiencing a transition of image as tertiary communication of the place improves (Ye & Bröjner, 2018., Klijn et al., 2012).

The objective of the literature review section was to evaluate place branding approaches and select one that could frame the investigation of the heritage project. The selected place branding approach was one having residents as priority and not only focusing on one or two tourism attributes to create a clear tourism image to attract more tourists and thus, neglecting the complexity of local culture in a given place. It was unexpected that this approach to a high degree is reflected in the heritage project based on the participants' constructions. Culture Counselor Encarni Rodriguez does not see the residents to be the number one priority and Ismael Ruiz did not express much on its tourism potential, but the former can be related to the stakeholder's limited involvement in the project and the latter the stakeholder's deep passion for the city's heritage and not tourism. It was also surprising to discover that Encarni Rodriguez is that uninvolved in the project. However, perhaps therefore the development of the project is partially bottom-up which can create many positive outcomes as explained. Tourism planner Inmaculada Sanchez' approach can be concluded to be a holistic place branding approach as she sees a big tourism potential that must be exploited in a sustainable manner through the residents.

Finally, it was surprising that the municipality of La Línea has been so reactive toward their historical fortification system, the city's only cultural heritage, when it can enhance the attractiveness of a destination, gain revenue, and benefit internal stakeholders as well (Fan, 2014., Timothy, 2018). The interpretation center is a small-scale project, but it turned out to display several place branding elements which is a testimony to the complexity and potential of both place branding, heritage tourism, and their interconnection.

Due to the small-scale of the heritage project, few stakeholders are directly involved in its development which limited the researcher's amount of data collection. Benefitting this is the time-schedule which becomes easier to manage for the researcher plus the findings of the data collection can be analyzed deeply. However, it would have been possible for the researcher to include stakeholders who indirectly are going to be involved in the heritage project such as locals, tourists, schoolteachers etc. This would have broadened the study but would also have costed a significant time and focus, and the questions is if it would have provided the study a greater yield. The data collection would have been more complex to perform and the knowledge creation on place branding would perhaps per se not have improved. The findings from these stakeholders therefore might not have been worth the extra time spent.

## Conclusion

The purpose of the thesis was to explore the heritage project in La Línea from a place branding perspective. To study this, the aim became to investigate the project's place branding elements based on the involved stakeholders' views toward it and drawing from relevant literature on place branding and heritage tourism.

One of the place branding elements of the heritage project consist of the municipality including the local organization of the ARB to develop the city's heritage culture which makes up for a partially bottom-up process of the project (Byrd, 2007).

All participants express that the bunkers are not relevant to most residents today, and the project leaders therefore view the main objective of the project to be creating awareness of the local cultural characteristic to the Linenses. This can create a motivation (ARB) and identification (DMO) for locals toward the bunkers where emotional value makes residents engaged in their maintenance, development, and external reputation (Kavaratzis, 2008., Klijn et al. 2013). Tourism planner Inmaculada Sanchez sees this as a tourism attribute in itself since such behavior by locals would positively affect the tourism experience in La Línea (DMO). This approach reflects both the main idea of the city branding model by Kavaratzis (2004) where the tertiary communication shapes a place's image, and also the place branding approach evaluated in the literature review to

be holistic, meaning striving toward gaining competitive advantage, but always prioritizing the residents' life quality. Lastly, the bunkers of La Línea are unique, easy to recognize, and authentic which are key terms to attract different type of tourists, and all participants view them as a part of their vision of La Línea in the future.

The implications of the findings are that destination branding can be developed through locals of a place in the effort to attract external stakeholders, but also to increase residents' life quality.

As mentioned in the place branding literature review, the author in search of place branding literature experienced the gap according to Ma et al. (2019) of place branding and its sub-concepts still being poorly understood. This was regarding destination branding being presented as place branding and more importantly contradicting what many researchers stress to be the main priority of place branding. By analyzing the heritage project from a place branding perspective prioritizing locals, the theoretical contribution of this study is that it partially closes this specific gap in place branding literature by explaining the interconnection of destination branding as a sub-concept to place branding in a case study.

The author was able to unfold complexity of the study of the heritage project due to knowledge of La Línea and the city's stakeholders. This was achieved by living there for six months, working at the DMO, interviewing a restaurant owner, the mayor, random tourists, etc., living in a hotel, and exploring nearby destinations such as Gibraltar, Tarifa, and Marbella. This is an investment to gain a high degree of understanding of a certain place which provides a foundation to explore a case study in-depth. Researchers wanting to perform similar studies like this in the future will experience limitations if they just 'show up' before conducting research, because the underlying elements that exist in a concept as place branding will not be uncovered.

