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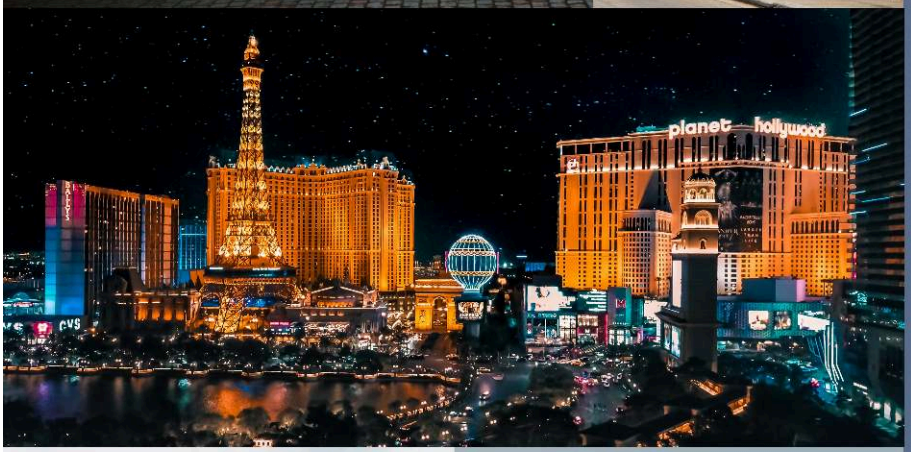

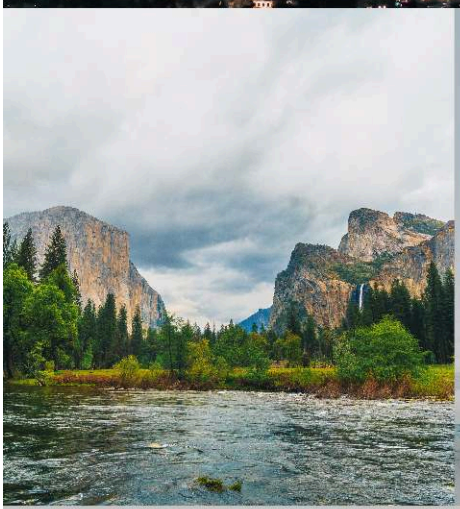

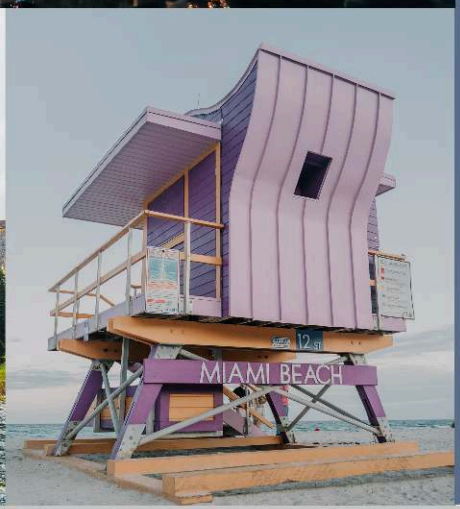

IMAGINAIRES ET PRATIQUES TOURISTIQUES AUX ÉTATS-UNIS :

enjeux économiques et enjeux territoriaux

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Imaginaires et pratiques touristiques aux États-Unis : enjeux économiques et enjeux territoriaux

Tourist Imaginaries and Practices in the United States: Economic and Territorial Issues

Alexandra Boudet-Brugal, Sophie Croisy, Sandrine Ferré-Rode, Frédéric Leriche and Dalila Messaoudi (dir.)

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Chronique

Back to Front: Erving Goffman's Past and Future Impact on Tourism Research. An interview with Dean MacCannell

Lire la sociologie d'Erving Goffman pour étudier le tourisme. Entretien avec Dean MacCannell

Thomas Apchain and Dean MacCannell

THOMAS APCHAIN (T.A.): Professor, Goffman's sociology obviously had a pivotal function when you wrote *The Tourist* and gave rise to the concept of "Staged Authenticity", and you wrote a paper about him (MacCannell, 1983) that stated your respect for him and his important position in the history of sociology (and, we could say, in the history of thinking from a broader/transdisciplinary perspective). Today, I wish to reflect with you about his legacy when it comes specifically to the study of tourism as I believe there is still plenty to be learned from him in this matter. But first could you take us to the moment when your first encountered Goffman's sociology and what it meant to you, even before you started studying tourism, which—as we shall recall—was not yet a recognized sociological topic? Maybe you could start by explaining how you actually met him?

Dean MacCannell (D.C.): Erving Goffman was my teacher, mentor and friend. We were neighbors in Philadelphia in the 1970s. How did I meet him? It was at "Berkeley in the 1960s." Still today, this phrase has mythic resonance. It marks the beginning of the end of politically conservative control of US popular culture. The Beat movement, the Black Panthers, the anti-war movement, new forms of Rock 'n' Roll, underground comic books, the Free Speech Movement, the New Left, all erupted together in the San Francisco Bay area. Soon to be followed by Women's Liberation, folk revivals, and hippies. The campus of the University of California at Berkeley was Ground Zero.

The State of California had recently invested heavily in making Berkeley its flagship institution. In the 1950s California was flexing its booming post-war economic muscles. It didn't want Berkeley to be the best university in the state or the nation. It wanted Berkeley to be the best in the world. Many programs received funds to hire

"as necessary" to become globally dominant. By 1960, some Berkeley departments including physics, sociology, and anthropology had attained top international ranking. This was the setting for Goffman's first academic appointment in 1958 as assistant professor of sociology. In the fall of 1960, I arrived on campus as a transfer student in anthropology.

Most in my group, the poor, leftist students, were very critical of the Berkeley curriculum. We were suspicious that the various fields and disciplines were preparing us for a life of corporate servitude. In the coffee houses and bookstores just off campus we gathered and compared notes about who was *not* being taught. There was no Marx in our economics classes, so we all read Marx. There was no Freud in our psychology classes, so we all read Freud. There was no Sartre in our philosophy classes, so we all read Sartre. Etc. Our faculty were rigorous in their handling of the limited material they presented to us, and we all knew that we had to submit to their version of rigor in order to survive. But we also had a strong sense that we were getting our true educations outside the classrooms by pursuing everything that had gained intellectual standing elsewhere, but not in the Berkeley curriculum.

Sociology as a discipline was especially derided as being an apologia for the societal status quo. Here is how I heard Erving Goffman's name for the first time. I was sitting with casual associates and a few strangers in one of our favorite coffee houses and someone opined, "You know that most sociologists are shit sociologists." (Strong affirmations of agreement.) "But we have Erving Goffman who is the only no-shit sociologist." "No-shit" is American vulgar slang meaning "truthful" or "genuine." Goffman never stated a political position, but his sociology was immediately embraced by hard left students as trustworthy. Probably because it was not obviously tilted right like the rest of sociology as it was taught at Berkeley in the 1960s.

I walked across Telegraph Avenue to Cody's Books and bought *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (Goffman, 1959). The paperback copy that I still own has a price of 95 cents printed on its back cover. I read most of it in a single sitting. It was immediately obvious to me that I was in the presence of an entirely new voice in academic social science, penetrating in its insights, and accessible.

What initially attracted me to Goffman's sociology was the way he conceptually framed his observations of daily life. We are all aware of the kinds of details he seized upon. The difference was he gave each of his observations a half-turn on its axis. He revealed significance and functions that were there for the taking but remained disattended until he began to give us names for them.

It was difficult for me not to take him personally. When I was about four, someone told me the story of the young James Watt staring at his mother's tea kettle and conceiving of a use for steam that would change the world. The story made me angry at myself. I had watched the steam coming from my mother's kettle many times and never imagined using it as a source of power. I spent the rest of my childhood wondering if there were other commonplace, everyday things occurring all around me that I was failing to see their potential. Here was Goffman, pulling a James Watt on me in a field adjacent to my own, explaining the potential power of everyday gestures, architectural arrangements, affectations, mannerisms.

Reading Goffman felt to me like a first tentative step toward understanding that *the human* and *the social* are not the same, are sometimes at odds with one another, and it

might be possible to map the points of tension between the two. I didn't have the vocabulary to express it at the time of my first reading, but it felt like he was analyzing the unconscious of commonplace situations, interactions and relationships. Reading Goffman can feel like he has taken hold of your humanity and is running off with it. When you succeed in grabbing it back, you will find it changed; tuned-up and better able to deal with the social.

T.A.: We can see that, even if Goffman never committed himself politically, his teachings were, for Berkeley students, imminently political. You have undertaken to specify his front/back distinction by intermediate stages, can you lead through this process?

D.M.: Interestingly I know the exact moment when I conceived the need for a modification of Goffman's front/back distinction to adapt it to the study of tourism. I wrote about it briefly in *The Ethics of Sightseeing*:

> The idea for writing about the special status of back regions in tourism came to me as I watched a salad chef in an exclusive restaurant prepare an elaborate salad on a cart in view of guests who were about to eat it. It was likely a scene in a movie as I doubt, at age twenty-four, I had eaten in so fine a restaurant. I had recently sat in an Introductory class by Erving Goffman and read his *Presentation of Self*. While watching the preparation of the salad I thought to myself, "Wait a minute, that's supposed to be a back region activity." I was beginning graduate school at Cornell and had already decided to study tourism. I wondered if a similar transposition of back to front occurred in other tourist contexts. My initial thoughts into this matter were set off by an empirical observation of a particular kind, one that did not fit into existing relevant theory, by an anomaly. (MacCannell, 2011, p. 16)

I did not reference it in place but that last word, *anomaly*, was intended to bring the full weight of Thomas S. Kuhn's *Structure of Scientific Revolutions* to bear on my process. Kuhn argues that western science progresses only when anomalous empirical observations bedevil existing conceptual paradigms (Kuhn, 1962). In *Ethics* I would eventually argue that there is almost nothing left of Goffman's front in the so-called "post-modern" world. Where there used to be formal front regions, now there is only staged authenticity. The cant and hypocrisy of pseudo intimacy.

Once I noticed the anomaly, there remained the crucial matter of giving it a name. I was reading Marcuse's *One-Dimensional Man* (Marcuse, 1972 at the time and beginning my study of the Frankfurt school. The first name I came up with for the behavioral arena between Goffman's front and the back regions was "the space of 'inauthentic demystification.'" Very Frankfurt School. My finding was that in tourist settings, there is often a pretense that some authentic, behind the scenes reality has been revealed—ordinarily hidden away production processes like whipping up the salad; other aspects of local daily life as it is really lived. But it is not real life as lived by the local people, it is a show they put on for tourists. Is it even possible to live your life authentically when outsiders, who have no instrumental role in what you are doing, are looking on, gazing, even gawking? I gave it more thought. "Inauthentic demystification" is a lot of negation and a lot of syllables. My observations and idea were based on Erving's work. What would he call it? "Staged authenticity," obviously.

T.A.: The staging of authenticity, I feel, has mainly been (abusively) interpreted as a commercial strategy to fool tourists, in the line of Boorstin's comments on tourists (Boorstin, 1961). But, in the end, it is much less that than it is a defense strategy of those

who are placed under the tourist gaze and who intend to preserve a back region, safe from tourists. Would you agree to say that staged authenticity is a defense mechanism?

D.M.: I didn't explore or emphasize this enough in my study of "Staged Authenticity," but you are correct in pointing out that one of the main functions of creating pseudo back regions for tourists would be to protect and preserve normal human relationships and activities away from the tourist gaze. The importance of this privacy can be measured in the performative costs of maintaining two fronts—the front and the staged back, that is also a front. When I visited Santa Fe, New Mexico, many years ago, the city had just passed an ordinance that required the Native American women who sold jewelry, pottery and baskets in the central plaza to sit on blankets on the ground. They had been sitting on folding chairs displaying their wares on folding tables. This was much more comfortable for them than sitting on the ground. The (white) city council decided that sitting on a chair at a table looked "inauthentic." Everyone is aware of the costs of maintaining a "false front." The performative costs of maintaining a "false back" are at least as great or greater. Some of the older Indian women were physically unable to sit on the ground and get back up again. There is also the risk that tourists may have no interest in the actual back region activities of the local people—that "being-an-authentic-Indian-for-others" is the only commercially viable option.

T.A.: You said that there is only staged authenticity left today. That's obvious in a way, the one that makes us say that there is no longer really a front because almost all front settings are at least tinged with staged authenticity. But, for all that, there are still back regions, aren't there?

D.M.: The spread of staged authenticity beyond tourism has brought forth a new generalized definition of the situation where everyone is required to seem unguarded, authentically open, hip, and casual at work, play, in public, with our children, etc. I.e., engaged in back region informality and familiarity. In California where this first emerged as an ethic of everyday life it is called "laid-back" and "cool." This is a better description of a corpse awaiting its autopsy on a slab in a morgue than of any live human performance.

I don't think that the norm shift you are noticing, i.e., the rejection of Puritanism and "uptight" bourgeoise society, did much to relax social controls, though. The new requirement to seem casual and open (i.e., "authentic"), not just in the back regions of society but in all our dealings, is as rigorous and demanding as any Goffmanian front region formality. The new social imperative, "ENJOY," can be even more cruel and demanding than the old, "THOU SHALT NOT." One who does not maintain a casual, happy-face ethos risks gaining a reputation as unable to cope, "up tight," or one who is guarded and unfriendly. Successful Silicon Valley CEOs no longer wear suits and ties. After Steve Jobs, CEOs began wearing black turtlenecks, blue jeans, and sports shoes when making formal presentations. Now, (Elon Musk) some dress even more casually and admit to smoking weed.

'But for all that there are still back regions.' Yes, absolutely. The social changes happening in parallel with the growth of tourism all apply to the changing definition of the situation in the front. To the extent that the social world mirrors human consciousness, there will always be "back regions." Goffman discovered and analyzed the functions of the most accessible back region of both mind and society—the semi-private spaces where human intimacy is formed and attempts to affirm and express

itself. Even before the changes that I tried to bring to light—staged authenticity in tourist settings and the eventual routinization of staged authenticity everywhere in the modern world—there were back regions on beyond Goffman. E.g., hide-outs where crimes are planned, kangaroo courts in prisons, extra-judicial torture sites, sex dungeons equipped for perversions beyond what ordinary bedrooms can support, laboratories where biological, nuclear and other hideous weapons are designed, sewers and other places so filthy that only those charged with maintaining them will enter, the most restricted wards of mental hospitals, every real place that might serve as a model for hell itself. On the flip side, the back region continues to shelter private quests for nirvana—for those who believe that the only way to extinguish desire completely is to satisfy it completely.

