

Code: SPS/10

CFU/ECTS: 9

Subject: **Sociology of Tourism [Sociologia del Turismo e del Territorio]**

Main language of instruction: Italian

Other language of instruction: English

Teaching Staff

Prof. Marxiano Melotti - marxiano.melotti@unicusano.it

Dr. Cristina De Stefani (tutor) - cristina.destefani@unicusano.it

Introduction

Tourism is an extraordinary tool to understand the social and cultural dynamics of our world. For Italy and other countries it is also an increasingly important resource and a challenge to find a balance between economic development and protection of the environment and the local communities, with their cultural identity and historical memory.

Globalization, post-modernity and liquid culture are transforming our mobility practices and the spaces where we live. Towns and territories respond to the tourist gaze and the social and cultural change with processes also including paradoxical forms of self-crystallisation or reinvention of their historical and cultural heritage, new creative and entrepreneurial practices and even new fears entailed by migration and terrorism.

The modules of the course accompany the students from Florence to Dubai, from Venice to Las Vegas, between well-tried practices and new tendencies. The main issue is the role of educators in these dynamics.

Objectives

The course intends to transmit the main concept of sociology of territory and tourism and to give some tools for analysing, understanding and planning the transformations of the territory and its use, with special reference to the enhancement of cultural heritage, the definition of urban, cultural and tourist policies, the relationships between local communities and tourism and the trends of cultural tourism in the context marked by migration, new fears and reorganisation of globalization.

The course aims at giving sociological tools to support educational actions connected to urban, cultural and tourist policies.

Competencies

Students are expected to become: familiar with some key concepts of the sociology of territory and tourism (gentrification, Disneyzation, thematization, heritagization, staged authenticity, tourist gaze, slow tourism etc.); able to understand the complex

relationships between territory and tourism, with reference to the processes of globalization and the transformations of contemporary society; capable of using the tools necessary to analyse the relationships between local community, local administrations and tourists, as well as between urban, cultural and tourist policies; and able to use the concepts and the tools above-mentioned to analyse, compare and implement projects of tourist development and enhancement of the territory, with special reference to cultural heritage and educational activities.

Knowledge and ability to understand: students are expected to acquire knowledge of the main socioeconomic processes active in our society, with particular reference to the policies of urban and tourist development and the effects of globalization and tourism on the urban centres and local communities.

Use of the knowledge acquired: students will become able to use their new knowledge in a large variety of social and professional situations, including public administrations, educational institutions, mass media, exhibitions and cultural festivals.

Ability to reach conclusions: students will become able to draw personal conclusions in the fields above-mentioned.

Ability to communicate: students will become able to communicate their knowledge and their conclusions in these fields in a clear and in-depth way.

Ability to learn: students will become able to acquire further knowledge in the above-mentioned fields in an autonomous way.

Syllabus (synthesis)

The course of “Sociology of Territory and Tourism” takes into account the relationships between society, urban contexts and tourism, with particular reference to the role of cultural heritage in the processes of tourist development.

The first part (modules 1-3) is devoted to the transformations of some Italian towns (with special reference to Rome, Florence and Venice) in relationship to the processes of touristification, gentrification and Disneyization of the historical centres and examines the relationships between local communities, tourism and urban policies, with their frequent contradictions.

The second part (modules 5-7) is devoted to some tendencies of cultural tourism and the use of cultural, archaeological and food-and-wine tourism. It analyses the role of cultural events, festivals and slow culture, as well as of the history, archaeology and emotions in the processes of touristification, heritagization and commodification of culture.

The third part (modules 8-9) is devoted to the analysis of two important tourist spaces, the Maldives and the Arab Emirates, with Dubai and Abu Dhabi, which throw some light upon the complex relationships between local community, international tourism, globalization and cultural heritage.



Learning materials

The learning material in the platform is organised in 9 modules. Each of them includes a lecture note (“dispensa”) from the lessons and some videolections with slides.

During the educational periods, there are also scheduled web-conference lessons.

In addition, there are forums (virtual classrooms) and chats, available on the platform, which constitute a synchronous and asynchronous cooperative learning space, including research, analyses, reflections, sharing and re-elaboration of materials. Teacher and tutor single out the most significant topics and interact with the registered students.

The course includes activities (proposed in the "forum" section), which, starting from the vision of on-line materials and the reading of short articles and interviews, allow students to apply (even in a cooperative form) the knowledge acquired to specific cases related to current events. Students are also invited to collect, interpret and compare data and formulate autonomous judgments.