The empirical contribution of the thesis is therefore that a researcher must understand the relevant themes of a place to be able to ask relevant questions to conduct research, understand the findings, and then, interpret them thoroughly.

The author would like to suggest further research on the interconnection between the two themes of the study, heritage tourism and place branding.

Exploring place branding in La Línea is interesting because it is a place with a bad economy located right next to a very popular tourism destination in Gibraltar. Furthermore, tourism wise it is underperforming regarding the city's beautiful location and not exploiting its cultural heritage. On top of this, cannabis smuggling from Morocco has given the city a negative image in all of Spain. All this makes up for an enormous research potential how place branding could affect the city's development and image. Just to follow the heritage project further would be interesting: if the project saw success, what would that mean for the city's identity, how much would the municipality invest in the project's development, would the bunkers be easier to maintain due to heritage proximity by locals, and could highly educated citizens, investors, and tourists become attracted.

Finally, to research heritage proximity of residents toward cultural heritage, a quantitative before and after study of the heritage project could be performed to measure the effect of the development of the bunkers in La Línea.

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## Documents

La Línea Semester Project (2020)

Uploaded as appendix on ‘digital eksamen’.

## Appendix

### Project interview – appendix 1

Inmaculada Sanchez: tourism planner of the destination management organization of La Línea.

Interview was performed in person at the participant's office on the 21<sup>st</sup> of February 2020.

Researcher:

Tell me your name and your job title here in the tourist office.

Inmaculada Sanchez:

Inmaculada (Sanchez) Escuadra, Tourism Technician.

Researcher:

Thank you. OK, about the fortification project. Can you tell me who finances it?

Inmaculada Sanchez:

We have various branches here, and one of them is a rehabilitation of all the bunkers and to get the the exterior rehabilitated. So suitable for to make visits to show to the public. And, I do not know the word in English it is a sort of grant of the state that gives amount of money to interesting projects to save historic patrimonio (heritage).

Researcher:

So this rehabilitation of the bunkers. What organization is behind that?

Inmaculada Sanchez:

It is our project that we along with the town hall have presented to Junta de Andalucía (Regional Government of Andalucía) to look for funding.

Researcher:

Can you write this down here (on a piece of paper) Junta de Andalucía and their role please?

Inmaculada Sanchez:

Their role is to promote.. promote initiatives... initiatives related with tourism... and preservation for heritage.

Researcher:

So this tourist office, it was your idea with the bunkers?

Inmaculada Sanchez:

We've been working on quite a while on the, on the bunkers but the action that we could undertake were not important, because we have no... no money.

We have a department in the town hall who look for money from the state and we got the news that Junta de Andalucía offered an amount of money to a project so we presented them this.

Researcher:

And this department in the... town hall. Do they have any role in this project?

Inmaculada Sanchez:

They are the.. the intermediate. They elaborate our ideas to present them for Junta Andalucía.

Researcher:

Could you write down their name please?

And then Junta Andalucía how much money have they given for the project?

Inmaculada Sanchez:

Right now? None, because we have a demand.

Researcher:

So they are still in the process of accepting the money?

Inmaculada Sanchez:

Yeah, actually they have freeze all the help to other cities, because we have made a demand. So they might have to make a distribution or redistribution of their money.

Researcher:

Is there a chance that they are not going to give you any money for the project?

Inmaculada Sanchez:

Is there a little chance, yes. We are in the middle now and we have to see what happens.

Researcher:

Of the negotiations?

Inmaculada Sanchez:

No it is on the judge and the jury in the court.

Researcher:

Because Junta de Andalucía maybe they do not have enough money or?

Inmaculada Sanchez:

No no it is because La Línea is being in a, in a very very tight, economical situation. So, in order to recuperate the annual budget, we have had to make compromises with the state.. of cutting up the expenditure. So we have been forbidden to make new contract in the town hall. So, the project should have contemplated the, the creation of employment, but since the state is telling us not to create employment, Yeah? we cannot create employment even if it is for a project.

So, you cannot tell us not to create employment, and then deny your money because we are not creating the project.

Researcher:

So it is political?

Inmaculada Sanchez:

Well, yes.

We always work here with politics. We work with the town hall and there is a party.