In October, 2006, at Berkeley, I gave a talk titled "Staged Authenticity Today" in which I began to trace the historical movement of staged authenticity out of tourist settings into almost every current urban, domestic, work, political, and interpersonal setting. My talk contained observations of the new "open plan" house design, up-scale powder rooms in McMansions, "hooking-up," "same person" marriage, new forms of celebrity, casual attire in what used to be formal settings, luxury trucks, show trials, reality shows, news leaks, loft and prison design. I would eventually publish an expanded version of this lecture as a chapter in my book *The Ethics of Sightseeing*. My lecture concluded that the wholesale elimination of the "barriers to perception" that, according to Goffman, once separated front from back regions in our society, does not mean that everything is now out in the open. It means the opposite. The pretentious revelation of supposed back region secrets suggests that what remains actually hidden in postmodern society is so appalling or sensuous we cannot permit it to appear even behind the scenes, or joke about it backstage.

T.A.: Reading Goffman, then *Ethics of Sightseeing*, I have the impression that there are two forces at work, and I wonder if they are entirely related. On the one hand, there is the emergence of tourism and its quest for authenticity which is pushing for the opening of back regions. On the other hand (or maybe not), there is a cultural change that makes many people decide to diminish the front and back dichotomy (by acting, speaking, dressing, etc. in ways that use to belong to back regions). It is probably a rejection of Puritanism and bourgeois society (the kind of society that has refined the distinction between front and back). We can perhaps say that Goffman is speaking at a time when social control is still very strong, and the social world he describes is made up of a still very strong opposition between front and back. And it is perhaps right at a social tipping point that you have modified Goffman's model because it was necessary.

Is it fair to see in these questions a way of linking the rise of tourism (because I think we can say that the rise of tourism as we know it is born of the refinement of staged authenticity, thus of the intermediaries between back and front) with a relaxation of social control?

D.M.: Ed Bruner was in the audience in the 2006 Berkeley talk I gave and, as usual, he asked a number of questions. I don't think I answered very well, because he continued to ask them by email after the conference. I am including some of our exchange here because Ed brings up the same idea that new freedoms and other important shifts in modern culture obviates Goffman's front/back dichotomy. Ed wrote:

> Dean, Possibly the world has changed so much from the 1950s to 2005, that the front-back metaphor is not as applicable anymore. From listening to your paper, I didn't hear you raise that possibility, but of course it is suggested by the paper. As

> women and gays and so many groups have been liberated, and more out in the open, in front, then what is left for the back? Or is that now the wrong question to ask. Just some thoughts.

I was in Europe lecturing when I got this note from Ed. My initial response was hasty. Our correspondence continued and eventually I answered more fully as follows:

> Dear Ed, No. the question you ask is important. I think that today, no less than in the 1950s, the *back* persists conceptually as the primary ground of fantasies of fulfillment. In my 1973 article (MacCannell, 1973) and *The Tourist* (1976), I described some clever or funky social arrangements to service those fantasies. Real back regions promise the possibility of connection, even human intimacy. The reason "staged authenticity" stirred up so much confusion is that while everyone is capable of enjoying the imaginary, no one is willing to accept that their intimacies and enjoyments might be forced, false, or fake. There can be no staged authenticity without the persistence of actual back regions to support belief in their existence.

Goffman's barriers to perception continue to function as necessary screens or foils for human dreams and desires. Understanding the dynamics of culture and cultural change still requires that we give close analytical attention, as Goffman did, to the structural supports of the distinction between the seen and the unseen, the accessible and the inaccessible. Applied to tourism, we now know that Goffman's barriers to perception support fantasy by surrounding the grounds of make-believe while providing the openings to enter myth, the gates to fantasyland. That is why the creation of staged authentic environments is such a profitable enterprise. They promise to resolve everyone's contradictions. Gays can be out *and* they can be nostalgic for the days of the closet. Women can be liberated and still long for patriarchal protections and the pretense of purity those protections supposedly provided.

In the end, I answered Ed's specific question, 'No.' I think that Goffman's *back* in the expanded sense of scientific unknowns, and as the locus of quotidian fantasies of fulfillment is even more important today than it was in the 1950s. As we rush into more permissive social arrangements and greater tolerance of once hidden human differences, barriers to perception between front and back shifted their ground but they did not go away. The idea of a hidden backstage continues to service our seemingly overwhelming wish that the last true "primitive" has not disappeared forever from the face of the earth; a longing for and fervent desire to protect pristine, untouched nature; the idea that human kind would be happier without all the contrivances that clutter up our personal fronts—simple living; belief that an anthropologist or a psychoanalyst might eventually decipher the deeply unknown parts of our culture or our psyches; or here in the architectural reconstructions of Colonial Williamsburg, the past is really real.

T.A: This brings us to another important point. We have mostly seen the back/front dichotomy, for the moment, in terms of tourist settings. But also important is the idea of tensions between the human and the social that leads to the idea of a tension between the self and society, and the risks of alienation that it entails. With Goffman, this difference between human and social is expressed in a distinction between back and front regions, but we might also say between a front (social) self and a back (authentic) self. For Goffman, individuals are aware of the need to modify their behavior and appearance when they enter a situation that they codify as social, and in which they have specific roles to play. Rather than awareness, let us say that they have a sense of what is appropriate and, in fact, correspond to behaviors that are not likely to put them in danger. For Goffman, there is a certain fatality relative to this danger: to manifest a role distance is to expose oneself to

sanctions, but to play a social role perfectly is to renounce the authenticity of one's humanity. The second evil often prevails over the first. This is also how the back/front division works, spaces of intimacy that are a partial (when in affinity society) or total (in solitude) suspension of one's social roles. But the idea of the tension between front and back, and between social and human, is also very important in your work, and doesn't start nor end with the idea of its impact on tourist settings. I think we can say that if we don't understand the Goffmanian idea that the human and the social are in tension, we don't understand what you have written about tourist motivations. Aren't your tourists individuals who, through travel, seek to rediscover the human buried under the social? In a certain way, isn't the theory of tourism that you have constructed rooted in the reference to a Goffmanian kind of violence, of malaise, leading to a momentary rejection of society?

D.M.: I almost hate to answer this because it stands so powerfully on its own as a rhetorical question that everyone should be required to contemplate.

You have done an almost perfect job of distinguishing what I have called the ethical sightseer from the mass of those who are simply going through the motions of being a tourist. A tourist attraction, any tourist attraction even the most tacky and commercial, embodies everything consciousness needs to pull the human out from under the social. Or, as Lacan might put it, to breathe life back into the symbolic. And yes, it is an act of violence. Or of "dialectical" violence if there can be such a thing; a fleeting moment of overthrow of what Barthes called the "fascism of language." (Barthes, 1977).

We should give Goffman the last word here. He was a dialectical thinker and also smart enough to know that his primary audience, Anglo-American social science, had (has?) zero tolerance for dialectical thought. So, he had to keep his methods largely hidden from view. The essay where he openly reveals the tension between the human and the social is "Role Distance." (Goffman, 1961a). I have always read "Role Distance" as Goffman's most penetrating meditation on Durkheim. Written about the time of his wife's suicide, "Role Distance" can be seen as a brilliant reflection on, and extension of, Durkheim's study of *Suicide*. Recall that Durkheim defined "altruistic suicide" as over conformity to social norms. When ordered to do so, military discipline requires a soldier to attack the enemy. But dying while running directly into machine-gun fire to drop a grenade into an enemy bunker is suicidal and called "gallantry above and beyond the call of duty." If every soldier used every opportunity to demonstrate this much devotion to role, the army would be destroyed by its enemy in short order.

What Goffman discovered in "Role Distance" is if society ultimately succeeds in the violent suppression of the human, like an army of over-conformists, society would cease to exist. There is a transcendent social norm that holds over conformity to norms to be abnormal. Manifestations of detachment from social roles are required if the roles are to be performed effectively. For society to function, most of us must wear our social roles lightly most of the time. I would revise the last words of "Role Distance" as follows: 'For if an individual is to show that he is human, or someone much less human than anyone need be, then it is through his using or not using role distance that this is likely to be done.' Tourism may not be a total break from ordinary social routines. But it can be an opportunity to practice some detachment. And far from undermining the social order, that kind of detachment is precisely necessary to it.

T.A.: In the end, what could we learn from Goffman as scholars who study tourism even if Goffman himself never wrote about tourism?

D.M.: While it is true that Erving Goffman never wrote specifically about tourists and tourism, if you look for them, they are omnipresent in his writings. Several of his observations are obviously of people on tour. But he chose not to frame behavior on tour as different, or separate, from the rest of life. While some tourism researchers like John Urry (1990) and Nelson Graburn (1977) define tourism as a "break from the everyday," Goffman did not find any touristic interactions worthy of their own distinctive conceptual treatment. In *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life,* the first long quote (from a work of fiction on page 5) is a description of a pompous British tourist who is trying too hard to impress his fellow tourists while on vacation at a beach in Spain. But Goffman treats this (fictional) tourist's pomposity as ordinary, everyday pomposity, not as distinctively touristic or connected to his being on tour.

The one place where Goffman notices there might be something interesting or distinctive about tourists and tourism can be found on the last pages of *Presentation of Self.* He is clearly bemused by the trending tendency at the time to upgrade and prettify kitchens to the point that they are no longer unambiguously "back regions" and can now be used for entertaining guests, not just the messy business of preparing salads, etc. It is almost as if he is shrugging, saying, in effect, "this doesn't make much sense." He noted "a peculiar social movement which led some factories, ships, restaurants and households to clean up their backstages to such an extent that like monks, communists, or German aldermen their guards are always up and their front is down while at the same time members of the audience became sufficiently entranced with society's id to explore the places that had been cleaned up for them." (Goffman, 1959, p. 247). This is Goffman annoyed about something he has noticed but deciding to let it go.

I regarded this passage as evidence of unfinished work. Goffman is clearly noticing something distinctive, or at least odd, about tourists and tourism that he is leaving unanalyzed. It was precisely at this juncture that I began my studies and developed my concept of "staged authenticity."

I was relying on Goffman's noticing of tourists, without noticing anything special about them, when I claimed that '"the tourist' is one of the best models available for modern-man-in-general." (MacCannell, 1976, p. 1) It is not difficult to demonstrate that everything Goffman wrote about social settings and interaction, with minor, straightforward, conceptual modification (e.g., staged authenticity), is directly applicable to understanding tourists and tourism.

Other areas of tourist studies would have already achieved a much higher stage of development had more researchers grounded their work in Goffman's relevant formulations. If his essay on "Where the Action Is" had been systematically applied to "Adventure tourism" and "extreme tourism," these sub-fields would have transcended their current standing as merely descriptive categories. Researchers who study cruise ship tourism could benefit a great deal from using Goffman's models in *Asylums* of "total institutions" and "underlife." (Goffman, 1961b). And research that insists tourism is not about society, authenticity, alienation, etc., but instead is only about escapism, pleasure, and enjoyment, could be revolutionized by a close reading of "Fun in Games."

T.A.: Those are important reflections that you're giving here. I would like to end our exchange by mentioning one of Goffman's last books, "Frame Analysis" (Goffman, 1974), that in my opinion has not been used enough, maybe because it is more difficult. In "Frame Analysis" Goffman takes on a question asked by William James who wondered "What is reality?" and starts to ask about the conditions required for people to define a situation as real. Doing so, he rephrased the question and asked how people answer the question: "what is going on here?" The change is subtle but significant because what Goffman immediately states is that people always have a range of preconceptions that help them to define, often very quickly and easily, what the situation is. Those preconceptions are called frames. The reason I'm bringing that up, is because it brings to our attention that every social situation, however extraordinary they might be and even if we are not directly involved in it, is codified or framed. Everyone involved or even simply witnessing a situation characterized by the presence of tourists tries to apply the right frame to it, and also to assign specific exigences about how people are supposed to conduct themselves in it. In Goffman's scenarios, all individuals do it easily, often with a simple look. But in Goffman's analyses, they are always people from the same cultural backgrounds, and they have a good knowledge of the social grammar. Isn't it different when it comes to tourist situations, and generally in cross-cultural encounters? Does Goffman's sociology still apply in that sort of situation?

I'm not convinced that we should give up on Goffman when facing cross-cultural situations. Moreover, I would like to try and formulate an audacious hypothesis. I do believe that framing operations are only widely simplified in tourist situations because the different groups that are momentarily brought together do not possess a complete knowledge of the ways they could understand and classify each other's behaviors and actions. Therefore, I wonder if the central place of "authenticity" in tourist situations (where the question would, therefore, be "what makes what I see authentic and not designed for me") could be explained simply because it's the simpler question a tourist could ask himself in a situation where he knows so little of the grammar. In my research in Rio de Janeiro's favelas, I found that tourists have difficulties trusting what is shown or told to them, but are much more able to believe that what lies beyond is the authentic: the interior of a home, a scene of the daily life gazed from afar, etc. You show that perfectly: tourists often reach beyond staged authenticity. Ultimately, staged authenticity begins the moment tourists become part of the situation. And authenticity can be understood as something that can only be sensed or glimpsed at, something clear of one's own presence. So, to sum up my thought, I wonder if we could not find a way to confirm your hypothesis (drawn from a macro perspective) with a micro (more Goffmanian) angle: judging the authenticity of a situation is the simpler framing operation one could make when placed in a situation that cannot be understood with the complex frames ordinarily used in daily life. The tourist can only choose between authenticity (a primary frame) and staged authenticity (a frame that has been transformed).

D.M.: You are right that *Frame Analysis* is poorly understood and underutilized in general, and there are valuable insights awaiting its first application specifically to situations involving tourists. This could well be the most productive line to emerge from our conversation about Goffman's potential contribution to tourism research.

You express concerns about the lack of shared cultural understandings between tourists and locals as perhaps limiting this approach. I don't see this as a problem so much as an opportunity to demonstrate the strength of Goffman's method for any and all types of human encounters. The assumption of shared understanding is always tenuous even when the participants in the situation are from the same cultural (or even family) background. The tourist encounter is clearer on this matter: the constitutive features of the frame, i.e., the shared understandings of the participants, include the assumption that they don't share understandings; that no one easily and immediately comprehends what the others are saying, thinking and feeling. In many ways, the tourist encounter might be regarded as a primary frame,

calling into question the intersubjective connections in other kinds of encounters. The partial or total absence of shared cultural understandings doesn't mean there will be incomprehension of what is going on. When tourists are present, there is very little need to ask "Why?"; "What are they doing there, and what may they need or want?" An enormous industry has been built on the assumption that we know answers to these questions. Not all the answers, but many. Unlike other situations where total strangers mingle in public and semi-public spaces, those identifiable as tourists are owed some things—beginning with a certain amount of consideration for their ignorance. They have come not just to spend money, but also to appreciate what the locals in the situation take for granted as a part of their day-to-day existence. There are many different forms of tourist/local encounter, but this is the framework of one of the most common, and the basis for continuing interaction if a rudimentary common language can be found—e.g., gestures, drawing pictures, wordless economic exchanges.

