The role of culture and creativity for urban and regional development and a new research agenda

Thursday, 21 November 2019, 2 PM
Aula Kessler, Palazzo di Sociologia, Via G. Verdi 26, Trento.

Speaker:
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Abstract
The evolution of the relationship between culture, economy, society and technology has changed and evolved over time, especially in Europe. In the last twenty years, we have assisted in the rise of the economic enhancement of the culture idea versus the conservation one. The focus has shifted from the importance of culture for local economic development to innovation processes and, finally, to the societal dimension of the culture. Cultural and creative districts and clusters have been implemented in many cities and regions through bottom-up and top-down policies. Cultural and creative industries have become one of the priority sectors for the European agenda and the establishment of communication and information technology (ICT) has improved the role of creative cities. Then, the impact of the crisis reaffirmed the role of culture for social cohesion and inclusiveness.

More recently, however, the dominance of technology has redefined the role of culture in the economic scenario, leading to the emergence of creative sectors technology-driven and resulting in processes of digitalization of the cultural heritage. This new phase reaffirms the importance of humanities and shows the limitations of new technologies and digitalization, advocating, in some cases, to back to conservation.

This presentation aims to discuss three main issues in the international debate:
- Rethinking the city transformation and the role of culture.
- How the cultural and creative industries contribute to growth and entrepreneurship.
- The role of culture in the face of the digital mutation challenge.

The relationship of culture, economy, society and technology is going to close the loop, but the future scenario will reserve new and significant challenges for scholars of culture and creativity.