

# TOURISM AND SIMULACRA. IMAGINARIES, ARCHITECTURES, PERFORMANCES

Double session, Association of American Geographers (AAG), San Francisco

Thursday, 3/31/2016, 8:00 AM - 9:40 and 10:00 AM - 11:40,

Sutter Room B, Hilton Hotel, 6th Floor, San Francisco

## *Organizers:*

**Maria Gravari-Barbas** (Paris 1 University - EIREST) and **Jean-François Staszak** Geneva University

## *Sponsorship:*

*Recreation, Tourism, and Sport Specialty Group*



*Ratatouille, Disneyland Paris*

## *Presentation*

Since its beginnings, tourism created imagined worlds, corresponding to the dreams, expectations and imagination of the tourists. These tourism environments have a dialectical and dialogical relationship with the "real" world and its architectural references.

On the one hand, they reinterpret architectural and urban archetypes: the medieval castle or the antique palace, the Renaissance villa or the Mediterranean village; on the other hand, they architecturally materialize utopias: pristine environments, idealized worlds, Eden and Paradise. In most cases these two situations occur simultaneously, creating idealised places inspired by dreamed or utopic narratives.

If these tourism worlds have been inspired by "really" experienced places or by imagined worlds, it is not less true that they have inspired, in their turn, the places in which we live, work, learn, do shopping, or practice our leisure activities. Contemporary urban environments, offered as tourism attractions, are re-interpreted in order to better correspond to tourism imaginaries. Architects and 'imagineers' translate in their simulacra powerful tourism imaginaries of Paris or Venice, of the French Riviera or the Caribbean sea.

These idealized worlds are offered as the setting on which new tourism performances may take place. Tourists are not only the "consumers" of these idealized worlds; they co-produce and they constantly re-interpret them through their imaginaries and their practices.

The session aims at questioning and analyzing the worlds built - with the complicity and the active participation of tourists - for and by tourism.

### ***This AAG session explores:***

- \*Tourism architecture: Copies and simulacra (references, models, geographies)
- \*Architecture, game and themed environments: Macao, Las Vegas, European recreated cities in Asia...
- \*Tourism imagined worlds / Dreamlands: theme parks, resorts, "tourist bubbles"
- \*The architecture, furniture, design, micro-environments, and landscapes of tourism worlds
- \*The tourism architecture as a storytelling
- \*The "Major fictions" used in tourism themed environments: the Haussmannian Paris, Venice, the exoticism of the Caribbean, the colonies...and their relationship to their urban and architectural archetypes.
- \*Cinema fictions and tourism architecture
- \*Tourism architecture and relation to time: heritagization, destruction, rewritings...
- \*The creators and the designers of Tourism worlds: architects, designers, imagineers
- \*Tourist practices /performances and tourism architecture
- \*Tourist imaginaries and tourism architecture

### **Session 1 (3156)**

Thursday, 3/31/2016, from 8:00 AM - 9:40 AM in Sutter Room B, Hilton Hotel, 6th Floor

**Chair:** Jean-François Staszak - Geneva University

**Discussant:** Li Yang, Western Michigan University

#### ***Presenters:***

- \***Yasmin Buchrieser** - EIREST, Université Paris I Panthéon-Sorbonne: *Simulacra and authentic Charles Rennie Mackintosh architecture in Glasgow in relation to tourism*
- \***William McCarthy** - Zayed University: *A Comparative Study of the Success and Failure of the Main Street USA Simulacrum in Hong Kong and California Disneyland*
- \***Yue Lu** - EIREST, University of Paris 1 Pantheon-Sorbonne: *Heritage and Tourism in Italian Theme Towns of Tianjin: Towards a New Kind of Space of Consumption*
- \***Maria Gravari-Barbas** EIREST, University of Paris 1 Pantheon-Sorbonne: *Imagined landscapes of Paris. Tourism simulacra of the City of Light*

### **Session 2 (3256)**

Thursday, 3/31/2016, from 10:00 AM - 11:40 AM in Sutter Room B, Hilton Hotel, 6th Floor

**Chair:** Maria Gravari-Barbas

#### ***Presenters:***

- \***Philippe Forêt** - Nazarbayev University : *Touring Modernity in the New Capitals of Asia*
- \***Jean-François Staszak**, Geneva Univ. (Switzerland) - Geneva University : *China City (1938-1948) : simulacra and identity*
- \***Elizabeth Carnegie** - University of Sheffield , Jerzy Kociatkiewicz, DR - University of Sheffield : *Dances with Despots: Tourism performances and the reshaping of political pasts*
- \***Allison Huetz** - University of Geneva : *The Building of the Swiss Imagination in World's Fair at the Beginning of the Twentieth Century : The Panorama des Alpes Bernoises and the Swiss Village*
- \***Raffaella Afferni** - Department of Humanities - Università del Piemonte Orientale Amedeo Avogadro, **Carla Ferrario** - Department of Economics and Business - Università degli Studi del Piemonte Orientale Amedeo Avogadro : *Understanding Italian Sacred Mounts through geotagged photography*

### ***Bibliographical references***

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- Hom Stephanie Malia, 2010, Italy without Borders: Simulacra, Tourism, Suburbia, and the New Grand Tour, Italian studies, Vol. 65 No. 3, November, 376-97.
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- Venturi Robert, Denise Scott Brown, and Steven Izenour, Learning from Las Vegas: The Forgotten Symbolism of Architectural Form, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1977.