**SIMULACRA AND AUTHENTIC ARCHITECTURE IN RELATION TO TOURISM: CHARLES RENNIE MACKINTOSH IN GLASGOW AND ANTONI GAUDI IN BARCELONA**

**Yasmin BUCHRIESER**

Simulacra and facsimiles of architecture of famous architects such as Charles Rennie Mackintosh or Antoni Gaudi have been progressively appearing in the cities of Glasgow and Barcelona. These simulacra and facsimiles have been voluntarily built by local actors, many years after the deaths of the architects. This presentation will analyse and discuss the motivations that led local actors to create these imitations of “*authentic”* architecture and specifically the role these simulacra play for tourism.

In Glasgow, examples of simulacra of Mackintosh architecture - such as the House for an Art Lover or the recreation of the original Tea Rooms built by Mackintosh as a simulacra on Buchanan Street or the reconstruction of a facsimile of the original iconic Glasgow School of Art library tragically lost in a fire in May 2014- will be analysed. We will analyse why local actors decided to create these simulacra in Glasgow and analyse which role tourism and visitors played in such decisions. Likewise we will question the purpose and role played by these imitations and reinterpretations of “*authentic”* Mackintosh heritage which have also been criticised and led to the name *“Mockintosh”*.

We will compare these examples of simulacra in Glasgow, with the city of Barcelona where a major simulacrum example can be found. Indeed, a large part of the Sagrada Familia has in itself become a simulacrum. The temple uncompleted after the architect’s death in 1926, has since been continued to be actively built by local actors. Hence the Sagrada Familia is in fact a combination of *“authentic”* architecture built by Gaudi and *“imitated”* architecture or simulacra reinterpretation of Gaudi’s architectural designs. We will see how this simulacra architecture is essentially constructed *for* and *by* tourism. We will also analyse and discuss the recent project to construct a chapel originally designed by Gaudi, in the city of Rancagua in Chile. This chapel is being built 90 years after Gaudi’s death, as a facsimile, and will become the first and currently only architectural project by Gaudi constructed outside of Spain.

These copies inspired by *“real”* architectural designs become attractions, for locals and for tourists who *“consume”* them, and which in some cases might even attract more visitors than some of the existing authentic buildings of the architects. These observations lead to the question, which role do *“authentic”* heritage and its *“imitations”* play for local actors in cities like Glasgow and Barcelona? How does tourism *“co-produce”* them and how it can lead to the creation of these simulacra? How do Glasgow and Barcelona use Mackintosh and Gaudi as a brand to compete with other cities on a cultural level?

Once the Sagrada Familia will be completed, we can question if tourism could initiate a new construction project of another unbuilt Gaudi design? In the same sense, we can question if it may lead to producing further simulacra of Mackintosh architecture in Glasgow. Here we question the limits of these architectural reconstructions and simulacra.

**Author information:**

Yasmin BUCHRIESER

PhD student, EIREST, Ecole Doctorale de Géographie, Université Paris I Panthéon-Sorbonne.

Thesis (*Title :« Quand le tourisme construit des cathédrales : patrimonialisation et mise en tourisme de l'architecture à Barcelone et Glasgow »)* under the supervison of Prof. Maria GRAVARI-BARBAS

yasbuch@gmail.com

**Biographical presentation :**

I am a PhD student at the EIREST (Interdisciplinary Research Group on Tourism Studies), Institute of Geography, at the University Paris I Panthéon-Sorbonne.

My thesis under the supervison of Prof. Maria GRAVARI-BARBAS, focuses on heritagization and touristification of Antonio Gaudi’s architecture in Barcelona and Charles Rennie Mackintosh’s architecture in Glasgow.