Also, the material supports for the tourist/local encounter have some distinctive framing functions. Some tourists "dress the part," making no effort to hide their guidebooks, maps, cameras, etc. Others try to blend in. Those who are obviously tourists are more approachable with offers of assistance than random strangers. In Goffman's terms, the primary framework around the tourist encounter would be special in the following way: the dialogic nature of the tourist encounter is minimized. Instead of taking turns being performer and audience, the tourist is somewhat stuck in the role of "audience" and the local people are the "performers." This is only the primary framework of the tourist encounter. In any actual run of tourist-local interactions, the locals can easily turn the tables on the tourists and make them unwitting performers of their own blindness or ignorance. Or the tourists can become painfully aware of their image in the eyes of the locals and try to minimize how "touristy" they appear. But primarily, the locals perform for the gaze of the tourists

Authenticity is projected by the tourists onto the "primary social frameworks" of the others—i.e., daily life as it is lived and understood more or less without effort on the part of the local people. I think you are correct that the tourists are more confident that they have witnessed an "authentic" performance if they also believe the local people haven't noticed them noticing, or if it is evident that the local people don't care about the presence of the tourists. I.e., when the tourists are not a meaningful part of the interaction. This may explain why some Americans in Paris try so hard to "blend in" with the local population—dress, mannerism, hair styles, etc. A strategy that is not so easy to employ in more exotic destinations.

Of course, the local people don't think of their primary frames as "authentic." They are just life. If you are saying that staged authenticity is the re-keying of behavior, or reframing of life, when the tourist becomes a part of the situation, I agree completely.

Ethnographically, this opens a number of questions about differences in the ways the local people actually frame or stage performances of their "authenticity" for others: burlesque, parody, stereotypes, anti-stereotypes, exaggeration, selective revelation... Goffman will have much to say about this.

T.A.: There is one last question I would like to ask you. Goffman is often seen as a sociologist of interactions and associated, perhaps too quickly, with a microsociology. However, your use of Goffman is immediately macro, it serves a general theory of tourism developed in The Tourist. You seem more interested in macro phenomenon. Goffman, on the other hand, even if he gives a real theory of it, almost never leaves the space of interaction. How do you see this passage from the micro to the macro?

D.M.: From our conversation so far, it should be evident that while Goffman hewed closely to studies of face-to face interaction, his approach is not restricted to micro-levels of analysis.[1] Without looking beyond his own writings we can find conceptual frameworks for studying the organization and functioning of entire ("total") institutions—jails, asylums, concentration camps (Goffman, 1961b). These models are immediately useful with little modification for research on cruise ships, summer camps, and resorts that are sealed off from their surrounding social contexts.

Consigning Goffman to a micro-level of analysis is, to my mind, a needless artifact of mid-20th century academic politics. Goffman's sociological colleagues strongly resisted any suggestion of the possibility that his approach and method might be useful for macro-level analysis. Sociologists preferred that he be read as providing an idiosyncratic and probably non-reproducible perspective restricted to face-to-face interaction. There are numerous complaints in academic reviews of his work suggesting he had nothing worthwhile to say about groups, communities, social classes, institutions, or society itself. To my knowledge, *The Tourist* was the only contemporaneous English language study that scales up Goffmanian concepts to the societal level.

His reception within academic sociology notwithstanding, Goffman's approach to interaction renders it readily accessible to be scaled up to the societal level. He did not report on restricted or highly distinctive, localized social arrangements as found in mini-ethnographies of tour groups or resorts, or the studies of so-called "primitive societies" in the classical ethnographic record. Instead, he took care to focus on aspects of interactions that occur generally, i.e., throughout societies. This is nowhere more manifest than in his transition from his Ph.D. dissertation on "communication conduct" in the Shetland Islands, and the book he made of it, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*. *Presentation* can be read as a treatise on the many ways we interact with one another that are the same or similar to the ways Shetlanders interact with one another. The kinds of interactions he observed may involve only a few individuals, but they repeat themselves across vast expanses of historical time and social space. They are micro in the scale of their individual occurrences, but macro in their ubiquity.

This is why our discussion of his "front/back" division so easily transitioned to the macro level. We found that continued close study of this replicant form, as it weaves its way into and out of different domains (tourism, everyday life, expressions of intimacy, e.g.,) with very little further conceptual modification, can be foundational for a macro-level of analysis.

Let's not forget Goffman's indebtedness to Durkheim, perhaps the greatest master of macro-level social analysis. Goffman adapted Durkheim's concepts of religion, ritual, and the normative framing of social ties and relations to his ethnography of micro-occasions. This led him to discover that Durkheim's "Society," something we used to

think of as very large, like "French society," is also found in the fine-grained details of our most seemingly intimate interactions.

We have discussed ways in which Goffman's micro-sociology meets and melds with Durkheim's macro-sociology. And how a few modifications of Goffman's front/back division, readily transforms it into "staged authenticity" and opens free passage between micro and macro levels of analysis. These conceptual moves were necessitated by the new questions that arose when dealing with the social and cultural changes accompanying the growth and spread of tourism.

Meeting Durkheim half-way might be regarded as a minor theme of *The Tourist*. I argued that sightseeing is a ritual tourists perform to the differentiations of society and that tourist attractions symbolically represent those differentiations. I openly derived my concept of "social structural differentiation" from Durkheim's "division of labor," and my "stages of sight sacralization" from Durkheim's *Elementary Forms of the Religious Life* (1965, New York, The Free Press, Opd, 1915).

Perhaps we have arrived at a place where macro and micro designate only empirical domains and make little sense at the theoretical level.

T.A.: What remains of Goffman's theories when they are used in another scale? And finally, do you consider yourself to be a Goffmanian?

D.M.: Goffman's theories are a strong foundation for almost all of my work. But, as we have discovered in the course of our conversations, very few of Goffman's concepts survive without minor tinkering and sometimes major modifications to fit observations I have made of tourists and tourism.

If the term "Goffmanian" suggests some kind of doctrine, orthodoxy, or school then you will need to count me out. I am strongly of the opinion that there is no place for "schools of thought" in research and scholarship. They only serve to enable stagnation; academics who have nothing new to say wave around their self-identification as "postmodernists," or Foucaultians, or "deconstructionists," in hopes that their membership in a school will obscure their failure to contribute to it.

In this sense, I am not a Goffmanian, nor was Goffman a Durkheimian.

My only strong attachment is to problems that I find to be significant. I chose tourism in 1965 because I thought it was about to reshape human life on an unprecedented scale and no one else was studying it at the time. My primary aim was to improve understanding of tourism by observation and reasoning. Of course, I began with the work of others that might potentially prove helpful including Goffman, Durkheim, Marx, Lévi-Strauss, Barthes, *et al*.

I never deductively entered my subject (tourism) viewing it only through Goffman's eyes or another theorist's. An orthodox Goffmanian might have produced an account of the ways tourists and guides interact, or tourists and locals, or tourists and tourists. Or, with sufficient ambition, all of these. This kind of work is valuable for putting flesh on the bones of an existing paradigm. Thomas Kuhn called it "normal science," and explained why it cannot lead to the creation of new paradigms.

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NOTES

1. Recently, Gary Jaworski (2021) provided a re-reading of Goffman's handling of face-to-face interaction as reflective of a major transformation of social relations in the United States after World War II. Jaworski suggests that Goffman's sociology is essentially a macro-level analysis of the impact of the Cold War on human relationships. He notes that US government anti-communist crusades had a powerfully negative impact on the University of Chicago, and especially on the social science faculty where Goffman was a student at the time. Jaworski notes that the field of sociology would like to keep Goffman out of its central, macro-level concerns, but this would be an error. He argues that Goffman's writings provide the most detailed account we have of the behavioral responses to the general breakdown of trust and endemic paranoia that transformed interpersonal relations post World War II.

ABSTRACTS

Erving Goffman never wrote about tourism and it may, therefore, seem strange to reflect, on the occasion of the centenary of his birth, on his contribution to the study of a phenomenon that he never undertook to study directly. However, many lessons can be drawn from Goffman's sociology towards an understanding of certain central issues in tourism. By the way he captured and analyzed society in the 1950s and 1960s, Goffman offers to all those who undertake to study tourism a fundamental basis for understanding its genesis. Much of what he taught us remains unexploited, and the links that can be established between Goffman and tourism are therefore mostly indirect. However, making Goffman's sociology a source of inspiration for the study of tourism is not far-fetched. A pioneer of the anthropology of tourism was heavily indebted to Goffman. Indeed, the tour de force that Dean MacCannell achieved in 1976 with the publication of *The Tourist* was largely inspired by Goffman and his unique approach to sociology. By returning with its author to the Goffmanian part of *The Tourist* we pay homage to what tourist studies owe to the author of *The Presentation of Self*. As we continue the study of tourism, what, from Goffman's sociology, opens up a new of set of problems? Not just those that, have already influenced our analyses through Dean MacCannell, but also some that remain, a source for new interrogations 40 years after Erving Goffman's death.

Erving Goffman (1922-1982) n'a jamais écrit sur le tourisme. Il peut alors paraître étonnant, à l'occasion du centenaire de sa naissance, de réfléchir à sa contribution à l'étude d'un phénomène qu'il n'a jamais entrepris d'analyser directement. Pourtant, de nombreuses leçons peuvent être tirées de la lecture de Goffman vers une compréhension de certaines questions centrales de l'étude du tourisme. Sa sociologie de la société des années 1950 et 1960 constitue une base fondamentale pour comprendre une part de la genèse du tourisme. La majeure partie de ce que nous avons à apprendre de Goffman reste inexploitée, et les liens entre sa sociologie et celle du tourisme demeurent, de ce fait, indirects. Pourtant, chercher dans l'œuvre de Goffman une inspiration pour étudier le tourisme a bien du sens. L'un des pionniers de l'anthropologie du tourisme en a même fait une pièce centrale de sa théorie du tourisme. En effet, le tour de force que réussit Dean MacCannell avec la parution de *The Tourist* en 1976 est largement inspiré de Goffman et de son approche unique de la sociologie. En revenant, avec son auteur, sur la part goffmanienne de *The Tourist*, nous rendons hommage à ce que les études touristiques doivent à l'auteur de *La mise en scène de la vie quotidienne.* Quels nouveaux types de questions la sociologie goffmanienne ouvre-t-elle pour le tourisme ? Pas seulement celles qui, sous l'influence de Dean MacCannell, font déjà partie de nos analyses, mais aussi celles qui restent, quarante ans après la mort de Goffman, une source pour de nouvelles interrogations.

INDEX

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Recherche - Dossier : Imaginaires et pratiques touristiques aux États-Unis : enjeux économiques et enjeux territoriaux

Tourist Imaginaries and Practices in the United States: Economic and Territorial Issues

Introduction. Imaginaires et pratiques touristiques aux États-Unis : enjeux économiques et enjeux territoriaux

Alexandra Boudet-Brugal, Sophie Croisy, Sandrine Ferré-Rode, Frédéric Leriche et Dalila Messaoudi

1 La question soulevée dans le cadre du présent numéro de la revue *Mondes du tourisme* porte sur les imaginaires et les pratiques touristiques aux États-Unis, mettant en l'occurrence l'accent sur les impacts économiques et territoriaux du tourisme dans ce pays. Ce numéro résulte de la maturation de réflexions engagées à l'occasion d'un colloque international intitulé « Imaginaires et mobilités touristiques aux États-Unis », organisé les 6 et 7 février 2020[1], soit, hasard heureux du calendrier, quelques semaines avant que la crise sanitaire de la Covid-19 ne bloque tout déplacement, touristique ou non, éclairant justement – non sans ironie – la question touristique d'une lumière crue. Pour partie, ce colloque a donné lieu à la publication d'un numéro de la *Revue française d'études américaines* intitulé « Imaginaires et pratiques touristiques aux États-Unis : enjeux identitaires et mémoriels » (Croisy *et al.*, 2021). Complémentaire de cette publication, ce numéro de *Mondes du tourisme* s'inscrit dans la continuité d'une production scientifique francophone sur la question touristique aux États-Unis relativement abondante, mais dont la cohérence générale reste sans doute à préciser.

La recherche sur le tourisme aux États-Unis : les termes du débat

2 Aux États-Unis, depuis les années 1970, et plus précisément de manière emblématique depuis 1973 et la création de la revue *Annals of Tourism Research*, se sont développées – à la croisée de plusieurs disciplines des sciences humaines et sociales (SHS) et des sciences de gestion – des *Tourism Studies* scientifiquement très fécondes (Réau, 2017).

Tant aux États-Unis que, plus largement, dans le monde anglo-saxon, nombre de recherches relevant de ce champ académique visent à théoriser la question touristique, souvent – mais pas uniquement – *à partir* du cas des États-Unis. Sans prétendre à l'exhaustivité, il est possible ici d'en souligner quelques jalons, lesquels se font l'écho des transformations conjointes du tourisme et des sociétés « occidentales » : avènement d'une classe moyenne « touristique » – la pratique du tourisme se révélant comme marqueur d'identité sociale – dans les sociétés postindustrielles (MacCannell, 1976), modélisation du cycle de vie des territoires touristiques (*Tourism Area Life Cycle*, *TALC*) (Butler, 1980), hybridation des pratiques sociales autour de l'acte touristique (Urry, 1990), essor et ancrage social d'une culture de masse du tourisme (Mackintosh, 2018). Pour autant, dès les années 1980, Mitchell (1984) soulignait l'extrême diversité de ce champ de recherche et la nécessité d'une mise en cohérence théorique. Rapporté à l'étude du tourisme *aux* États-Unis, cet « éclectisme scientifique » se voit confirmé par la multiplication de travaux portant sur des objets très divers, dont il est possible également de donner quelques exemples, à titre indicatif : impact du développement de l'*entertainment industry* sur l'attractivité touristique de New York (Fainstein et Stokes, 1998), intégration de l'activité touristique dans les stratégies de développement économique et de reconversion urbaine des métropoles (Judd et Fainstein, 1999), importance de l'activité touristique dans les transformations urbaines et la structuration du marché du travail à New York et à Los Angeles (Gladstone et Fainstein, 2001), mise en œuvre d'une réglementation dédiée à la protection des espaces naturels face au développement de la pratique du camping (Young, 2018), résilience des stations de sport d'hiver face au changement climatique (McCourt et Perkins, 2018).

