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FROM DESTINATION IMAGE TO STORYTELLING: NEW PARADIGMS OF SMART TOURISM

Keywords: Cultural Tourism; Destination Photography; Sustainability; Heritage; Social Media.

The destination image (DI) denotes an interdisciplinary concept fundamental for destination marketing and sustainable tourism configuration. In delineating the different components of DI, of particular interest is the conative one, which denotes the behavioural attitude that the tourist outlines, starting from the previous cognitive and affective components. Following the multidimensional nature of the image, research on DI is pivotal in the field of smart tourism, which configures a co-creation of the destination through the active role of tourists: the latter, in particular, resort to the online word of mouth-user-generated content to convey precise storytelling, which, if not appropriately focused, can lead to communication conflicts.

This session starts from the observation that, in an era of information sharing on a global scale and of digital transition, a focus on the conveyed and shared image of a destination is strongly recommended, as well as on the type of tourists who visit a specific destination.

These considerations apply mainly (but not only) to cultural/heritage tourism, which, following the COVID-19 pandemic, has been interested in the digitalisation of information, with consequent changes in the configuration of the DI before the actual visit.

CHAIRS

Sonia Malvica - Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Sassari, Italy.

She is a Researcher in Economic and Political Geography engaged in a project on innovation/digital transition of SMEs operating in the tourism and cultural heritage sector in Sardinia, Italy. Her research is focused on tourism, with an interdisciplinary approach to the destination image, smart tourism, mapping and landscape research.

Giovanni Messina - Department of Ancient and Modern Civilizations, University of Messina, Italy.

He is a Researcher in Geography. His main research interests are in landscape studies and local development.

Enrico Nicosia - Department of Cognitive Science, Psychology, Education and Cultural Studies, University of Messina, Italy.

He is a Full Professor of Geography and Coordinator of the Interdepartmental Degree Course in Tourism, Culture and Business Sciences. His main and recent research focused on movie-induced tourism as territorial promotion and valorization; sustainable tourism, parks and MPAs; cultural itineraries and urban redevelopment related to the organization of international events.

Carmelo Maria Porto - Department of Cognitive Science, Psychology, Education and Cultural Studies, University of Messina, Italy.

He is a Full Professor of Economic-Political Geography, Director and Former Vice-Coordinator of the PhD in Cognitive Science at COSPECS Department (University of Messina). His scientific production is documented by numerous publications concerning various fields of geography, with particular reference to urban, economic and tourism geography.