Researcher:

So... because I remember when I was here (internship) and I read the report on the fortification, or the plan the strategy the project, to me it seemed like Junta Andalucía was going to give finance I think 1 million euros.

Inmaculada Sanchez:

Yeah, something like that.

Researcher:

But now that negotiating is, is on standby yet because it is going to go to a judge?

Inmaculada Sanchez:

Yeah, we have demanded.. to go to court in Junta Andalucía.

Researcher:

And is it because Junta Andalucía al final (in the end) have said, they said that no we do not want to, you know, we do not want to finance your project? Because they said they have said yes in the beginning but now they are..

Inmaculada Sanchez:

No no is because they have told us that we cannot employ any more people in the town hall, in the whole organization. So, if you are telling us not to employ people, you cannot deny money. You (Junta de Andalucía) are contradicting yourself. That is why.

Researcher:

OK.. is there any more involved?

Inmaculada Sanchez:

Yeah, apart from that is one side of the project, that is an ambitious project. Yeah. But now, we have in another hand, we have things in which we can with our money, with little money, but with what we can do a little bit at a time. Okay, yeah. So, our, our plan now is at the moment. If, in meanwhile we do not receive any economical support. And we are getting one bunker from the.. We have cleaned all the bunkers from in the park. Yeah, yeah, which are the ones that are near



the town. Yeah, the center of the town. So, one of them We're going to sign an agreement with an association and is a non-profit organization. To create our interpretation Center for the bunkers.

Researcher:

Can you write down this association?

The interpretation center is like a small museum?

Inmaculada Sanchez:

Yeah, that is right.

We have these, these, these people, where they are going to go do is to recreate the use of the bunkers as it was in the, in the times that they were created. So you can have people to interpret that. What they were for. And apart from that about, they are going to put exhibit, two models of other types of bunkers, and they are going to get furniture from the, from the side. Yeah, stuck into it. And the arms, weapons. And as well, they are going to help us to to cover the personnel that we would need to get the interpretation center be a reality, like we have a, we need people to open and close. Yeah, and cover the time that the museum is open. They are going to do that for us, and apart from that because they isn't an association where.. a lot of people that is studying the, the, this thing is part of a, they are going to help people that arrive there to explain why they were built for the mission was what how their mission changed, why the Felix operation wasn't a reality... Nice details from history.

Researcher:

And what was the name of this association?

Inmaculada Sanchez:

Ruta de los bunkers.

Apart from that, we are making other small things like installing the windows, so the bunkers do not leak.

Researcher:

Who is going to finance the interpretation center?

Inmaculada Sanchez:

we have rehabilitated the bunker. And they are going to put the whole lot themselves. Okay. Yeah, because they, their interest is the history to be shown to the public. Yeah. And they, the bunkers to be, as I said, valued as a heritage. Yeah, yeah. And as well we have started a signalization. Yeah, we are putting up a sign information of different type for each bunker. And the bunker route. Okay, yeah. What was I going to say more...

If either we get the money from the Junta de Andalucía, we would create a whole net of ways in the park with cycling routes.

Researcher:

You could do a lot with that money. A very big project and this is a good project but on a smaller scale.

Inmaculada Sanchez:

Yeah. Yeah. Well you can imagine. You can imagine that there is a, our budget, our budget this year has been 17,000.

Researcher:

For this chosen organization? for everything?

Inmaculada Sanchez:

Yeah, this whole year. So it is not a lot. And we have initiated.. making movements in, in, in the routes. There are there are outside La Linea center. Yeah, like the ones in a, in the hill. But we have our own track to do because it is very difficult to send a person in from the town hall to sending them into the middle of a hills to maybe clean up or some areas.

Researcher:

Every time you want to do something, then you have to go and talk with the people in the town hall, no? because they have to be the ones negotiating with..

Inmaculada Sanchez:

It depends, it depends if, either because it is small actions is more actions that we can do it on our own like for example the simple. We have done it on our own. Yeah.

Researcher:

Okay. But if it is something to negotiate with money or something, then they have to do it or..?

Inmaculada Sanchez:

If it is big money yes. For example, I do not know, thousand euros or if my boss can kind of say yes, and I sign for that. Yeah.

Researcher:

Since Mercedes (Tourism Counselor) she works in the, in the town hall then I just assumed that she is a connection between the town hall and this. The office.