3 Dans ce concert, dont nous ne livrons ici que quelques notes, la recherche francophone a apporté une contribution non négligeable, abordant en effet une multitude de thèmes et d'objets ciblés, comme les interactions entre reconversion urbaine et développement des loisirs et du tourisme à partir du cas de Baltimore (Gravari-Barbas, 1998), la mise en œuvre progressive de politiques du patrimoine – associant acteurs publics et privés – susceptibles de promouvoir le tourisme (Tobelem, 2007), la politique étatsunienne singulière quant à la protection des espaces naturels et à l'encadrement de leur usage comme espaces récréatifs – politique dont les finalités utilitaristes permettent le développement de l'activité touristique (Depraz et Héritier, 2012), les effets de l'industrie du jeu sur l'attractivité touristique et les transformations urbaines à Las Vegas (Nédélec, 2017), le développement de nouvelles pratiques sociales sur les plages à Los Angeles (Devienne, 2020), ou encore la pratique de l'urbex dans les métropoles de la *Rust Belt* à partir de l'exemple de Détroit (Le Gallou, 2021). En parallèle de tels travaux, quelques chercheurs ont réalisé des synthèses sur la question touristique (Bailly et Dorel, 1992 ; Andreu-Boussut, 2012 ; Zaninetti, 2012). Ces synthèses – d'autant plus appréciables qu'elles sont rares – permettent de mettre en exergue les grands pôles d'attractivité touristique (Floride, Californie, grandes métropoles, espaces naturels), rappellent les particularismes du rapport des Étatsuniens à la nature, d'une part, et à leur histoire nationale, de l'autre, et soulignent la capacité des États-Unis à produire des modèles spatiaux originaux sous la forme, en quelque sorte, d'enclaves touristiques : parcs nationaux, parcs d'attraction et parcs à thème, « villes festives » dont le modèle est parfois poussé à l'extrême – sous la forme des « villes casinos ». Par définition surplombantes et trop générales, certes, ces synthèses se révèlent en revanche utiles pour articuler entre elles les multiples recherches conduites par ailleurs, contribuant ainsi à la compréhension plus générale

des enjeux sociaux, culturels, identitaires, politiques, environnementaux, spatiaux ou encore économiques soulevés par la question touristique aux États-Unis.

4 Pour autant, encore trop peu de recherches proposent une lecture générale des dynamiques économiques et géographiques du tourisme aux États-Unis[2] ; ces recherches, en particulier, tentent trop rarement de prendre en considération la manière dont les imaginaires et les pratiques touristiques influent sur de telles dynamiques. Dans cette perspective, reste pleinement posée la question de savoir s'il existe – en comparaison de l'Europe par exemple – une spécificité des imaginaires et des pratiques touristiques aux États-Unis. En d'autres termes, pourquoi nous intéresser ici à la question touristique dans le contexte étatsunien ? En quoi l'expérience touristique aux États-Unis est-elle spécifique ? Dans quelle mesure la question du tourisme y tisse-t-elle un rapport singulier, d'une part à la nature et aux grands espaces américains, d'autre part à l'objet mémoriel, notamment autour de la question de l'esclavage et de l'expérience amérindienne ? En quoi, par ailleurs, le contexte étatsunien contribue-t-il à l'émergence d'une forme originale, véritablement industrielle, de tourisme comme secteur d'activité économique ? Plus généralement, qu'est-ce que l'étude du cas étatsunien nous permet de comprendre quant aux enjeux soulevés par l'expansion économique et géographique du tourisme ? Aussi, prenant acte de cette abondante littérature et sans prétendre mettre fin à l'éclectisme mentionné plus haut, en mettant en avant la question des imaginaires et des pratiques touristiques, nous nous fixons ici pour objectif d'approfondir notre connaissance des dynamiques économiques et territoriales du tourisme aux États-Unis, au prisme d'un regard interdisciplinaire.

La question de l'imaginaire touristique aux États-Unis : enjeux géographiques

5 À la suite du travail pionnier de Knafou sur l'aménagement des stations de sport d'hiver dans les Alpes (1978) puis, à partir des années 1990, des travaux de Cazes sur la géographie du tourisme (1992) et de Dewailly et Flament sur la géographie du tourisme et des loisirs (1993), l'activité touristique a suscité en France un intérêt croissant en SHS. Aux côtés – si ce n'est dans le sillage – des géographes (Stock, 2004 ; Knafou et Équipe MIT, 2008, 2011 ; Violier, 2008 ; Lazzarotti, 2011 ; Fagnoni, 2017 ; Stock *et al.*, 2017 ; Duhamel, 2018), dont les travaux ont joué un rôle crucial dans l'essor du tourisme comme thème de recherche en SHS, économistes (Caccomo, 2007 ; Schéou, 2009) et spécialistes en gestion (Callot, 2013), sociologues (Viard, 2006 ; Christin, 2014 ; Cousin et Réau, 2016 ; Guibert et Réau, 2020)[3] et anthropologues (Urbain, 2002), juristes (Jégouzo, 2018 ; Lachièze, 2020) et historiens (Bertho-Lavenir, 1999 ; Boyer, 2005 ; Hagimont, 2022) ont en effet contribué à la compréhension des principaux enjeux – sociaux, culturels, économiques, environnementaux – soulevés par l'expansion planétaire de cette facette de plus en plus importante de la vie contemporaine. Ces multiples travaux, aux horizons disciplinaires étendus, sont marqués par la diversité des clefs de lecture du fait touristique, oscillant entre approches économicistes, aménagistes, environnementalistes ou encore, plus récemment, culturalistes et politiques (Stock *et al.*, 2021). Dans ce panorama scientifique, la question des imaginaires touristiques n'est pas négligée, constituant même une approche originale et nécessaire puisqu'elle permet de saisir au mieux les ressorts socioculturels et les motivations profondes des

pratiques touristiques (Amirou, 1995 ; Gravari-Barbas et Graburn, 2012, 2016) et, consécutivement, de mieux appréhender les raisons du développement d'un secteur économique puissant et de la mise en tourisme d'un nombre croissant de territoires.

6 D'un point de vue métaculturel, sans doute est-il possible de considérer que l'imaginaire touristique est encastré dans un « ordre imaginaire » occidental moderne qui, associant romantisme et consumérisme, est propice au développement commercial des expériences touristiques (Harari, 2015)[4] ; la montée en puissance récente d'une véritable « moralité touristique » dans le rapport à l'Autre amende toutefois cette sorte d'hédonisme primaire occidental (Mostafanezhad et Hannam, 2016). Plus prosaïquement, cet imaginaire touristique, aux États-Unis et ailleurs, se nourrit d'images matérielles (cartes, affiches publicitaires, magazines et revues spécialisées, reportages diffusés dans les médias traditionnels, productions cinématographiques et télévisuelles) et immatérielles (récits de voyages, discours, fantasmes et préjugés, mais aussi slogans, idiomes et logos, tels que *Only in San Francisco*, *What Happens in Vegas Stays in Vegas*, ou *The Big Apple* – pour New York – ou encore clichés et stéréotypes, tels que le Golden Gate Bridge à San Francisco, la tour Eiffel à Paris, ou l'incontournable balade en gondole à Venise), sans oublier de nouvelles formes dont l'avènement repose sur l'invention et le développement depuis la seconde moitié des années 1990 des médias internet. *In fine*, dans une démarche itérative, imaginaires touristiques et supports marketing façonnent de véritables marques territoriales – tout comme il existe des marques commerciales – qui contribuent efficacement à l'identification et au positionnement marchand des destinations touristiques (Keller, 1993 ; Marchat et Camelis, 2017).

7 Situé essentiellement en amont de la pratique touristique elle-même, qui est marquée par une première mobilité dans l'espace, cet imaginaire participe pleinement à l'expérience touristique, contribuant tant à l'émergence puis au développement de destinations touristiques que, *a contrario*, à la mise à l'écart et au délaissement de lieux considérés comme peu intéressants, voire répulsifs, à tort ou à raison. Cet imaginaire, au demeurant jamais totalement figé et, tout au contraire, susceptible de spectaculaires revirements provoqués bien souvent par la puissance des nouveaux outils multimédias, dessine ainsi une cartographie contrastée des mobilités, des flux et des espaces mis en tourisme, lesquels alimentent en retour les aspirations au voyage, les désirs d'ailleurs, les envies de nouveaux lieux, œuvrant comme une prophétie autoréalisatrice dans un cercle (vertueux ou vicieux) potentiellement sans fin.

8 L'imaginaire touristique portant sur les États-Unis met en avant quelques espaces particulièrement attractifs. Cet imaginaire génère ainsi une géographie du tourisme qui fait ressortir, sur la carte des États-Unis, quatre grands types de territoires. Ce sont, tout d'abord, les grandes métropoles, comme New York[5], Los Angeles, San Francisco, Washington D.C., Boston, ou encore Chicago ou la Nouvelle-Orléans. Ce sont, ensuite, les grands espaces naturels « sauvages », en particulier quelques parcs nationaux de haute réputation internationale comme le Grand Canyon, Yellowstone, Yosemite, ou le parc des Everglades. Liés à la nature également, ce sont aussi les plages, en particulier les plages tropicales de Hawaii ou de Floride, aux eaux chaudes, où se développe un nouvel imaginaire du corps lié à la pratique du sport (le surf par exemple) et au culte du teint hâlé (Coëffé, 2010). Ce sont, enfin, symboles d'un tourisme « hors-sol » – autrement dit d'un tourisme d'enclave ou, autre perception de cette forme touristique, d'un « tourisme de simulacre » (Zaninetti, 2012) – né aux États-Unis, les parcs

d'attraction, anciens[6] ou plus récents, souvent adossés aux stratégies sectorielles et territoriales du capital (comme les sociétés Disney, SeaWorld ou Six Flags), et autres « villes-casinos » (comme Atlantic City ou Las Vegas).

9 Néanmoins, l'évocation de ces quelques lieux révèle, en creux, que, précisément en raison de la diversité des imaginaires, la géographie des marchés touristiques est inégale et segmentée. Aussi les imaginaires touristiques contribuent-ils à la structuration des mobilités et des flux, pour générer des « pleins » et des « vides » sur la carte touristique, pleins et vides dont les caractéristiques marchandes sont distinctes. Ainsi, sous l'effet du marketing global, les touristes internationaux, plus tournés vers les espaces à fort pouvoir médiatique, ne fréquentent pas tout à fait les mêmes lieux que les touristes nationaux, à la géographie plus fine et aux temporalités plus diffuses. De même, ces derniers, nourris qu'ils sont de l'imaginaire de l'Ouest (Massip, 2018) et de la *wilderness* (Strigler, 2013), manifestent une inclination nette pour des pratiques touristiques et de loisirs – lointaines ou de proximité – profondément marquées par la prégnance de l'*Outdoor*. Ainsi, par exemple, le parc national des Great Smoky Mountains (12,1 millions de visiteurs en 2020)[7], situé au cœur des Appalaches et accessible tout au long de l'année, profitant de sa localisation pour desservir le marché de l'Est du pays et ses grandes métropoles, est-il marqué par une fréquentation essentiellement nationale, tandis que certains parcs, à l'instar notamment des parcs nationaux du Grand Canyon (2,9 millions de visiteurs en 2020)[8] et de Yellowstone (3,8 millions de visiteurs en 2020)[9], internationalement plus réputés, bénéficient-ils *a contrario* d'un apport plus conséquent de visiteurs étrangers (Billard et Chevalier, 2012).

10 En raison de l'immensité de leur territoire, mais aussi de l'idiosyncrasie de leur histoire sociale et culturelle, les États-Unis offrent une grande diversité de ressources territoriales pour stimuler les imaginaires et les pratiques touristiques : ressources naturelles (paysages, grands espaces, écosystèmes dont la flore et la faune nord-américaines singulières sont bien souvent protégées, par exemple), ressources anthropiques (grandes métropoles modernes, petites villes « fantômes » de l'Ouest américain, campagnes du Vieux Sud, patrimoine historique, monuments et lieux iconiques, produits culturels tels que musées et parcs d'attraction, par exemple). Cette offre, abondante et variée, amplement médiatisée, y compris à l'international, suscite une activité économique plus que conséquente, avérée par quelques indicateurs statistiques. Ainsi, l'activité touristique a généré en 2019 quelque 15,8 millions d'emplois aux États-Unis, dont environ 9 millions d'emplois directs (parmi lesquels environ 7,9 millions liés au tourisme national et environ 1,2 million lié au tourisme international) et 6,8 millions d'emplois indirects et induits (US Travel Association, 2020). En 2017, le chiffre d'affaires total de l'industrie touristique *stricto sensu* s'élève à 1 199 milliards de dollars[10], soit 6,1 % du PIB[11]. Ce volume d'activité se répartit inégalement entre un tourisme national largement majoritaire (86 %) et un tourisme international, certes minoritaire (14 %), mais dont l'impact est multiple : emplois et chiffre d'affaires donc, mais aussi, plus difficile à mesurer, impact en termes d'image voire, probablement, de prestige et de *soft power*. En effet, largement relayées à l'international par divers médias comme, en particulier, le *National Geographic*, la majesté et le caractère grandiose, voire solennel, des grands espaces américains et des grandes métropoles contribuent vraisemblablement à renforcer la fascination et l'attraction – si ce n'est l'impression de puissance et, conséquemment, de respect dû à leur rang – que peuvent susciter les États-Unis sur l'imaginaire de nombreuses personnes à travers le monde. Au final, en 2018, avec 79,6 millions de visiteurs

internationaux, les États-Unis se situaient au troisième rang mondial en termes d'attractivité touristique, derrière la France (89,4 millions), l'Espagne (82,6), la Chine (62,9) et l'Italie (58,2)[12]. En outre, cette attractivité génère une balance commerciale excédentaire, de l'ordre de 59 milliards de dollars en 2019[13].

11 Par ailleurs, dans un contexte marqué à la fois par la prospérité économique et par une croissance démographique considérable[14], l'expansion du marché touristique est à l'origine de la création et du succès de quelques grands groupes qui s'internationalisent rapidement, que ce soit dans l'hôtellerie (Hilton, fondé en 1919 ; Marriott, fondé en 1927), dans l'industrie du divertissement (Disney, fondée en 1923) ou du transport aérien (United Airlines, fondée en 1926). En d'autres termes, dès les premières décennies du XX^e^ siècle, le tourisme a donné naissance à un secteur industriel dont l'expansion ne cessera de se confirmer et à un *global tourism system* qui réunit une multitude d'acteurs engagés dans la production et la consommation de produits touristiques.

Les singularités du tourisme aux États-Unis : une grille de lecture

12 Le tourisme aux États-Unis s'insère dans des particularismes nationaux qui impactent, du côté de la demande, les pratiques de consommation et, du côté de l'offre, l'aménagement et le développement du territoire ainsi que la création et la croissance d'entreprises spécialisées. Au titre de ces particularismes, sans doute convient-il de mentionner quatre dimensions originales et cruciales de l'expérience américaine : la culture de la recherche du bonheur, la culture « protestante » du travail (*Protestant work ethic*), le processus historique de la conquête de l'Ouest, la question de l'esclavage, des « peuples premiers » et de l'expérience traumatique de la guerre du Viêt Nam. Ces particularismes constituent sans doute le socle de la singularité des États-Unis quant à la question qui nous intéresse ici. Par ailleurs, en raison de ces particularismes, les États-Unis sont, d'une certaine manière, les inventeurs d'un nouveau modèle touristique, fondé sur le recours accru à l'automobile, le fractionnement des temps touristiques, la création d'un tourisme « hors-sol » multifacettes et l'industrialisation de l'activité.

