**Co-producing minority culture in China’s South West**

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**Abstract:**

Through a case study close to the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Lijiang in Northwest Yunnan, the paper examines processes of co-production of tourist places, with a specific focus on how touristic imaginaries are translated into material constructions. The site in which the case study was carried out attracts predominantly organised daytrip tour groups of Han Chinese tourists. The fact that they are visiting what is perceived as an ethnic minority population provides abundant material to feed their imagination: there are plentiful of images and stereotypes of ethnic minorities in media, cultural productions, tourist promotion etc. on which to base one’s imaginary of this region and its people. At the same time, there are obviously different kinds of actors other than tourists involved in such processes, including international, national or local tourism operators, residents of the destination area, marketing experts, architects, carpenters, etc. each mobilising their own ideas, imaginaries or reinterpretations of other people’s imaginaries. The results of such a multivocal and multiscalar process can be at times astonishing, at times bewildering – both for visitors and the residents of the places themselves. A main aspect discussed in this paper is how residents in particular negotiate these co-production processes, considering that in many cases they – their quotidian spaces, built environments, are themselves part of the main attraction for the tourists. How do the imaginaries of local authenticity projected by the different external actors shape the residents’ perception of their own lifestyle and culture? And how do these processes materialise in the form of concrete build environments at the scale of houses, urban spaces and wider territories?

**Biography**:

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