Inmaculada Sanchez:

Yeah. She's actually, she's been quite active. Very, very active. Okay, so she said, talking with a lot of people to know the routes, different routes in La Línea and and to generate this is like an engine soon as you put all your.. things start moving. Yeah, the whole thing gets in the dynamic, and we have another, another branch as well, with a eco-forte route, the European certifications route.

Researcher:

With La Línea, is it still with the bunkers?

Inmaculada Sanchez:

With the bunkers is includes the bunkers includes Santa Barbara and the town, all the fortification.

Researcher:

And that is with what organization?

Inmaculada Sanchez:

It is called forts to market.

Unknown

It is something with all of Europe right?

Inmaculada Sanchez:

Yeah. Through this organization we have become members of them. Yeah. And so that we are distributing our leaflets from the bunkers through 30 CTC Europe. And as well as we are.. They have the possibility of certifying guides. Under certain standard. So we are going to certify few a few guides from the region from La Línea, we already started doing that now.

Researcher:

Okay. But, but this. This is only to develop few things, there's not going to be a project like this?

Inmaculada Sanchez:

No. All we have to do is adding up.

Yeah. Okay, under, under the premise is that we cannot make biggest expenditures. Right now, we can do small actions. The first thing we have to do is to get the bunkers, is through info to inform the people that this is here. Yeah. And what makes the bunkers here unique.

Researcher:

And are you in contact with any other, this is, this is a local. Do you have, are you in contact with other local stakeholders, organizations to create awareness of the bunkers or is that something you are going to do later on.

Inmaculada Sanchez:

Something we are going to do later on. Yeah. Right now is these people that we have that we work with.

Researcher:

Okay, so here you are waiting, and waiting and waiting, and it could take some months?

Inmaculada Sanchez:

Yeah, yeah. But anyhow, we cannot do anything different. Yeah, well, what we are doing right now is needed, anyway. So, if we get the money. We'll get into a bigger stage. More important stage. But what we are doing now is going to be there.

Researcher:

Why was it that they, in the beginning they had said yes to..

Inmaculada Sanchez:

No, they opened a period of time to present the projects. And when it was their decision time, they evaluate each project, and they left us out.

Researcher:

And what is one of the other projects from, from different cities? So they approved a project in Tarifa for example?

Inmaculada Sanchez:

But right now, they give us hope the fact that they have freezed, they have told the other cities hold on a minute do not spend the money

Researcher:

And why have they done that you think?

Inmaculada Sanchez:

I think because they have seen, they did not see it clear, yeah. Oh, hey right now that is why we are we are having contact with the people from the University Cadiz, University, and making a thesis as well in various matters related to the 20th century constructions. It goes from, how to preserve the material. To, how to measure the potential of the bunkers, us, well of the fortification of the 20th century. To measure the impact of this kind of construction in the tourism, which sounds very very interesting, because they are using us as an example of how to manage heritage.

So, it is good for us because they contribute to expand the name of the bunkers outside of La Línea. Yeah. And our bunkers are in the knowledge, more people who, people who are starting to make studies with this type of things back up to, you know, they complete the lens on us.

Researcher:

So now you are focusing on this. And how's that going?

Inmaculada Sanchez:

Fine, actually on Monday I have a meeting with a representative of a.. the president of the association and the lawyer from the town hall. To see how we can give the give a contract.

Researcher:

Yeah, so you are in the beginning, in the beginning of this project. And Los Locos del parque (non-profit organization of the Park Princesa Sofia) are they doing something on this?

Inmaculada Sanchez:

Not in this aspect. Normally they do not, I do not know. They are more into natural aspects which is interesting to trying to improve the.. Apart from now they are working in different routes with with the floor for La Línea which in this region is very important

Researcher:

Okay. All right. That is good.

Inmaculada Sanchez:

Anything else?

Researcher:

No. Ahora no. Luego sí.

[Interview guide – appendix 2](#)

**About you:**

1. What is your name and job position?
2. How did you become involved in the project of the museum? Do you work fulltime on it?

**About your organization:**

3. What are the objectives of your organization?
4. Who forms part of the organization?
5. How is the organization financed?
6. Does the organization collaborate with other partners?
7. Do you work with the Municipality of La Línea de la Concepción?

**About the project of the bunker:**

8. How did the project begin?
9. What are the objectives of the project?
10. Who are the target groups of the project and how do they benefit?
11. Do the bunkers have any value for the Linenses, and how?
12. To you, what does this project mean?
13. How is the project financed?
14. Do you work with other partners on the project? How do you collaborate?
15. Do you have a plan of the project with established goals and objectives? Could you send me something of this plan?