13 Gravé dans le marbre de la Déclaration d'indépendance, le droit à la « quête du bonheur » est inscrit au cœur même de la culture américaine. Privilégiant la recherche de l'épanouissement individuel, cette culture se traduit, en termes d'impact sur l'industrie touristique et de loisirs, par le développement d'un tourisme fondé sur le divertissement, l'amusement et le plaisir, autrement dit sur le *fun*, terme idiomatique difficilement traduisible ; sans doute, sur ce point, en net décalage avec les pratiques françaises par exemple, plus volontiers orientées en direction de la découverte culturelle et de l'authenticité[15]. Cette culture du divertissement motive la création d'*amusement parks* (parcs d'attraction et parcs à thème) et le développement des territoires dans lesquels ceux-ci sont ancrés, à l'instar d'Orlando en Floride ou, plus modestement, de Vallejo en Californie, au nord de la région urbaine de San Francisco, qui accueille un parc d'attraction de la société Six Flags. Cette culture hédonique se traduit aussi par l'appétence des Étatsuniens pour les pratiques touristiques et de loisirs liées à l'eau, forme particulière du tourisme de l'*outdoor* : activités nautiques (sur le lac Powell par exemple), croisiérisme (à partir de Miami, Fort Lauderdale et Port

Canaveral en particulier), l'observation marine (*whale watching* au large des côtes californiennes), divertissement dans des parcs de type SeaWorld (à San Diego par exemple) ou encore, cette fois-ci plus proche de la démarche éducative et culturelle, pratique d'un tourisme scientifique (comme au Monterey Aquarium, Californie) ou historique (au Maritime Museum de San Francisco par exemple).

14 La pratique du tourisme s'inscrit, fondamentalement, dans un temps social situé en dehors du champ assujetti de l'activité professionnelle. Or, encastrée dans une culture – la *Protestant work ethic* – qui érige le travail en valeur cardinale de la société, la réglementation du travail tend à contracter – en comparaison de la France par exemple – le temps « hors travail », potentiellement consacré à la consommation de loisirs et aux pratiques touristiques[16]. Ce cadre culturel et réglementaire exerce en conséquence de fortes contraintes sur les pratiques touristiques et de loisirs. Deux tendances en découlent. Premièrement, et comparativement à la France, la tendance à pratiquer un tourisme plus fractionné dans le temps, à multiplier les séjours inscrits dans des temporalités plus courtes et sans doute également à pratiquer des activités plus orientées en direction de l'*entertainment*, des activités plus ludiques et plus intenses du point de vue du contenu de l'expérience. Associée à la culture du *fun* évoquée plus haut, cette tendance favorise le développement des *amusement parks* intra-métropolitains, situés au cœur géographique du marché, à l'instar du premier Disneyland ouvert à Anaheim en Californie en 1955. Deuxièmement, une tendance à valoriser à l'extrême le temps de la retraite, ouvrant la voie – après l'arrêt de l'activité professionnelle – à un temps de villégiature au long cours et hors du cadre du quotidien, provoquant un mouvement migratoire des retraités – connu sous le nom de *snowbirds* – depuis les États du Nord des États-Unis (et du Canada) vers les États du Sud, en particulier la Floride, mais aussi les Monts Ozarks, l'Arizona ou le Sud californien. Cette seconde tendance donne parfois naissance à des résidences fermées d'un type particulier, les *retirement communities* (Pihet, 1999).

15 L'épopée historique de la conquête de l'Ouest stimule quant à elle un imaginaire du contact direct – si ce n'est un imaginaire de la confrontation – avec la nature, la *wilderness*, un imaginaire de l'aventure, de la découverte et de l'éducation à l'environnement. Le rapport des Étatsuniens à la nature, si spécifique et constitutif de l'identité américaine, déteint sur les pratiques touristiques et de loisirs, conduisant à une intense fréquentation des espaces naturels, espaces sauvages où se joue la fabrication même de l'américanité, à écrire au masculin puisque prioritairement inscrite dans une filiation virile père-fils (Young, 2017). Cette épopée stimule également un imaginaire de la mobilité, du voyage, du nomadisme, formes originales de la pratique touristique facilitées par le développement des *recreational vehicules* (Forget, 2012). La fameuse *Route 66*, route touristique reliant Chicago à Los Angeles (Santa Monica), est le fruit de cette histoire singulière. En outre, l'itinérance, mode de vie choisi par un nombre non négligeable d'Américains qui se caractérise par l'hétérogénéité de ses acteurs et un processus de déplacement codifié (*ibid.*), contribue au développement d'escales, de villes « étapes » faussement isolées puisque toujours situées à proximité relative des marchés de consommation, qui parsèment les parcours circulatoires et dans lesquelles se développent corrélativement les infrastructures d'accueil touristique nécessaires. Ces villes étapes n'ont parfois d'autre intérêt que leur position géographique entre deux pôles touristiques, à l'instar de Lee Vining (Mono County, Californie), petite localité de quelque 200 habitants située à l'est de la Sierra Nevada, sur le trajet entre la métropole de Los Angeles, d'une part, et le parc national

de Yosemite et le lac Mono, de l'autre, et comptant plusieurs motels destinés à l'hébergement des touristes de passage. Parfois, ces villes étapes revêtent un intérêt touristique propre, à l'instar de Yachats (Lincoln County, Oregon), charmante petite ville de quelque 800 habitants localisée sur le littoral de l'Oregon, située sur une route côtière aux paysages exceptionnels reliant la métropole de Portland au nord de la Californie, et elle aussi dotée d'un appareil hôtelier conséquent. Dans d'autres cas, ces villes étapes jouent un rôle de porte d'entrée en direction d'un pôle touristique majeur, à l'instar de Sedona (Arizona, 11 000 habitants), elle-même destination touristique en raison de ses spectaculaires paysages naturels mais aussi ville étape située sur un axe majeur permettant d'accéder au parc national du Grand Canyon.

16 L'idée d'un passé américain multiple et d'un présent socioculturel pluriel, loin du concept monolithique du modèle WASP (*White Anglo-Saxon Protestant*), a fait surface pendant la vague de mouvements contestataires des années 1960. De l'historicisation de la « mémoire indienne », pour reprendre le titre des mémoires de Tahca Ushte[17] (1989), à la revalorisation des récits d'esclaves ou sur les esclaves, notamment par le biais du cinéma, en passant par la récupération historique et littéraire des mémoires de guerres controversées (par exemple guerre du Viêt Nam), cette fragmentation et cette complexification de l'histoire américaine a engendré l'émergence d'une nouvelle mémoire collective (Halbwachs, 1950), laquelle ne s'inscrit plus dans une narration historique unitaire et imposée, mais met au contraire l'accent sur des réalités historiques américaines complexes, dont celles du génocide amérindien, de l'esclavage et de la ségrégation raciale (légalisée dans les États du Sud de 1896 à 1964). De ce fait, les États-Unis ont vu progressivement croître l'attractivité et la popularité de sites touristiques représentatifs de cette pluralité, telles les anciennes plantations ou les villages amérindiens reconstitués. Le développement de ces « lieux de mémoire » (Nora, 1997) a contribué à l'essor d'un tourisme singulier, le « tourisme mémoriel », aujourd'hui devenu un puissant catalyseur de mobilité touristique américaine. Ce tourisme mémoriel comporte une dimension performative (Connerton, 1989) : en effet, en se rendant sur une ancienne plantation ou en faisant l'expérience d'un monument commémoratif de ces mémoires trop longtemps tues, le passé mythifié, parfois distant et figé, devient palpable et malléable. Les visites touristiques deviennent alors rites et, paradoxalement, ce qui est fragmenté et a été oublié, réintègre la mémoire collective de la nation. Mais comment réconcilier ces mémoires plurielles qui mettent à mal les valeurs fondamentales des États-Unis prônées par la Déclaration d'indépendance, que sont le droit à « la vie, la liberté et à la quête du bonheur » ? C'est, paradoxalement, ce à quoi contribuent ces espaces touristiques émergents. Ces lieux de mémoire, qui alimentent un foisonnement de nouvelles mobilités touristiques depuis la fin du XX^{e} siècle, soulèvent ainsi des enjeux qui sont donc tout autant de l'ordre de l'intime et du privé que du politique et de l'économique. En effet, longtemps limités quant à la possibilité de se mouvoir sur le territoire américain pendant la période ségrégationniste, comme l'illustre le *Negro Traveler's Green Book* publié entre 1937 et 1967, des changements sont intervenus dans l'industrie du tourisme, qui fait maintenant cas des questions de diversité culturelle et de représentation de ces diversités et de leur passé dans le cadre du développement de lieux de mémoire qui proposent une histoire complexe du peuple américain. Ceci dit, comme le souligne Alderman (2013), un travail de remise en question du pouvoir normatif qui encadre le marché du tourisme (et la société américaine encore aujourd'hui) et de la sous-

représentation des Afro-américains dans la planification touristique (*tourism planning*) reste à entreprendre.

Imaginaires et pratiques touristiques aux États-Unis : nouveaux éclairages

17 Dès le début du XX^e^ siècle, grâce à l'impressionnante prospérité de la période du *Gilded Age* (1865-1901) adossée à une croissance industrielle soutenue, les États-Unis sont un pays riche, sur le point de devenir la première puissance mondiale. En lien avec cette prospérité et l'essor de grandes entreprises, un « tourisme d'affaires » émerge aux États-Unis. Ce tourisme d'affaires se développera tout au long du XX^e^ siècle, marquant de son empreinte nombre de grandes métropoles du pays, où *convention centers* et complexes hôteliers sortent de terre pour former partie intégrante du paysage urbain, soulevant au passage de colossaux enjeux financiers, urbanistiques, mais aussi, corrélativement, sociaux et politique[18]. Surtout, dans le prolongement de cette prospérité, la demande exercée par les classes aisées des métropoles du Nord-Est attise le développement d'un « tourisme familial », augurant de la précocité du tourisme de masse aux États-Unis. Très tôt, dès la fin du XIX^e^ siècle, l'essor de ce marché conduit à la mise en tourisme de nouveaux territoires : parcs nationaux, chutes du Niagara, nouvelles « rivieras » (la Floride, ou encore la Californie du Sud), parmi tant d'autres territoires, en particulier les grandes villes (Cocks, 2001). Ce nouveau marché suscite rapidement l'intérêt d'entrepreneurs touristiques. L'exemple le plus flagrant est sans doute celui d'Henry Flagler, qui pressent très tôt les opportunités offertes par la Floride comme destination touristique (Violier et Duhamel, 2009). Dans cette perspective, Flagler investit durant deux décennies (1885-1905) dans la construction d'une ligne de chemin de fer (le *Florida East Coast*) et dans la construction d'hôtels, contribuant de manière décisive à l'essor de Jacksonville, ainsi que dans les aménagements de base requis pour l'industrie croisiériste (à Miami), laquelle se développera dès les premières décennies du XX^e^ siècle. En outre, les États-Unis supplantent la Grande-Bretagne comme fer de lance du tourisme international. Motivés par la recherche de leurs racines européennes ou par le désir de fréquenter des pôles culturels ou de plaisir, les Étatsuniens pratiquent en effet un tourisme international de manière précoce ; ainsi, dès 1900, 20 % des touristes étrangers fréquentant la ville de Nice sont citoyens des États-Unis (Vanneph, 2017).

18 De tels commentaires, relatifs aux premiers pas de l'activité touristique aux États-Unis au cours du *Gilded Age*, ne clôturent en rien le débat sur la genèse ou sur les temporalités du développement du tourisme aux États-Unis – bien au contraire. Cette expansion du tourisme est ainsi à repenser dans le cadre des transformations historiques de la société étatsunienne, jalonnées par quelques événements qui mériteraient de plus amples investigations quant à leur articulation avec les transformations du tourisme : prospérité des années 1920 puis dépression des années 1930 et New Deal ; expansion économique et expansion suburbaine après la Seconde Guerre mondiale, conjointement adossées à la démocratisation de l'automobile et au modèle résidentiel pavillonnaire ; lois raciales des années 1960 et amorce de développement d'une classe moyenne afro-américaine ; crise économique des années 1970 puis néolibéralisme de la décennie suivante ; montée en puissance de l'économie culturelle et cognitive ; accélération de l'insertion internationale des

années 1990 (après la guerre froide) ; mais aussi, plus récemment, attentats terroristes du 11 septembre 2001, grande récession de 2008-2010, ou encore recentrage économique et politique nationaliste de l'administration Trump.

19 Ces transformations, ici rapidement esquissées, invitent à soulever un certain nombre de questions quant aux liens qu'elles entretiennent avec le fait touristique. Quelques-unes de ces questions peuvent être évoquées. Ainsi, dans quelle mesure les pratiques touristiques – mais aussi les lieux fréquentés – par la communauté (ou plutôt *les communautés* ?) afro-américaine(*s* ?) sont-elles distinctes des pratiques de la population blanche, ou encore des populations latino-américaine et asiatique ? Quels sont les impacts de l'événementiel, qu'il soit sportif – animé par de grands acteurs tels que la National Football League (NFL) ou la National Basketball Association (NBA) et requérant des équipements et des moyens colossaux – ou festivalier – comme, parmi tant d'autres exemples, l'Aspen Music Festival (organisé dans le Colorado, inspiré du festival de Marciac) ou le Burning Man (organisé au Nevada et devenu avec le temps un événement international) – sur les circulations touristiques et sur les territoires d'accueil ? Le renforcement de l'offre muséale dans certaines métropoles, à l'instar de la ville de San Francisco, est-il devenu une clef de l'attractivité touristique ? Quel est l'impact de l'industrie cinématographique et de l'industrie multimédia (grands studios hollywoodiens et plateformes de distribution) sur la diffusion globale de paysages associés à certains territoires – urbains ou non – et, en retour, sur la notoriété et consécutivement sur le pouvoir d'attraction de ces territoires ? Quelle est l'ampleur du phénomène du « retour au centre » – à moins qu'il ne s'agisse d'un phénomène de bi-résidentialité – pour certaines populations suburbaines, appartenant aux classes moyennes et supérieures, et quelles sont les répercussions de ce phénomène sur les quartiers centraux ? Le « surtourisme » constitue-t-il un problème dans certains territoires, quelles oppositions suscite-t-il et comment les acteurs locaux y font-ils face ? Quels regards les touristes étatsuniens portent-ils sur les destinations étrangères potentielles (pays amis ? pays ennemis ?) et comment ce regard influence-t-il leurs mobilités touristiques internationales ? Inversement, quelles représentations les visiteurs étrangers ont-ils des États-Unis, selon le président qui est à la tête du pays ? En l'occurrence, très concrètement, quel a été l'impact de l'administration Trump sur l'attractivité touristique des États-Unis ? Ces questions ouvrent des horizons de recherche très ouverts et, bien sûr, y répondre *in extenso* dépasse les ambitions du présent numéro de *Mondes du tourisme*. Nous tâcherons toutefois d'aborder certaines de ces interrogations à partir des textes ici recueillis.

