**Co-Production and Performance of Authenticity and Aesthetics: Convergences of Built Architectural and Intangible Heritages in a Popular Tourism Site**

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**Abstract:** This paper addresses tensions between two dominant heritage practices in Antigua Guatemala, one that is oriented around the regulation buildings and streets and another that is oriented around the regulation of people as touristic cultural performers. These regulatory and performative practices are placed within a framework to discuss Bruno Latour’s “acts of mediation” – the relationship between materiality and humans – in the context of heritage politics and lived touristic practices in heritage sites. In short, this case study explores how UNESCO heritage politics and the Guatemalan State’s regulation of Antigua's architecture and street workers are intertwined with tourism performance economies and residents’ cultural aesthetics of the city. In describing Antigua's contemporary cityscape aesthetic, I draw on Latour’s assemblage theory to get at heterogeneous ways in which the materiality of the city contributes to public social, economic, and political practices. I then draw on Jacques Rancière's theory of aesthetic regimes to make sense of locals’ and tourists’ everyday practices in urban public places. The spaces of tourism are defined by a combination of Baroque Colonial architecture, historical tours, street performances, and commercial transactions that bind weaver-vendors with tourist-consumers. Considering Rancière’s and Latour’s respective theories together allows me to argue that residents’ and tourists’ heritage aesthetics within the larger political, regulatory, and aesthetic apparatuses of the State and UNESCO illustrate how urban heritage sites are an assemblage that articulates with everyday social and material practices that lead to unexpected political outcomes. I conclude by locating this discussion of heritage and touristic assemblage and aesthetics within Edward Bruner’s and Dean MacCannell’s debates about authenticity to the highlights tensions that exist in cross-cultural co-productions of authenticity. My aim is to build on Bruner and MacCannell’s groundwork to illustrate how authenticity works on the ground—in the built and imagined spaces of tourism and touristic performance—in relation to aesthetic regimes. I argue that being in the same place is not enough for the space to be mutually meaningful or even understood as the same by all parties who enter that space. Ultimately, Antigua, as international tourism destination and urban World Heritage site may or may not be multiply constituted and produced by all those who occupy the city. It depends on the extent of mutually shared knowledge and culture within the contexts of architectural heritage and ethnic and historical tourism.

**Short Biographical Presentation:** I am a cultural anthropologist who studies the socio-economic and political lives of Mesoamericans. My multi-sited ethnographic research in Guatemala and Mexico aims to understand heritage and tourism practices in urban places with attention to identity politics and handicrafts sales to tourists, through the exploration of Kaqchikel and K'iche' Mayas' livelihoods as artisans and vendors in urban heritage sites. I am the author of nine books and edited volumes and have published over 90 articles and reviews. My monograph, *Mayas in the Marketplace: Tourism, Globalization, and Cultural Identity* (Texas, 2004), won Best Book of 2005 from the New England Council for Latin American Studies and my co-edited volume, *Street Economies in the Urban Global South* (SAR, 2013) won the Society for the Anthropology of Work Book Prize in 2014.