**About La Línea:**

16. How do you see La Línea today as a tourism destination (without the COVID-19 in mind)?
17. Do you believe the bunkers will have a more important role in the tourism scene of La Línea in the future?

[ARB interview – appendix 3](#)

Ismael Ruiz: directive member of Asociación Ruta de los Búncers.

Interview was performed over email on the 14<sup>th</sup> of April 2020.

**About you:**

1. What is your name and job position?

Ismael Ruiz Calvente. I work in the offices of Programación – Planificación in Acerinox.

2. How did you become involved in the project of the museum? Do you work fulltime on it?

I was born in 1972 and during my childhood these military constructions always caught my attention, since I was a youngster I began with the referred models to the Second World War and later during my university years I began to involve myself more in the history of the zone and I then made a trip to Normandy to know the Atlantic Wall more in depth, and there the idea stroke me of one day promoting an interpretation center in La Línea. All though thanks to the labor of Alfonso Escuadra that being siendo Culture Counselor had a great idea of digging up the bunkers of the Isthmus to show their true value, including cleaning and leaving them as in the 1940s but without furniture. That project remained in that, in a project but not by Alfonso Escuadra, rather because the budgetary participation for that council was considerably reduced and there was a change of government in the city council in 2010. After years of neglect we decided a group of friends to create an Association to raise awareness of the current government of the City Council, thus obtaining a good reception from the first moment and they took it with great enthusiasm. The non-profit Association called Cultural Association "Ruta de los Búncers" (friends of the fortifications of the Strait) was born to give La Linea de la Concepción the cultural and tourist space it deserves both at the regional and national level. It is the only town in Spain that has within a few meters two defensive archaeological remains from different times and that have always been abandoned except for that small impulse that Alfonso Escuadra gave him in his day.

As far as the time that I dedicate to the Association and the Interpretation Center project is the free time that I have left at home, it is not a fixed time and it is variable.

**About your organization:**

3. What are the objectives of your organization?



The main objective is to make the public aware that this heritage should not be lost since it is part of our lives and the history of La Línea de la Concepción.

Also, to give a meritorious recognition to our army and to the personnel of the Battalions of Workers who together did a great job to fortify and defend the area before a supposed English and French invasion.

4. Who forms part of the organization?

We comprise a total of: Five members of the board, two honorary members and several collaborators. We have no employees.

5. How is the organization financed?

As it is non-profit, it is financed through the members of the Board of Directors of the Association, honorary members, and collaborators.

6. Does the organization collaborate with other partners?

Yes, as I mentioned previously, the Association has collaborators that today will be about five in total.

7. Do you work with the Municipality of La Línea de la Concepción?

No, the only thing that unites us to this are the collaborations in group visits when they require it and that are totally disinterested on our part and the contacts that we maintain for the legalization of the transfer of the bunker to carry out the project.

**About the project of the bunker:**

8. How did the project begin?

Well, with meetings between the members of the board, investigations in public archives of different Estates and with contacts with national and international groups who feel the same passion for this military heritage and for the new boom in military tourism, which

both in various places in the Center and Northern Spain as in Europe have been exploiting this tourism for years and are having a very good acceptance.

9. What are the objectives of the project?

Disclose our most recent history, the latent danger of an invasion by the English and French (very few know this) and also show both the uniformology of the different armies involved as well as military material of the time, the artillery used, documentation, explanatory panels, books and exhibitions. All of the above related to the troubled era of World War II.

It is directed to the current citizen that more sees the bunkers as a dump or a nuisance than a tourist and cultural treasure to exploit. There are many that see that and do not know why they are there and think that they were built for nothing and it is the exact opposite, they were very important.

So now is the time to disclose and create awareness to the youngest ones in expositions, conferences etc., in the high schools and elementary schools and encourage so that when the museum is ready for visits, these students will at least visit it to know the real history and how it was. With this one reaches that from a young age a motivation arises to maintain them for the future.

10. Who are the target groups of the project and how do they benefit?

The range is wide since it may interest tourism, archaeologists, architects, historians, schools, Institutes, Universities, military, hikers (since we are surrounded by an open field where it is full of military elements related to bunkers). Each of these groups will benefit according to their profession to which they are dedicated, such as for example the Architects since the form of construction is very significant, as well as the other groups will draw what interest them for their information and study. They will indirectly benefit the hotel trade, the small commerce etc. since everyone who visits it will also want to know the city.

