**Title:** Spatializing tourism and transnational architectural trends in Southern Mexico.

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**Abstract:** This paper discusses the contemporary architectural landscape of one of regions most voraciously transformed by tourism since the mid 1970s, the Mexican Yucatan Peninsula. Building on the anthropology of space and place, urban geography and tourism studies, the paper explores the centrality of tourism architectures in producing this region as an a-geographical fictional space by comparing and contrasting three of its most recent architectural forms: (1) all-inclusive resorts and (2) high-rise condominiums designed for sea, sand and sun tourism on the Caribbean coast; and (3) restored haciendas for indigenous luxury tourism in inland Maya villages.

My argument is organized as follows. First, I explore the genealogy of these architectures and their connections to historically specific state-led tourism governance models. I emphasize the centrality of cartographic representations of tourism architectures as pleasurable islands “to escape to” or “to encounter otherness” and demonstrate how the production of these architectures as “place-images” (Shields, 1991) has reinforced traditional global representations of Yucatan as “a world apart” as well as contributed to its contemporary spatialization as an “a-geographical” tourism stage. That is, a space with no place attached to it (Sorkin, 1992). Second, I show how all-inclusive resorts and high-rise condos have created an architectonic logic of enclosures within enclosures to maintain the staging of the Caribbean beach within the boundaries of Western paradisal tropes; and how the architectural restoration of colonial haciendas has led to the construction of artificial Maya villages and the re-functionalization of vernacular architectures in the pursuit of recovering an imagined “golden age”. In the three cases I explore to what extent developers’ transnational avant-gardism has reshaped Maya traditional building designs and interior decorations to accommodate to tourists’ cosmopolitan lifestyles (Gravari-Barbas & Rendon, 2015; Ren, 2011). Third, I argue how tourism architectures function as political technologies (Foucault, 1995) in the expansion of tourism neoliberal productive forces by enabling the control of the movement and the surveillance of bodies in space. I show how coastal and inland tourism architectonical trends have reproduced historical and regionally informed patterns of social distinction and labor discrimination based on race and gender which are systematically performed through travels and encounters in the Yucatan region *as* a tourist landscape (Minca, 2007). As a result, I conclude, these tourist architectures contribute to strengthen a moral economy of mutual indifference in both rural and urban areas where state-led tourism architectures are present.

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**Short Bio:** Matilde Córdoba Azcárate is an Assistant Professor at the Department of Communication, University of California, San Diego. Her research uses a political economy approach to understand the relations between tourism, space and community development in Southern Mexico. Working across the fields of social anthropology, critical geography and development studies she is currently engaged in a comparative ethnography exploring how different tourism ventures, which have been promoted as sustainable development tools for impoverished Maya communities, have become integral in the reproduction of historical uneven socio-cultural and spatial dynamics. She is currently writing a book manuscript on this research and co-directing an ethnographic documentary on maquila villages, textile production and cultural tourism in Yucatan. Her research has been supported by the Spanish National Research Plans (2004-2015); The Fulbright Post-Doctoral Program (2010-2012) and more recently, the UC San Diego Non-Senate Faculty Development Awards (2015, 2016) and Faculty Research Grant (2016).

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