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Supervisor Expression of Interest
MSCA-IF Marie Sklodowska Curie Action-Individual Fellowship 2020

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Department Name: Research topic: (https://www.polimi.it/en/scientific-research/research-at-the-politecnico/departments/)	Architecture and Urban Studies (DASStU) Mass tourism in the age of globalization and its impact upon urban landscapes and cultural heritage. A study of certain art cities.
MSCA-IF Research Area Panels	<input type="checkbox"/> CHE_Chemistry <input type="checkbox"/> ECO_Economic Sciences <input type="checkbox"/> ENG_Information Science and Engineering <input type="checkbox"/> ENV_Environmental and Geosciences <input type="checkbox"/> LIF_Life Sciences <input type="checkbox"/> MAT_Mathematics <input type="checkbox"/> PHY_Physics <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SOC_Social Sciences and Humanities
Politecnico di Milano Areas:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cultural Heritage <input type="checkbox"/> Smart Cities <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Territorial Fragilities <input type="checkbox"/> Health <input type="checkbox"/> Industry 4.0
Brief description of the Department and Research Group (including URL if applicable):	



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<p>Brief project description: (max 1 page)</p>	<p>The fragile urban fabric of art cities is every day subject to the impact of crowds of visitors, whose arrival is facilitated by road traffic, low-cost flights and by now-infamous large cruise ships. Thousands of people follow well-trodden itineraries, whose character is often debased by the proliferation of shops selling low-quality merchandise. However, the logic of numbers, which appears to demonstrate the wealth generated by such tourism, seems to prevail in the economic strategies of both local and national governments, taking precedence over the protection of the character of historical cities and the societies that inhabit them. While even the Italian MIBAC (Ministry for Cultural Heritage) proudly cites the growing numbers of admissions to artistic sites and locations as a sign of the success of the policy of “self-financing” within the sector, the numbers of visitors to monuments and museums is also amongst the more recent indicators used to measure the impact of mass tourism upon historical city centres, upon the buildings that have defined their identify and the societies that have lived within them.</p> <p>The juxtaposition of opposing analyses and strategies is one of the complexities and contradictions of our age. On the one hand there are tables listing ‘most popular’ tourist sites; marketing initiatives aiming to increase visitor numbers; the provision of professional courses, at even a university level, to train those who</p>
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will manage such tourism. On the other there are the results of this expanding phenomenon, which has already had profound effects upon the balance between the fabric of historical cities, the lives of their inhabitants and the functions performed by such centres – effects which over the medium-long term could lead to the actual loss of the precious yet fragile “physical city” of ancient origin.

What instruments should one use in a cost-benefit analysis of mass tourism in the age of globalization? What indicators and evidence should be assessed and compared? How are strategies for sustainable tourism to take into account the cultural heritage (architecture, landscape, environment and related intangible heritage) of historical cities? And what effects have the policies pursued by international organisations (UNTWO, World Tourism Organization) or bodies responsible for the promotion of the world’s tangible and intangible heritage (UNESCO) had in changing the scale and impact of tourism?

Within the framework of wide-ranging research regarding “fragile territories”, this aspect merits investigation by architects, architectural historians and urban planners, as well as by the sociologists who, since the 1960s, have been studying the impact of “cultural tourism” (according the Unesco’ categories) upon developing countries.

The goal would be a critical analysis that aims to provide an initial response to a range of questions. To what extent is tourism a ‘resource’, and what differences are there between cultural tourism and mass tourism? What disciplines have explored and monitored the causes and effects of ‘overtourism’? What approaches are being advanced in the various fields of research? What are the most interesting forms of interdisciplinary collaboration? What issues are now coming to the fore? What strategies exist to manage the phenomenon in the areas where its effects are becoming critical?



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Wide-ranging bibliographical and sitographical research, starting from published conference papers and monographic studies, and the subsequent collection of information using digital software, would make it possible to form an initial picture of the trends within the phenomenon; to identify the instruments that have been devised to study its scale and its effects upon the physical and social fabric of historical city centres.

This survey and critical evaluation of data should be followed by interviews and exchanges with scholars and experts in various fields, and study visits to sample sites at both a national and international level. For the historical centres subject to more in-depth study, information should also be gathered from research centres, local authority tourist offices, the central and regional offices of the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, etc.

Publication of works in-progress and seminar discussions would make it possible to broadcast and enrich the results of the research.