20 Dans son article, **Stephen J. Whitfield** nous livre la chronique d'une mort annoncée : celle de l'éden floridien, réel et fantasmé. Par le prisme de nombreuses références littéraires et journalistiques, il décrit les étapes d'une métamorphose à l'issue fatale. Dans la seconde moitié du XIX^e^ siècle, la Floride n'est qu'un petit État du Sud des États-Unis, reculé et sous-peuplé, mais riche de milieux naturels exceptionnels, dont profitent quelques voyageurs privilégiés. Dans la première moitié du XX^e^ siècle, notamment avec l'essor de l'automobile dans les années 1920, la Floride se voit progressivement investie par des résidents de plus en plus nombreux. L'urbanisation met en péril ce monde prélapsaire, bientôt littéralement assiégé par des millions de touristes étatsuniens et étrangers en quête d'une nature et de paysages sublimes, qui sont insensiblement atrophiés puis ravagés par une industrie touristique de masse fondée sur l'exploitation de parcs à thème, à l'image de Walt Disney World. Stephen J.

Whitfield nous montre que cette manne économique et financière, par la pression environnementale qu'elle exerce sur les milieux naturels, condamne la Floride à devenir un paradis perdu.

21 L'article de **Mathieu Schorung** propose une analyse particulièrement documentée et contextualisée d'un phénomène inattendu dans la Floride des années 2010 : celui de l'avènement d'une ligne de chemin de fer à haute vitesse, appelée Brightline, construite sur des fonds intégralement privés et qui, au terme de sa construction, doit desservir les grands centres touristiques de l'État. Après avoir détaillé les grandes étapes de la transformation de la Floride en haut lieu du tourisme étatsunien et étranger puis rappelé les choix faits par les autorités locales, notamment à partir des années 1950, de construire une infrastructure privilégiant l'automobile et l'avion comme modes de transport, Mathieu Schorung montre l'ampleur du défi qu'est parvenu à relever la société ayant parié sur Brightline : celui de réimplanter le train dans le paysage urbain et touristique de l'État, mais aussi de réinventer, via une communication ciblée, un imaginaire touristique intimement lié à ce mode de transport.

22 Dans son article, intitulé « Slavery and Plantation Tourism in Louisiana: Deconstructing the Romanticized Narrative of the Plantation Tours », **Melaine Harnay** s'attache à analyser les mécanismes et stratégies liés au tourisme des plantations en Louisiane. L'auteure s'appuie sur les exemples notables de Houmas House et Greenhood Place, qui ont fait le choix d'une présentation centrée sur l'histoire de l'Amérique blanche, en les opposant à Oak Alley, Evergreen et la Whitney Plantation, qui ont opté pour une stratégie de recentrement sur l'esclavage. L'article questionne donc ces choix, à savoir dans quelles mesures ils traduisent une simple adaptabilité à un marché touristique en évolution, ou bien s'ils sont le reflet d'une volonté de proposer une contre-histoire et de faire entendre d'autres voix inaudibles. Melaine Harnay aborde en premier lieu les plantations-musées qui érigent un passé idéalisé et glorifié, à la manière de *Gone with the Wind*, afin d'attirer les visiteurs, majoritairement originaires d'Amérique du Nord. Ainsi, l'auteur s'attache à explorer leurs stratégies et perspectives qui le conduisent à établir ces lieux comme résultant d'une vision mythifiée et de la « Cause perdue », à la fois des témoins et des produits de l'héritage de la Confédération. L'auteur démontre que les stratagèmes utilisés manipulent la représentation de l'histoire en invitant à une forme de nostalgie niant la présence des esclaves et leur véritable condition. Plus encore, l'auteur démontre que certains de ces établissements deviennent des sortes d'autels dédiés à la gloire du Sud en se faisant « collectionneurs » et en se proposant de recueillir les artefacts de cette histoire du Sud, telles les statues des confédérés retirées de l'espace public. Melaine Harnay relève toutefois que, récemment, une certaine pression sociétale pour reconnaître et rendre visible l'histoire afro-américaine a engendré des changements notables dans la stratégie de certaines plantations-musées qui ont pris le parti de la pluralité des voix, afin de brosser un portrait plus réaliste de ce passé sudiste. Ces lieux proposent ainsi une alternative et reposent sur une stratégie muséale différente, à travers laquelle l'invisible devient visible en replaçant les esclaves au centre. Le degré de relecture varie cependant selon les lieux, certains faisant de la visite des quartiers des esclaves une option proposée aux visiteurs tandis que d'autres présentent des monuments commémoratifs et des plaques en l'honneur des esclaves, soit un véritable travail de mise en mémoire et d'inclusion. Ainsi, l'offre de ces plantations-musées oscillent aujourd'hui entre territoire sacré d'un Sud mythifié et

lieux de mémoire plurielle inclusifs, mettant en évidence la pluralité des raisons qui poussent les visiteurs à se rendre dans ces plantations-musées.

23 Dans son article, intitulé « An Analysis of Southern Advertising from the Jimmy Carter Era: The Origins of the Fragmented Image of the Tourist South », **Giuliano Valenzani** s'attache à étudier le tourisme du Sud des États-Unis. Partant du constat que, depuis vingt ans, une attention accrue est portée à cette industrie, notamment dans cette région, il souligne la centralité des enjeux de l'identité du Sud, portée à la fois par une image et un mythe. L'auteur appuie son étude sur la publicité faite par quatre États du « Deep South », l'Alabama, le Mississippi, la Géorgie et la Caroline du Sud – soit l'essence même du Sud. Valenzini démontre que cette publicité a une fonction double : elle sert, d'une part, à attirer les touristes, et, d'autre part, elle contribue à créer, ou recréer, l'image et l'identité du Sud. Il s'interroge alors sur une possible évolution de cette image, qui, jusqu'aux années 1970, reposait essentiellement sur le « vieux » Sud, celui des Belles et de la Cause perdue. Mais les années 1970, explique l'auteur, sont un moment charnière, qui pousse le Sud à se transformer et à chercher de nouveaux mythes. Les gouverneurs l'ont bien compris : le tourisme est une industrie porteuse et l'ère des vacances en famille n'est plus, il faut donc complexifier l'offre, et cela passe par les perceptions du territoire. L'auteur explique ainsi la création d'un tourisme des droits civiques et, plus largement, le développement d'un tourisme afro-américain, timide dans un premier temps, mais qui pousse ces États à travailler à réhabiliter leur image. Bien d'autres offres sont aussi proposées aux touristes potentiels, du blues, en passant par l'héritage amérindien, à la nourriture – ce dernier aspect n'ayant intégré l'offre touristique que plus récemment. De ce fait, Guiliano Valenzani affirme que ces États vont ainsi créer une image fragmentée, illustrée par la multitude des images et photos qui agrémentent les brochures, guides et autres publicités. Cette fragmentation, qui s'est opérée durant ces années, s'est accentuée par la suite. Il montre combien l'offre se fait alors emphatique, mettant en avant l'abondance et la richesse des expériences possibles, loin d'une « vision monolithique » du Sud comme terre des plantations. L'auteur conclut que, dans les stratégies touristiques de ces quatre États, si le « Vieux Sud » reste un thème majeur, les promesses de modernité se font plus présentes et les stratégies plus globales, afin de continuer à séduire.

24 Dans son article, intitulé « Access to Labor and Leisure in Cars: Early Black Motorists' Automotivity in Miami », **Helen Gibson** analyse le rôle qu'a joué la voiture au début du XX^{e} siècle dans les processus de valorisation identitaire et de libération sociale dans la communauté noire-américaine, dans le Sud ségrégationniste en particulier. Helen Gibson propose d'abord une analyse de la racialisation de la mobilité et des loisirs aux États-Unis (en particulier dans la Floride touristique) en exposant la route comme scène historique des humiliations et de la terreur perpétrées contre les Noirs américains. Elle se penche ensuite sur l'expérience de l'automobilité dans la communauté noire américaine qui, malgré les dangers létaux auxquels la route était associée, s'est appropriée la voiture comme moyen de représentation de soi et d'accès aux mondes du travail et des loisirs. L'auteure mobilise l'exemple particulier de Miami, ville au cœur du tourisme floridien du début du siècle, mais aussi théâtre privilégié des violences racistes dans le Sud, où cette appropriation de la voiture comme moyen d'accès aux espaces publics, dans le cadre du travail et des loisirs, a été particulièrement notable. À travers l'étude des réactions de la communauté noire aux tentatives systématiques et virulentes organisées par la communauté blanche d'interdire aux chauffeurs noirs l'accès à l'automobilité dans cette ville, Helen Gibson

démontre que la résistance de la communauté noire à ces interdictions a permis, à partir des années 1920, la mise à mal du système économique racialisé de Miami et l'avènement de la voiture comme moyen privilégié de progression socioéconomique pour les Noirs américains.

25 Dans son article, intitulé « Outdoor Imaginaries: The Emergence of Camping in Modern America », **Terence Young** analyse les enjeux sociaux, culturels et technologiques au cœur de la pratique du camping aux États-Unis. Suite à son avènement comme pratique récréative à la fin du XIX^e^ siècle aux États-Unis, le camping s'est établi comme pratique récréative privilégiée dans le contexte de la modernité américaine du début du XX^e^ siècle, un contexte caractérisé notamment par un mouvement de pensée antimoderne qui, sans dénigrer totalement les réalités urbaines aux attraits mitigés, a valorisé dans ses productions artistiques, notamment littéraires, la *wilderness* américaine comme source et moyen de régénération pour les habitants des villes américaines enfermés dans un quotidien morose. Ce mouvement a également réhistorisé le lien prémoderne entre les Étatsuniens (d'origine européenne, précisons-le) et la nature. Le ravivement de la pensée agrarianiste jeffersonienne et des imaginaires romantiques passés sur la Frontière et l'Ouest sauvage américain, éléments centraux de la pensée antimoderne américaine blanche, s'est inscrit dans les guides, brochures et autres publicités valorisant le camping à la façon des pionniers. Terence Young démontre ici que les campeurs d'hier et d'aujourd'hui, inscrits dans ce mouvement antimoderne, font le lien entre leur histoire et l'Histoire, et sortent de cette expérience transformés car renforcés dans leur sentiment d'appartenance à leur nation. Dans cette histoire sociale et culturelle des pratiques du camping aux États-Unis, l'auteur met également en avant les problématiques raciales qui ont participé à leur évolution, de même que les progrès technologiques qui ont contribué largement à leur mutation.

26 Le rôle de la communication et des campagnes publicitaires comme outil de différenciation et d'affirmation de l'identité touristique d'un territoire est fondamental. C'est dans cette perspective que **Pascale Nédélec**, dans un article intitulé « "*What happens here, stays here*" : origines, cristallisation et recomposition des imaginaires touristiques de Las Vegas », analyse l'action des acteurs touristiques animés par le désir de notoriété et d'attractivité du site. Ainsi, nous explique l'auteure, les décideurs locaux, les acteurs et les promoteurs touristiques ont-ils orienté leur communication afin de faire de Las Vegas une destination touristique identifiable mondialement et bénéficiant d'une image unique. Ils ont ainsi contribué à la construction d'un certain imaginaire touristique et au développement de pratiques largement tournées vers le jeu, le divertissement, voire l'ostentatoire. Pascale Nédélec appuie notamment son analyse sur une campagne publicitaire intitulée « *What happens here* » afin d'identifier l'objectif des communicants mais aussi la façon dont les touristes reçoivent, perçoivent et s'approprient ces stratégies de marque territoriale. En retraçant l'origine des imaginaires touristiques végasiens, l'auteure montre comment l'exposition à des sources d'information crée une image souvent décisive dans le choix d'une destination touristique. Pascale Nédélec soulève ainsi certaines questions relatives aux stratégies de communication. En particulier, en écho à certaines questions soulevées plus haut, quel est l'impact des images cinématographiques – en l'occurrence le film *Very Bad Trip* (2009) – sur les imaginaires relatifs à Las Vegas ? Ces imaginaires

sont-ils figés ou en mouvement ? Peut-on renouveler une image de marque touristique ?

27 L'article d'**Aude Le Gallou**, intitulé « Imaginaires de l'abandon et pratiques touristiques à Détroit : des marges urbaines entre stigmatisation et valorisation », porte sur une pratique touristique de niche, mais en plein essor depuis le début des années 2000, aux États-Unis et ailleurs dans le monde : le « tourisme de l'abandon », forme intermédiaire entre urbex (*urban exploration*) et tourisme plus banal. Objet de l'article, la ville de Détroit, symbole du capitalisme industriel du XX^e^ siècle, permet de mettre en exergue de manière crue les caractéristiques – positives et négatives – de cette pratique. L'auteure commence tout d'abord par retracer l'histoire de Détroit, suivant une courbe gaussienne marquée par une longue phase d'expansion, suivie de décennies de déclin ; cette histoire laisse de profonds stigmates dans le paysage urbain (cadre bâti) et dans le cœur même des habitants, frappés par la désindustrialisation, en particulier celles et ceux qui sont restés sur place. L'auteure explore ensuite l'idée d'imaginaire « négatif » nourri par cette histoire industrielle, sociale et urbaine. Aude Le Gallou montre comment, à la faveur de la diffusion sur les médias numériques d'images esthétisées des ruines de Détroit depuis la fin des années 2000, se produit un renversement du regard porté sur Détroit, ville industrielle en crise devenant un objet touristique désirable pour celles et ceux qui sont avides d'expériences touristiques originales, et quelque peu morbides. Cette nouvelle pratique ouvre au demeurant des opportunités pour des entrepreneurs touristiques innovants, qui organisent des circuits de visites qui relèvent de l'illégalité. L'auteure montre au passage comment ce tourisme de l'abandon est racialement structuré : des entrepreneurs blancs s'adressent en premier lieu à des « touristes » blancs pour visiter des espaces où travaillaient et où résident encore des populations afro-américaines. Prolongeant ce constat, Aude Le Gallou montre enfin comment est reçu sur place ce tourisme de l'abandon. Si certains habitants sont relativement indifférents, d'autres récusent ces pratiques qu'ils perçoivent comme violentes (les qualifiant de *ruin porn*) ; quant aux acteurs institutionnels en charge de l'attractivité de Détroit, leur volonté est de promouvoir une autre image, renouvelée, de la ville.

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NOTES

1. Colloque organisé à l'Université de Versailles Saint-Quentin-en-Yvelines (UVSQ) sous l'égide du Centre d'histoire culturelle des sociétés contemporaines (CHCSC), de la Maison des sciences de l'homme (MSH), de l'Université Paris-Saclay et de l'Institut des Amériques (IDA).

2. Le territoire des États-Unis est à entendre dans un sens relativement étendu, même si tous les territoires englobés ici ne sont pas égaux dans leur rapport à la question touristique, soit : 48 États contigus du *Mainland*, deux États périphériques (Alaska, Hawaii), cinq territoires insulaires du Pacifique (Guam, îles Mariannes du Nord, Samoa américaines) et de la Caraïbe (Porto Rico, îles Vierges américaines), neuf *US Minor Outlying Islands* [îles mineures éloignées des États-Unis].

3. Soulignons tout de même que, en France, aux côtés de la géographie, la sociologie a joué un rôle prépondérant dans le développement des études sur le tourisme et les loisirs, en particulier sous la plume de Joffre Dumazedier au sujet de l'avènement d'une civilisation du loisir (1964) ou encore de Jean Viard à travers ses travaux sur les « temps sociaux », ici, les vacances (Viard, 1984).