11. Do the bunkers have any value for the Linenses, and how?

Well, thank God we are finding more and more a good reception among the citizens because it seems that they have already become aware that it is the only Heritage that we have and that we must respect and care for future generations. Well, it may be that the value we are observing is from the different exhibitions and visits that are being carried out by both us and the current City Council.

12. To you, what does this project mean?

Well, a dream that in the end will come true, since being as I am from La Línea I have observed that culturally we are losing what little we have left and that it had to be stopped anyway. It is something that I have been pursuing for many years and thank God it is slowly becoming reality.

13. How is the project financed?

As soon as the bunker is transferred to us, all expenses will come from the members of the board, honorary members, and collaborators.

14. Do you work with other partners on the project? How do you collaborate?

The City Council supports us a lot in its different departments of Culture and Tourism as well as the Mayor who without his motivation would not be possible since he is the one who gives the go-ahead as representative of the City Council that he is. On the part of the City Council, it will provide us with the essentials so that it is in optimal opening conditions, such as: electricity, maintenance, security, etc. We maintain meetings and network contacts very regularly.

15. Do you have a plan of the project with established goals and objectives? Could you send me something of this plan?

For now the objectives that we have is that as soon as they give us the bunker with the electrical fluid, water, security and solved the problems of flooding and humidity, we will begin to place the material to expose. This material would be shown according to the level

of difficulty to expose, that is, we want to show bunk beds of the time, well, this would be something of artisanal construction and the closest thing to the original with all its realism of the time.

We want everything to be completed within a period of no more than five years, but this does not mean that it will remain closed until that date, quite the contrary, from minute one of handing over the keys to the transfer of the bunker you will be able to visit, since although without material it is worthy of study and visit.

#### **About La Línea:**

16. How do you see La Línea today as a tourism destination (without the COVID-19 in mind)?

I have always believed that La Línea has wasted that treasure, since it is the only city in the area that once arrived at the center of La Línea and without moving in vehicles has:  
Beaches, archaeological remains, green areas, museums, hotels, etc.

17. Do you believe the bunkers will have a more important role in the tourism scene of La Línea in the future?

I am completely sure that it will be a national benchmark since the level of realism of both the material and the level of information will be very important.

#### [DMO interview – appendix 4](#)

Inmaculada Sanchez: tourism planner at the destination management organization of La Línea.

The interview was recorded over telephone on the 15<sup>th</sup> of April 2020.

Researcher:

Many of the first questions I already know the information but what is the name of your job position?

Inmaculada Sanchez:

Tecnico de Turismo

Researcher:

What are the objectives of your organization?

Inmaculada Sanchez:

Maximize the tourism of the city and develop it as an economic sector that can give a boost to the economy of the city. This, in collaboration with all agents in the tourism industry, where it makes sense for the DMO. Hostels, hotels, associations etc.

Researcher:

And who do you collaborate with?

Inmaculada Sanchez:

Turismo de Cadiz, Junta de Andalucia and of course the municipality of La Línea

Researcher:

And how did the project of the bunkers begin?

Inmaculada Sanchez:

The idea of the project has been under way for some time. Before I worked in the tourism department I worked in culture and I have known the people that now work in the organization ruta de los bunkers for a long time and we have had the idea of shaping one of the bunkers into a museum and now finally all the pieces came together and I think it is an important project.

Researcher:

And what are the objectives of it?

Inmaculada Sanchez:

Well for the population it is important that they are conscious of the bunkers and what they represent. The bunkers are cornerstones that the young generations today have seen all their lives and the elder generations have seen some of them been built but there are still people that still do not them very well. Why were they built and why were they important? La Línea is a small city but it formed part of some very important history and these bunkers are a testimony to that. This

museum will help bring conscious to the citizens of La Línea of the history of their city because the bunkers play a big part. And if the population is proud of the bunkers and of their city and its passed, it will influence things that are very simple but very important, e.g. taking care of the bunkers, being friendly with the tourists, collaborating on creating a nice experience for the tourists. And I think these things are some of the most important in tourism because tourism develops itself from experiences in a place. You can have the most beautiful place in the world but if the environment is not friendly, not welcoming, the experience is not going to be pleasant.

Researcher:

And what can the museum offer the tourists?

Inmaculada Sanchez:

In what way are you referring?

Researcher:

Mostly in the aspect of values.

