**TITLE**

Architecture and Tourism: Creation and Re-creation of Europe in Japan

**NAME AND AFFILICATION**

Dr Takamitsu Jimura (Senior Lecturer in Tourism)

School of Education, Leisure and Sport Studies, Faculty of Education, Health and Community

Liverpool John Moores University

IM Marsh, Barkhill Road, Liverpool, L17 6BD, United Kingdom

**BIOGRAPHY**

Dr Takamitsu Jimura holds a PhD in Tourism and Cultural Heritage Management and an MSc in Tourism, Conservation and Sustainable Development. His research interests include cultural and heritage tourism, tourism marketing and sustainable tourism. He is especially interested in investigating the impacts of World Heritage Site designation on tourism development, local communities, and heritage management and conservation activities. He is the author of several journal articles and book chapters, including ‘The impact of world heritage site designation on local communities – A case study of Ogimachi, Shirakawa-mura, Japan’, published in *Tourism Management*. He has also presented his works regularly at international conferences.

**ABSTRACT**

The paper looks at creation and re-creation of European style buildings and townscapes in Japan and their associations with tourism. Japan has a long history of connections with Europe. The exchanges with Portugal and the Netherland started in the 16th and the 17th centuries respectively, and continued even under the isolationist policy adopted during the Edo period. Such interactions included personnel exchanges as well as trading. After the Meiji Restoration in 1868, Japan was officially ‘opened’ to the world, and the relationships with other European countries were newly started. At that time, Japan was keen to learn advanced knowledge and technologies from Europe through interactions with European countries, and this trend had been prominent until the early 20th century. After World War II, the USA has been the most influential country for Japan. However, the impacts of European countries have also been immense. The majority of Japanese people born after World War II have been exposed to European culture such as music, paintings, literature, architecture, etc., through the media and education, even if they have never been to Europe.

Thanks to the long history of interactions with Europe, countless European style houses and townscapes have been built across Japan. There are a wide range of differences in many aspects amongst these European buildings and townscapes in Japan. This paper attempts to divide Japanese Western style buildings and townscapes into Categories A and B by two factors, (1) history and authenticity, and (2) purposes and usages.

First, Category A is discussed. Part of Western style buildings in Japan has a long history. Such buildings were built between the late 19th and early 20th centuries and originally used as foreigners’ houses. These houses can be found in Japanese port cities, especially in Kobe and Nagasaki. Overall, they have been conserved in a good condition and some of them are now used as visitor attractions. Yamamoto-dori area in Kobe and Higashi-Yamate and Minami-Yamate areas in Nagasaki are also designated as ‘Groups of Traditional Buildings’ by the Agency for Cultural Affairs. Next, Category B is argued. European countries have always been popular destinations for Japanese tourists, although they are still difficult to visit for many Japanese people due to long travel distance and time, and high travel costs. This would be one of the main reasons why European style houses and townscapes have been re-created in several Japanese theme parks in the past 20-30 years, especially in the early 1990s. European countries featured in such theme parks include the UK, the Netherlands, Spain, Italy and France.

As discussed above, European style buildings and townscapes in Japan can be divided into Category A or B by two factors. Intriguingly, however, those in either Category can exist as successful visitor attractions in the Japanese tourism market. Hence, it could be stated that overall Japanese tourists understand the differences between European style buildings and townscapes in Categories A and those in Category B, and decide where to visit depending on their interests and expectation.