4. Voir pages 140-146.

5. Si la métropole de New York constitue le premier pôle urbain en termes d'attractivité touristique internationale, elle exerce également une attractivité interne colossale. Ainsi, en 2018, la métropole a accueilli 65,2 millions de visiteurs, dont 13,5 millions d'étrangers et 51,6 millions d'Étasuniens. Cette fréquentation avait généré 16,1 milliards de dollars de recettes pour l'économie locale en 2017 contre, à titre comparatif, 13,5 milliards de dollars pour Paris la même année (Gradt, 2019).

6. Voir, en particulier, parmi les premiers du genre : *The Pike* à Long Beach, opérationnel de 1902 à 1979, ou le *Luna Park* de Coney Island, ouvert entre 1903 et 1944.

7. Source : National Park Service (https://www.nps.gov/).

8. Toutefois, ce chiffre de 2,9 millions de visiteurs en 2020 marque une décrue spectaculaire, à replacer dans le contexte très particulier de la crise sanitaire de la Covid-19 et de la limitation consécutive des déplacements internationaux. En effet, le parc national du Grand Canyon occupe, en situation « normale », la deuxième place en termes de fréquentation dans la hiérarchie des parcs nationaux. Ainsi, en 2018, il accueillait 6,4 millions de visiteurs, derrière le parc national des Great Smoky Mountains (11,4 millions de visiteurs) et devant le parc national de Rocky Mountain (4,6 millions de visiteurs). *A contrario*, l'augmentation de la fréquentation dans le parc national des Great Smoky Mountains entre 2018 et 2020 (passant donc de 11,4 à 12,1 millions de visiteurs) est vraisemblablement la traduction d'un effet de report des mobilités touristiques sur le marché intérieur.

9. Le parc national de Yellowstone subit également une décrue de sa fréquentation (4,1 millions de visiteurs en 2018, 3,8 en 2020), toutefois moins conséquente que celle du parc national du Grand Canyon.

10. Ce à quoi il est possible d'ajouter le chiffre d'affaires des activités induites, soit 1 182 milliards de dollars. Ce qui représente, au total, pour le secteur du tourisme au sens large, 2 381 milliards de dollars en 2017 (1 199 plus 1 182) ; source : US Travel Association (https://www.ustravel.org/). Ainsi considérée, l'activité touristique représente selon nos calculs 12,2 % du PIB (2 381 rapportés aux 19 540 milliards de dollars du PIB 2017).

11. Selon nos calculs : 1 199 rapportés aux 19 540 milliards de dollars du PIB 2017.

12. Source : PopulationData.net (https://www.populationdata.net/palmares/tourisme/)

13. *Travel exports* (255 milliards) moins *travel imports* (196 milliards), soit 59 milliards ; source : US Travel Association (https://www.ustravel.org/).

14. Pour rappel : 5 millions d'habitants en 1800, 76 millions en 1900, 281 millions en 2000, 331 millions en 2020.

15. Encore convient-il ici de nuancer le propos. En effet, aux États-Unis, l'idée de l'authenticité ne s'est que récemment développée, notamment sous la forme de villages amérindiens reconstruits ou de l'ouverture aux visiteurs d'anciennes plantations.

16. Quelques indicateurs permettent de mesurer l'écart entre la France et les États-Unis concernant la réglementation du travail (hors dispositifs particuliers liés aux conventions collectives et/ou aux législations locales) : volume horaire hebdomadaire (35 heures en France contre 40 heures aux États-Unis), jours de congés payés (25 jours contre 9 jours), jours fériés (11 jours contre 10 jours). En 2020, en moyenne, les Français ont travaillé 1 402 heures, contre 1 767 heures pour les Étatsuniens (source : https://fr.statista.com/).

17. Tahca Ushte (alias John Fire Lame Deer) publie en 1977, avec l'historien et journaliste Richard Erdoes, une autobiographie qui, dans le cadre du mouvement littéraire de la Renaissance amérindienne, critique la colonisation et valorise les philosophies amérindiennes, en particulier celle de la culture Lakota (sioux). Traduction française : *De Mémoire Indienne. La vie d'un Sioux, voyant et guérisseur*, publié en 1989 chez Pocket, coll. « Terre humaine ».

18. De telles opérations urbaines, en raison des transformations qu'elles peuvent provoquer dans les quartiers où elles sont réalisées, soulèvent dans certaines situations de vives oppositions, comme dans le quartier de South of Market (SOMA), au centre de San Francisco, au sujet du *Moscone Convention Center*, finalement inauguré en 1981, en dépit d'un contexte tendu en raison de l'impact de ce projet urbain sur les résidents d'un quartier de classes populaires (Hartman, 2002).

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Introduction. Tourist Imaginaries and Practices in the United States: Economic and Territorial Issues

Alexandra Boudet-Brugal, Sophie Croisy, Sandrine Ferré-Rode, Frédéric Leriche and Dalila Messaoudi

1 The question raised in this issue of *Mondes du tourisme* focuses on tourist imaginaries and practices in the USA, notably by emphasizing their economic and territorial impacts on the country. This issue results from critical reflections that began during the international conference entitled "Tourist Imaginaries and Mobility in the United States", organized on February 6-7 2020[1], in short, and coincidentally only a few weeks prior to the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic which led to the border closing, and prevented any kinds of travel, touristic or others, ironically shedding a bright light on the question of tourism. Some of the conference papers led to the publication of an issue of the *Revue française d'études américaines* (RFEA), entitled "Imaginaires et pratiques touristiques aux États-Unis : enjeux identitaires et mémoriels" (Croisy *et al.*, 2021). As a follow-up to the latter, this issue of *Mondes du tourisme* provides further insights into US tourism as a field of study, one that has been extensively explored by French academia already but that still deserves more scrutiny.

Research on tourism in the US: context and stakes

2 From the 1970s onwards, and more specifically and emblematically since 1973 with the creation of the *Annals of Tourism Research*, the US has seen the rise of tourism studies, a quite prolific interdisciplinary field rooted in humanities and social sciences (Réau, 2017).

3 In the United States, and more broadly in the English-speaking world, most research in the field has aimed to theorize the tourism question, often—but not exclusively—based on the US example. Among the landmarks underlining the transformations of both tourism and western societies, we may highlight the rise of a "touristic" middle-class—

the practice of tourism proving to be a social marker—in post-industrial societies (MacCannell, 1976), the shaping of the life cycles of tourism territories (*Tourism Area Life Cycle*, *TALC*) (Butler, 1980), the hybridization of social practices about the tourism practice (Urry, 1990) and the emergence and rise of a mass culture in tourism (Mackintosh, 2018). By the 1980s, Mitchell (1984) could emphasize the vast diversity of this field of research and the idea that it was necessary to establish a consistent theoretical strategy. This "scientific eclecticism" applied to the study of tourism *in* the US is confirmed by the vast array of topical studies including the impact of the development of the *entertainment industry* on New York's attractivity for tourists (Fainstein and Stokes, 1998), the influence of tourism activity over strategies of economic development and urban change (Judd and Fainstein, 1999), the importance of tourism activity in urban change and the structuration of the labor market in New York and Los Angeles (Gladstone and Fainstein, 2001), the implementation of environmental regulations to contend with the development of camping activity (Young, 2018), the resilience of ski resorts impacted by climate change (McCourt and Perkins, 2018).

4 French scholars have largely contributed to this extensive field of research. A sample of their work is published here, addressing a variety of topics and objects of study, such as the interactions between urban change and the development of leisure and tourism stemming from the example of Baltimore (Gravari-Barbas, 1998), the implementation of a heritage policy—including both private and public sponsorship—likely to promote tourism (Tobelem, 2007), the link between the development of tourism and the unique American policy of protecting natural spaces and the regulation of their use as recreative spaces (Depraz and Héritier, 2012), the impact of the gambling industry on tourist attractiveness and the urban transformation of Las Vegas (Nédélec, 2017), the development of new social practices in Los Angeles (Devienne, 2020), or yet again the practice of urban exploration, AKA urbex, in the cities of the *Rust Belt* based on the case of Detroit (Le Gallou, 2021). Alongside these works, some scholars have produced syntheses on the issue of tourism (Bailly and Dorel, 1992; Andreu-Boussut, 2012; Zaninetti, 2012). These syntheses—all the more interesting as they are scarce—highlight the major poles of attraction for tourists (Florida, California, large cities, natural spaces), emphasizing on the one hand the unique relation between Americans and nature, and on the other hand their national history. In addition, they underline the ability of the US to produce original spatial models in the shape of what has been referred to as tourism enclaves: national parks, amusement and theme parks, "party-towns" whose model expands into casino cities. While such surveys possibly remain too broad in scope, they remain nonetheless quite useful in order to build a conceptual framework for a range of research topics, thus offering a better understanding of the many issues involved in tourism as a field of study in the US, whether they be social, cultural, related to identity, political, environmental, territorial or economic.

5 Few studies nevertheless offer a general examination of the economic and geographic dynamics of tourism in the US[2]; all too often, they rarely attempt to consider the ways in which tourist imaginaries and practices influence such dynamics. In that regard, whether or not there are specific imaginaries and practices in the US compared with Europe for instance, remains undetermined. In other words, why should we examine the issue of tourism in the United States? To what extent does tourism enable the creation of a unique link between nature and the vast American spaces on the one hand, and with objects of memory (notably memory linked to slavery and the Amerindian experience) on the other hand? Meanwhile, in what ways does the

American context contribute to the emergence of an original, and truly industrial, form of tourism as an economic sector? More generally, what does the example of the United States allow us to understand about the challenges involved in the rise of tourism on the economy and the geography of the country? By emphasizing the question of imaginaries and tourist practices, this issue of *Mondes du tourisme* aims to consolidate our knowledge of economic and space dynamics related to tourism in the United States, drawing from this vast literature as well as an interdisciplinary approach, all the while disclaiming to put an end to the eclecticism mentioned earlier.

The question of tourist imaginaries in the US: geographical challenges

6 Following the groundbreaking work by Knafou on the development of ski resorts in the Alps (1978), followed in the 1990s by Cazes's work on the geography of tourism (1992), and Dewailly's and Flament's on the geography of tourism and leisure (1993), tourism activity has prompted growing interest in the humanities in France. Along with—and perhaps in the wake of—geographers whose work has played a crucial role in the emergence of tourism as an object of study in the humanities (Stock, 2004; Knafou and Team MIT, 2008, 2011; Violier, 2008; Lazzarotti, 2011; Fagnoni, 2017; Stock et al. 2017; Duhamel, 2018), economists (Caccomo, 2007; Schéou, 2009) and specialists in management (Callot, 2013), sociologists (Viard 2006; Christin, 2014; Cousin and Réau, 2016; Guibert and Réau, 2020)[3] and anthropologists (Urbain, 2002), lawyers (Jégouzo, 2018; Lachièze, 2020) and historians (Bertho-Lavenir, 1999; Boyer, 2005; Hagimont, 2022) have all contributed to the understanding of the major issues—whether they may be social, cultural, economic or environmental—raised by the worldwide expansion of this increasingly important aspect of contemporary life. These various works from various fields showcase the diversity of approaches to tourism as a field of study, oscillating between economist, planning, environmentalist or culturalist, and political methods (Stock *et al.*, 2021). The issue of tourist imaginaries has not been neglected in this vast scientific exploration, and has even stood out as an original and necessary approach, since they allow to grasp the socio-cultural mechanisms and the deeply ingrained motivations of tourism practices (Amirou, 1995; Gravari-Barbas and Graburn, 2012, 2016), and as a result, to better make sense of the reasons for the development of a powerful economic sector and the "touristification"—or "touristified places"—of an increasing number of regions.

7 From a meta-cultural point of view, one may consider that tourist imaginaries are integrated into a modern, western "*imaginary order*" conducive to the commercial development of the tourist experience, associating romanticism and consumerism (Harari, 2015)[4]; though the recent emergence of a genuine "*tourist morality*" in the relationship to the "Other", amends this kind of primal western hedonism (Mostafanezhad and Hannam, 2016). More prosaically, tourist imaginaries in the United States and elsewhere have emerged from material images (maps, advertising posters, magazines and specialized journals, media reports and documentaries broadcast on traditional media, movies and TV series), miscellaneous immaterial forms (travelogues, speeches, fantasies and prejudices, but also slogans, logos and expressions like *Only in San Francisco*, *What Happens in Vegas Stays in Vegas* or *The Big Apple*, or yet again clichés and stereotypes such as the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco, the Eiffel Tower in

Paris or the inescapable gondola ride in Venice), as well as new forms whose advent since the second half of the 1990s relies on the creation and the development of the Internet and new technologies. *In fine*, tourist imaginaries and marketing tools relying on an iterative process shape actual territorial brand names—just like there are commercial brand names—which catalyze the identification and the marketability of tourist destinations in a very efficient way (Keller, 1993; Marchat and Camelis, 2017).

8 While these imaginaries are conjured up ahead of the tourism practices and stand as a primary form of mobility in space, they fully partake in the tourist experience, contributing to the emergence and popularity of top tourist destinations as much as discarding and marginalizing places which come to be seen as places of little interest, even repulsive, whether this assessment is based on facts or not. Such imaginaries are never completely fixed and, on the contrary, may be dramatically turned upside down by the power of the new multimedia tools for instance. They also shape a contrasted cartography of movement, flows and areas turned into tourism spaces, which, in turn, fuel neverending tourist *wanderlust*, longings for distant places, working, in the way of a self-realizing prophecy, in a potentially endless (virtuous or vicious) circle.

9 Tourist imaginaries about the United States highlight a few rather appealing spaces. Thus, they foster a geography of tourism that brings out four major territories on the map. There are first the large cities including New York[5], Los Angeles, San Francisco, Washington D.C., Boston, Chicago or New Orleans. Second come the vast "wild" open spaces, notably renowned national parks such as Grand Canyon, Yellowstone, Yosemite or the Everglades. Also embedded in nature, third come beaches, and especially Hawaii and Florida's warm waters, which have triggered new body imaginaries resulting from sports practices, such as surfing, and the cult of tanned bodies (Coëffé, 2010). Fourth and finally, prominent are the amusement parks, which symbolize "tourism bubbles"—in other words a form of "enclave tourism", or, from a different perspective, a *pretend tourism* ("*tourisme de simulacre*", Zaninetti, 2012)—born in the United States, and which may be dated[6] or more recent, and are often backed by the sector and territorial strategies of corporations (like Disney, SeaWorld or Six Flags), and casino cities (such as Atlantic City or Las Vegas).

