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What are the contradictions, negotiations, claims, and conflicts associated with the tourism phenomenon in a stigmatized urban periphery?



What do the locals think about it?



In which ways do tourists experience the stigma? What emotions do they feel gazing at buildings in ruination? Why are they so attractive?



What different tourism does the third sector offer? What effects does the enhancement of positive experiences and the creation of heritage in the neighborhood have?

These are the main questions that guide my ongoing doctoral research. Bringing territorial stigmatization and territorial destigmatization studies (Wacquant, 2008; Schultz Larsen and Delica, 2021) into dialogue with those on consumer culture (Sassatelli, 2007; Larsen et. al. 2014) and those on tourism in marginal areas (Frenzel et. al. 2012, Freire-Medeiros, 2010, Le Gallou, 2018), I aim to analyze the ways in which the territorial stigma is reconfigured, incorporated, and used as a commodity in the tourism industry. Built-in the 1960s and 1970s as part of a public housing program representing the post-1945 Fordist European urban utopias (Brodesco and Mattiucci, 2017), the peripheral district of Scampia (Naples) is a relevant case study: it quickly acquired the role of a stigmatized neighborhood for structural reasons (unemployment, poverty, absence of Statal services) and because of performative nominations by authorities (newspaper articles, journalistic reportage, political discourse, books, movies and TV series such as Gomorrah) that depicted it as a dangerous 'no-goes area' (Ibidem). In this context, on one side tourism is used by local actors as a tactic to cope with the stigma and as an attempt to positively re-narrate the neighborhood and activate de-stigmatization processes, while on the other, it reifies and commodifies the stigma itself, contributing to the aestheticization of peripheries and to the reproduction of urban inequalities.

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