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Experience for Sale: An Exploration of Biopolitics in Tourism

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Title: Experience for Sale: An Exploration of Biopolitics in Tourism

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Abstract:

Biopolitics, understood as the junction of life, politics and power, has been a growing concept in social science in the last 20 years (Campbell and Sitze, 2013). The experiential turn of the economy (Pine & Gilmore, 1999) in which the tourism industry is often shown as a typical example can be seen as a manifestation of biopower (Roelofsen & Minca, 2018; Scher, 2011). Indeed, tourism is part of the dematerialization of the post-Fordist economy where now the economy is producing subjectivity and transformation of human relationship. In this form of social organization “value is extracted from residents’ knowledge, creativity, affect, care, and cooperation—the very forms of work that typify the tourist service industry” (Simpson, 2016: 33). Therefore tourism, and the explosion of its growth, when seen through this lens, seems to be an important component of the smooth space of power and movement of the biopolitical world (Hardt and Negri, 2000), but surprisingly, the use of biopolitics, and biopower, is still not common in the tourism studies corpus. This presentation will then explore its use and involvement through a systematic literature review where we will answer these questions:

- 1- How have tourism studies scholars defined biopolitics?
- 2- Which tourism related topics are analyzed through the use of the concept of biopolitics?
- 3- What does this literature tell us about tourism?
- 4- What are the gaps and future research areas on biopolitics that are identified by the authors selected through the systematic review?

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Roelofsen, M., & Minca, C. (2018). The Superhost. Biopolitics, home and community in the Airbnb dream-world of global hospitality. *Geoforum*, 91, 170-181.

Scher, P. W. (2011). Heritage tourism in the Caribbean: The politics of culture after neoliberalism. *Bulletin of Latin American Research*, 30(1), 7-20

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