An Introduction to Tourism Research

This class aims at providing the participants with an overview of the main issues of tourism research. The class will be organized in three sections. Section 1 deals with the relationship between tourism and development. Based on recent trends, we will question to what extent tourism can be considered as an “engine for growth” and/or a factor of resilience for local / meso / national economies. We will also compare the “industrialist” critique to the emerging “tourism-as-industry” approach. The meaning of “sustainability” in tourism will be also investigated. Section 2 will compare the different disciplinary approaches that are present in tourism research and outline its epistemology. Section 3 will provide a survey of some key or emerging research questions, that may be particularly relevant for urban / regional studies research: the variety of tourisms; authenticity and modernity in tourism experiences; tourism and technological innovations.

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