Inmaculada Sanchez:

The bunkers we have are something unique in all of Spain. People that find this kind of tourism interesting should come to La Línea. Moreover, it is a way to maximize our tourism in a responsible and sustainable matter. The museum is a way of selling our history of culture in an exciting manner.

Researcher:

And what does the project mean to you?

Inmaculada Sanchez:

It is a dream of mine. I see a lot of potential and a lot of importance in the project as a tourism offer and something for the population of La Línea to identify themselves with. In Tarifa they also have bunkers that they have plans for. So, a project like this is an element that can unite the region but at the same time one that identifies La Línea and differentiates it from the rest of the region.

Researcher:

And why have you not begun a project like this earlier I wonder?

Inmaculada Sanchez:

It is a question of politics because almost every fourth year there are new politicians elected with different goals. Earlier we have not had people that paid attention to this idea of a project.

Researcher:

How is the project financed?

Inmaculada Sanchez:

It is the municipality one hundred percent. Unfortunately, they have their limits and we can only work as much and as fast as they allow us to.

Researcher:

Is there a plan containing long term goals for the project?

Inmaculada Sanchez:

No there is not. The main thing is that these years, the city has other priorities. Cleanliness and security of the city. The city and the mayor have many things to take care of. Infrastructure as well is a thing that must be developed. But all this will help the project of the bunker in the future. And when these aspects are more structured, then the maximization of the tourism in the city can begin to become a big priority. Until then we are going to work on what we can to develop the tourism in the city.

Researcher:

And in terms of La Línea, how do you see the city as a tourism destination as of today? Without the corona virus in mind.

Inmaculada Sanchez:

I see La Línea as a destination with big potential. When someone discovers this, it can really develop. We have 11 km's of untouched beaches and the location is unique. What La Línea needs

is investment in order to develop the city and then the tourism. The infrastructure is a big problem for example.

*Researcher:*

And do you see the bunkers have a bigger role in the tourism of La Línea in the future?

***Inmaculada Sanchez:***

Absolutely, if not I am not even sure I would be working this job. It is cultural tourism of high quality and with potential to be very sustainable.

#### Culture DP interview – appendix 5

Encarni Rodriguez: Culture counselor at the Culture Department of the municipality of La Línea.

The interview was recorded over telephone on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of April 2020.

*Researcher:*

What is your name and job position?

Encarni Rodriguez:

Encarni Sanchez Rodriguez. Counselor of Culture of the Municipality of La Línea de la Concepción.

*Researcher:*

How did you become involved in the project of the museum?

Encarni Rodriguez:

The association (Ruta de los Búncers) got in contact with me and it seemed like a good idea to me because all that history (of the bunkers) is something good and from there we began to stay in touch and also with the tourism delegation.

*Researcher:*

What are the objectives of the project?



Encarni Rodriguez:

To create awareness of the military heritage de la linea and in this case, the bunkers. Because historically these are som big unknown factors.

Researcher:

Who are the target groups of the project and how do they benefit?

Encarni Rodriguez:

The bunkers are located close to the border of Gibraltar, so many people will stop and look because it is something unusual to see in this kind of landscape. In general, the project is for everyone interested. There is no single target group.

Researcher:

Do the bunkers have any value for the Linenses, and how?

Encarni Rodriguez:

There are people that look at the bunkers in different ways. The bunkers have a historic value. We are used to see them all our lives. Maybe we are taking them a bit for granted as just another part of the landscape.

Researcher:

And do they have any value as far as identification?

Encarni Rodriguez:

Yes, they mean something given that the origin of the city is military. But there are also other bunkers in the other villages. The bunkers in La Línea however, are very diverse.

Researcher:

How is the project financed?

Encarni Rodriguez:

Practically there is no need to support anything. The municipality allows for the bunker to be used and pays the duties of maintain and clean the bunkers. The material that they are going to need for the interior, they already have.

Researcher:

How do you see La Línea today as a tourism destination (without the COVID-19 in mind)?

Encarni Rodriguez:

A very good tourism offer. 14 kilometers of beach, places to eat, restaurants superb, museum, many places to see. There is future potential. La Línea calls for attention. People hear about the bad image of the city, but when they come here they experience that it is not how the press displays it. We have everything hear but most of all, we have good people.

Researcher:

Do you believe the bunkers will have a more important role in the tourism scene of La Línea in the future?

Encarni Rodriguez:

I think so. When this project really begins it is going to attract attention.