Asynchronous self-assessment tests accompany the pre-recorded lessons and allow students to ascertain both their comprehension and their degree of knowledge of the contents of each lesson.

Evaluation system and criteria

The student can choose whether to take the exam in written or oral form.

Written exam

The written exam consists of 3 open-ended questions and 3 multiple choice questions on topics covered in the 9 modules of the course. The exam in reduced form includes 3 open-ended questions and 3 multiple choice questions on topics covered in the first 6 modules and in the sections of module 9 covering topics present in the first 6 modules.

The evaluation of open-ended questions takes into account the relevance of content and the capacity and quality of conceptual processing. The questions are constructed in order to evaluate the different abilities of the student and usually involve a comparison between different topics and sections. The evaluation takes into account the ability to make this comparison.

In the evaluation completeness and originality of the answer are considered. Of course, answers must not include passages taken from the lecture note, summaries or materials downloaded from the network.

The personal contribution of the candidate is particularly appreciated: for instance, references to one's own professional knowledge; knowledge acquired in other courses or personal experiences of cultural, scientific or tourist nature, such as visits

to museums and archaeological areas; and application of teaching contents to cases not treated in the course.

The score of the written exam is attributed as follows. Starting from a score of 30, for each of the open-ended questions, up to 6 points may be subtracted, while, for each of the multiple choice questions, 1 point is subtracted for each missed or wrong answer. For any activities and interactive activities carried out, from 0 to 2 points are added or, if 30 has been already reached, the praise is added.

Oral exam

The oral exam consists of an interview on the subjects of teaching. The average duration is 15-20 minutes. The fundamental concepts of the course and the topics treated in the various modules are reviewed. The assessment takes into account the ability to make comparisons between different historical and socio-cultural contexts and to relate the issues addressed to specific professional and cultural experiences. The students have the opportunity to refer also to the in-depth lessons recorded during the year. The knowledge of these additional materials is evaluated. The teacher can invite no more than 3 or 4 candidates to take the exam together. In this case the exam may include discussions between them on the topics of the course: the ability to argue and defend a certain position is also assessed. The evaluation, however, is always individual, candidate by candidate.

Erasmus students

Erasmus students are invited to contact and meet the teacher.

It is possible to define a special programme.

It is available an English version of the learning material (“dispensa”).

Students can take their exam in Italian, English, French or Spanish.

Bibliography and resources

- Melotti, Marxiano, *Beyond Venice. Heritage and Tourism in the New Global World*, in E. Marra and M. Melotti, eds., *Mobilities and Hospitable cities*, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, Newcastle, 2019, pp. 101-140.
- *Florence. Tourism, Heritage and Consumption*, in M. Kozak and N. Kozak, eds., *Tourist Behavior – An Experiential Perspective*, “Anatolia”, special issue, Springer, Berlin, 2018, pp. 97-109.
 - *Gladiator for a day. Tourism, archaeology and themed parks in Rome*, in F. Carlà, F. Freitag, S. Mittermeier and A. Schwarz, eds., *Time and Temporality in Theme Parks*, Wehrhahn, Hannover, 2016, pp. 131-153.
 - *The Power of the Senses. New Trends in Heritage Tourism*, in “Englishes”, 52, 2014, pp. 47-76.

- *Heritage and Tourism. Shifting Values in United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia*, “Middle East - Topics & Arguments”, issue “Cultural Heritage: Past and Present”, University of Marburg, 3, 2014, pp. 78-98.
- *Cultural Heritage and Tourism. Maldives and the Challenge of Future in Tourism and the Shifting Values of Cultural Heritage: Visiting Pasts, Developing Futures*, Proceedings of the International Conference, Ironbridge International Institute for Cultural Heritage, University of Birmingham, Birmingham 2014 (DVD); University of Taipei, Taipei 2015 (print).
- *Archaeological Tourism and the Crisis. Italy and Greece*, in “Electryone”, 1, 2013, pp. 29-53.

[All these essays can be downloaded from:
<https://unicusano.academia.edu/MarxianoMelotti>]

Ritzer, G., *The McDonaldization of Society*, Pine Forge Press Thousand Oaks, Cal., 1996.

Urry, J., *The Tourist Gaze*, Sage, London, 1990 (rev. ed. 2002).