## Data analysis – appendix 6

Key notes and themes highlighted from the data collection. The initials of the participants indicate if they have stated the specific point.

- Project leaders have passion for the bunkers (ARB, DMO).
- Local stakeholder inclusion in the project (All).
- Project leaders are aware of the municipality's limitation to contribute (ARB, DMO).
- The bunkers seem to mean very little to the general Linense (All).
- The bunkers have historic value for La Línea (All).
- Residents do not know this (All).
- Create awareness of the bunkers (All).

- No participant mentioned that the bunkers ever have provided specific meaning beside the historic value (All).
- La Línea has tourism potential (All).
- The bunkers are unique and can attract tourists (All).
- The project aims to do the above through locals (ARB, DMO).
- The bunkers can be something for locals to identify themselves with (DMO).
- Locals co-create a tourism experience in La Línea (ARB, DMO).
- Tourism develops itself from experiences in a place (DMO).
- Vision to improve the city and the county as a place of tourism (DMO).
- Long-term vision of the bunkers' importance in La Línea (All).

Key notes and themes from the place branding literature review.

- Corporate branding – clear identity – oversimplification
- Perceptions & associations
- Symbolic meaning
- Favorable image of a place
- Unique, authentic, easy to recognize
- Complexity within a place
- Tertiary communication
- External stakeholders – economic revenue
- Prioritize and involve internal stakeholders
- Sense of ownership, responsibility, heritage proximity, lead to local brand ambassadorship.
- Engaged residents -> positive behavior toward visitors -> improves tourism experience -> improves tertiary communication -> improves image

Key notes and themes from the heritage tourism literature review.

- Unique characteristic of a city
- Creates economic development
- Both for tourists to gaze and explore

- Not only a touristic, also a social phenomenon
- How residents perceive their city
- Heritage proximity
- Social solidarity
- Positive attitude toward tourism development

### La Línea Semester Project Table – appendix 7

The interviews were conducted with the following participants:

- Ana Morales, coordinator of the Alcaidesa Marina, La Línea
- Carmen Morales, supervisor of Dos Mares Viajes, travel agency in La Línea
- Juan Franco, mayor of La Línea
- Benjamin Dominguez, restaurant and bar owner in La Línea
- Inmaculada Escuadra, director of the DMO of La Línea
- José Martín Estrella, archival of Patrimonio Histórico de La Línea (PHL)

STAKEHOLDERS & QUESTIONS	<b>The Marina</b>	<b>Travel Agency</b>	<b>The Mayor</b>	<b>Restaurant &amp; bar</b>	<b>DMO</b>	<b>PHL</b>
<b>Perception of La Línea in general?</b>	Bad due to the drug related problem	Bad due to the drug related problem	Bad due to the drug related problem	Bad due to the drug related problem	Bad due to the drug related problem	Bad due to the drug related problem
<b>Personal perception of La Línea?</b>	Wonderful place to live	Wonderful place to live	Wonderful place to live	Not much different to the above stated	Wonderful place to live	Wonderful place to live
<b>What do tourists appreciate</b>	The nature	The friendly locals	That the city is much better than its image	The friendly locals, close to Gibraltar	The friendly locals	The gastronomy, the beach

STAKEHOLDERS & QUESTIONS	The Marina	Travel Agency	The Mayor	Restaurant & bar	DMO	PHL
about La Línea?			and the gastronomy			
What do you appreciate about living in La Línea?	The nature and a sense of feeling safe	The people	The people and the environment	There is a bit of everything to enjoy	The size of the place between a city and town	The nature and the people
Recommend ed tourism attributes of La Línea?	The nature	The nature, the people, the fortification	Each season offers something valuable, and a day trip to Gibraltar	The beach and the gastronomy	City center, fortification, gastronomy, museum, beaches	The gastronomy
Value adding attributes to locals?	The nature	Not sure	All of the tourism attributes	Festival during the summer	All above	The fortification
A specific tourism image of La Línea?	The nature	The view of the rock	The marina	Nothing	The Fortification	The landscape
Vision of La Línea?	A place that tourists can enjoy year-round	Not sure	10-year plan of clearing the city's debt, cleaning the city, building more hotels and improving	Needs more hotels	Tourism is the future of the city. A need for investment and the city hall on board	Good relation with Gibraltar

STAKEHOLDERS & QUESTIONS	The Marina	Travel Agency	The Mayor	Restaurant & bar	DMO	PHL
			tourism overall			