10 Nevertheless, these names, rooted in a vast diversity of imaginaries, implicitly illustrate that the geography of tourism markets is unbalanced and divided. Hence, tourist imaginaries contribute to structuring mobilities and flows, to produce "empty spaces" and "busy spaces" on the tourist's map, each with distinct market characteristics. Hence, influenced by global marketing, international tourists, who are drawn to places that benefit from strong media coverage, do not visit the same places as U.S. nationals, whose geographical interests and temporality are more diffuse. Similarly, the latter, who grow up with stories of the American West (Massip, 2018) and its vibrant wilderness (Strigler, 2013), are inclined to practice leisure activities that favor the outdoors, including outdoor tourism, near or far from home. In that regard, the Great Smoky Mountains National Park (12.1 million visitors in 2020)[7], situated at the heart of the Appalachians and accessible all year long, is ideally located to tap the eastern market of the country and its large cities, and is thus marked by an overwhelming number of national visitors, while, on the contrary, other parks such as the Grand Canyon National Park (2.9 million visitors)[8] and the Yellowstone National Park (3.8 million visitors in 2020)[9] benefit from a more massive intake of foreign visitors (Billard and Chevalier, 2012).

11 Because of the vastness of their territory, but also the idiosyncrasy of their social and cultural history, the United States offers a wide range of territorial resources that may stimulate imaginaries and tourism practices: natural resources (for instance landscapes, open spaces, ecosystems with often protected endemic flora and fauna); anthropological resources (modern and large cities, small ghost towns of the American West, the countryside of the Old South, heritage sites, iconic monuments and places, cultural spaces like museums and amusement parks). The vast offer, advertised extensively in the media at home and abroad, generates an important economic activity confirmed by statistics. In that regard, in 2019, tourism activity generated about 15.8 million jobs in the United States, among which 9 million direct jobs (about 7.9 million of those are linked to domestic tourism, and about 1.2 million linked to international tourism) and 6.8 million induced or indirect jobs (US Travel Association, 2020). In 2017, the total revenue/turnover from the tourism industry amounted to 1,199 billion dollars[10], in other words 6.1 % of the GDP[11]. The volume of activity is unequally shared between an overwhelming domestic tourism activity (86%) and a minor international tourism activity (14%) whose impact is nonetheless non negligible, not only in terms of jobs and revenues as previously stated, but also in terms of the image and prestige, hence soft power, that is more difficult to assess. Indeed, the majesty and grandeur of the vast American space and large cities have been largely relayed abroad by media like *National Geographic* in particular and have contributed to bolstering fascination and attraction—and consequently the idea of power and due respect—that the Unites States has sparked in the imaginaries of many people around the world. In the end, in 2018, with 79.6 million international visitors, the United States ranked third behind France (89.4 million) and Spain (82.6 million), and before China (62.9 million) and Italy (58.2 million)[12]. Additionally, this attractiveness generates a favorable trade balance, worth about 59 billion dollars in 2019[13].

12 What is more, in a context of economic prosperity and substantial population growth[14], the development of the tourism market has led to the successful founding of a few multinational corporations in the hospitality business (Hilton, founded in 1923; Marriott, founded in 1927), the entertainment business (Disney, founded in 1923) and in air transportation (United Airlines, founded in 1926). In other words, as early as the 20th century, tourism would give rise to an industrial sector whose expansion would only keep growing and a *global tourism system* which has since gathered many protagonists dedicated to the production and consumption of tourist products.

The specificities of US tourism: a framework

13 Tourism in the United States falls within the frame of national specificities which, on the one hand, impact demand with consumption practices, and on the other hand, supply with the planning and development of the territory as well as the creation and growth of specialized businesses. As examples of these distinct features, what comes to mind are notably four original and crucial dimensions of the American experience: the "pursuit of happiness", the Protestant work ethic, westward expansion, slavery and the Amerindian question along with the trauma of the Vietnam War. These distinct features most certainly constitute the bedrock of America's uniqueness when it comes to the question of tourism. To some extent, owing to these distinct features, the United States initiated a new tourism model based on the growing use of cars, the fragmenting

of tourism and leisure time, the creation of multiple "tourism bubbles" and the industrialization of the activity itself.

14 Derived from the sacred founding document, the Declaration of Independence, the "pursuit of happiness" is at the heart of the American ethos. Focusing on the quest for individual fulfilment, this basic tenet of American identity impacts the tourism and leisure industry by developing a form of tourism based on entertainment, good time and enjoyment, in other words, *fun*. In that regard, these practices are very different from the French ones for instance, which are usually more culturally oriented and tend to focus on "authenticity"[15]. This entertainment culture prompted the creation of amusement or theme parks and the development of the territories they are built on, namely Orlando, Florida or, to a lesser extent, Vallejo, California, located north of San Francisco and which hosts a Six Flags amusement park. This hedonic culture also shows in the American yearning for tourism and leisure practices linked to water, a specific kind of outdoor tourism: nautical activities (at Lake Powell for instance), cruising (from Miami, Fort and Port Canaveral more notably), marine wild-life watching (whale watching along the Californian coast), entertaining on parks like SeaWorld (in San Diego for instance), or yet again the practice of some form of scientific tourism (such as the one in the Monterey Aquarium, California), or tourism related to history (the Maritime Museum in San Francisco for instance), hence practices closer to the educational and cultural approach.

15 Tourism practices fundamentally pertain to social time that is not subjugated to work. However, as American culture—namely here the Protestant work ethic—establishes work as a fundamental value, labor law tends to limit time outside work, unlike in France for instance, hence reducing the time dedicated to leisure tourism.[16] The cultural and legal framework thus exerts a strong pressure on tourism and leisure practices. It results in two trends. The first one is the tendency toward a fragmented practice of tourism, especially when compared with France: it means that American tourists will go on more trips but for a much shorter time, but it also quite possibly means that they will be more inclined to choose entertainment and more playful and/or intense activities. Along with the culture of *fun* referred to earlier, this trend prompts the development of intra-city amusement parks, located at the geographical core of the market, in the way of the first Disneyland that opened in Anaheim, California, in 1955. The second trend tends to excessively focus on retirement that allows—once one stops working—longer stays outside the daily routine. The phenomenon has led to a migratory movement of retirees known as *Snowbirds*, who migrate from the north of the United States (and Canada) to the south, and especially Florida or Mount Ozarks, Arizona or southern California. This trend sometimes leads to the creation of specific gated communities, also known as *Retirement Communities* (Pihet, 1999).

16 The epic tale of westward expansion invigorates imaginaries of a direct contact—and, to some extent, confrontation—with nature and the wilderness, of adventure, discovery and learning about the environment. The relationship between Americans and nature stands out as constitutive of American identity, with rippling effects on tourism and leisure practices as it leads to high rates of trips to natural and wild spaces where "becoming an American" is at stake, and particularly becoming an American man, as it is strongly linked to a manly father-son relationship (Young, 2017). This epic tale also stimulates imaginaries of mobility, travel and nomadic adventures, that stand for the

original tourist practices facilitated by the development of *Recreational Vehicles* (Forget, 2012). The much-talked-about Route 66, linking Chicago to Los Angeles (Santa Monica) has emerged from this unique history, and from the development of wandering, a way of life chosen by a fair number of Americans, and defined by the diversity of its stakeholders and by a codified moving process[17]. In addition, wandering contributes to the development of stops and stopover towns which are not truly isolated for they are always located near consumption markets scattered along the road and where, as a result, the much-needed tourism infrastructures have developed. Oftentimes, the limited interest of these stopover towns lies in their geographical location between two tourist destinations, such as Lee Vining (Mono County, California), a small town of 200 inhabitants, east of the Sierra Nevada, located halfway from Los Angeles, Yosemite and Mono Lake and as such offers several motels to host tourists passing through. Sometimes, these stopover towns possess a tourism interest of their own. Such is the case of Yachats (Lincoln County, Oregon), a quaint little town of 800 souls, located along the Oregon coast, which connects the city of Portland to the north of California, via a breathtaking scenic road. The town thus offers an impressive number of hotels. Alternately, these stopover towns play the role of a gateway to major tourist attractions, as is the case for Sedona (Arizona, 11,000 inhabitants), which has become a tourist destination in itself owing to its dramatic natural landscapes, but also as a major stopover town located on the main road to Grand Canyon National Park.

17 The idea of many American pasts and a myriad of socio-cultural presents, contrary to the monolithic concept of the WASP model, emerged during the protest movements of the 1960s. From integrating "Indian memory" into American history, such as Tahca Ushte's memoirs[18] (1977), to the rise of slave narratives or stories about enslaved people, especially by means of an increased number of feature films, to the historical and literary exploitation of controversial war memoirs (such as the Vietnam War for instance), the fragmentation and complexification of American history have prompted the emergence of a new collective memory (Halbwachs, 1950), which does not stand as a uniform and imposed centralized historical narrative, but rather emphasizes a multifaceted American historical reality, including that of the Amerindian genocide, slavery and racial segregation (legal in Southern states between 1896 and 1954). Consequently, the United States has seen an increase in the attractiveness and popularity of tourist destinations constitutive of this diversity, comprising Southern plantations or recreated Amerindian villages or encampments. The development of these *sites of memory* ("lieux de mémoire"; Nora, 1997) has contributed to the rise of an idiosyncratic type of tourism, namely memory tourism, which has become a powerful catalyst of American tourist mobility. This form of tourism holds a performative dimension (Connerton, 2004), as visiting a plantation or experiencing a memorial representing long-silenced memories, the mythicized and sometimes distant and fixed past, becomes palpable and flexible. Visits turn into rites and, paradoxically, what used to be fragmented and forgotten reintegrates the national collective memory. Yet, how can these various memories be reconciled, as they simultaneously expose the fractures and falsities of the fundamental values of the United States heralded by the Declaration of Independence, namely "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness"? Interestingly, these emerging tourist spaces contribute to that. As these *sites of memory* have fueled a range of new tourist mobilities since the end of the 20th century, they have simultaneously posed private, political, and economic challenges. Admittedly, while African Americans were not allowed to travel freely across the American territory

during segregation, as illustrated by the "Negro Traveler's Green book" published between 1937 and 1967, they have benefitted from changes in the tourism industry, which now take into account cultural diversity as well as their representations and their past, as evidenced in the development of sites of memory offering a complex history of the American people. That being said, and as Alderman (2013) argues, the question of the normative power that frames the tourism market (and American society still today) and the under-representation of African Americans and tourism planning still needs to be addressed.

Imaginaries and tourist practices in the United States: new insights

18 In the early 20th century, thanks to the impressive prosperity of the Gilded Age (1865-1901) fueled by a booming industrial growth, the United States was a wealthy nation on the verge of becoming the leading world power. Fueled by the prosperity and the development of big corporations, "business tourism" emerged in the United States. This "business tourism" would continue to develop throughout the 20th century, leaving its mark on many large cities where convention centers and resorts were built to become an integrating part of the urban landscape, all the while creating financial, urban but also social and political issues[19]. More importantly, in the wake of prosperity, the demand from the upper middle class of the North-eastern cities stoked the rise of "family tourism", signaling early mass tourism in the United States. Soon enough, at the end of the 19th century, the expansion of this market led to the tourism development of new territories: national parks, Niagara Falls, new rivieras (Florida or Southern California); among many other territories, including large cities (Cocks, 2001). This emerging market soon drew the attention of tourism entrepreneurs. The most blatant example is certainly that of Henry Flagler, who, very early on, anticipated Florida's potential as a land of opportunity for tourism (Violier and Duhamel, 2009). That is why for two decades (1885-1905) Flagler invested in the construction of a railway line (the *Florida East Coast*) and hotels, thus contributing to the development of Jacksonville as well as the basic installations critical to the cruise business in Miami that would further expand in the first decades of the 20th century. In addition, the United States superseded Great Britain by becoming the spearhead of international tourism. Driven by the search for their European roots or by an urge to seek out cultural or leisure hubs, Americans did indeed practice early international tourism; thus as early as 1900, 20% of foreign tourists visiting Nice were American citizens (Vanneph, 2017).

19 Such remarks about early tourism in the United States during the Gilded Age do not close the discussions on the background nor the timing of the development of tourism in the United States: *bien au contraire*! The expansion of tourism has to be framed within the historical transformations of American society, punctuated by a few events worthy of further investigations as to their articulation with the transformations undergone by tourism: the 1920s prosperity followed by the Great Depression of the 1930s and the New Deal, the post-World War II economic and urban expansion associated with the democratization of automobiles and suburbia, the desegregation of the 1960s and the beginning of the development of an African-American middle-class, the 1970s economic crisis followed by neoliberalism in the 1980s, the rise of a cultural and cognitive

economy, the acceleration of international integration in the 1990s (following the end of the Cold War); but also, more recently, the 9/11 terrorist attacks, the 2008-2010 recession or the economics of Donald Trump's "America first" and the nationalist policies of his administration.

20 The transformations suggested above raise a few questions as to their links with tourism. Some of them may be discussed. Hence, to what extent are tourism practices – along with the places visited—by the African American community—or rather communities—distinct from the white population, or yet again the Hispanic and Asian populations? What are the impacts of the events industry, whether they be sports events, organized by such major protagonists as the National Football League (NFL) or the National Basketball Association (NBA) that require colossal equipment and means, festivals including among others the Aspen Music Festival (taking place in Colorado and inspired by the festival of Marciac in Southern France), or the Burning Man (organized in Nevada and which has become an international event), on tourist circulations and hosting places? Has the blossoming of the museum offer in some cities, like in San Francisco, become key to tourist attractiveness? What is the impact of the film and multimedia industry (major Hollywood studios and distribution platforms) on the global dissemination of landscapes associated with certain urban or non-urban territories, and in return, on the popularity and the subsequent attractiveness of these territories? What is the scope of the "back to downtown" phenomenon—unless it is, in reality, about residing in two places—for some suburban populations belonging to the middle and higher classes, and what are the repercussions of this phenomenon on downtown areas? Is mass tourism a problem in some areas, what have been the voices standing up against it and how do major key players deal with it locally? How do American tourists view potential tourist destinations abroad (allies or foes) and in what ways do these views influence their international mobility? Conversely, how do foreign visitors see the United States, depending on the incumbent president; more specifically, what has been the impact of the Trump administration on the United States' attractiveness for tourists? These questions make for vast possibilities of research, and as such, the present issue of *Mondes du tourisme* does not intend to answer them all. Nevertheless, we will try to discuss some of them, through the articles we have gathered here.

21 In his article, **Stephen J. Whitfield** narrates the chronicle of a death foretold. Drawing from many literary and journalistic references, he describes the different stages of a metamorphosis bound to a fatal outcome. In the second half of the 19th century, Florida was a minor underpopulated American state, nonetheless possessing a lush and unique natural environment, which only a few well-off travelers could enjoy. In the first half of the 20th century, Florida's population grew, mostly as a result of the booming car industry. Urbanization has since endangered this paradise, soon beleaguered by millions of American and foreign visitors alike, in search of pristine nature and landscapes. These extraordinary spaces have been gradually and heartlessly wasted away and destroyed, in the wake of mass tourism generated by theme parks such as Walt Disney World. The financial and economic windfall has thus exerted tremendous pressure on Florida's natural environment, dooming the state to become a paradise lost.

22 **Mathieu Schorung**'s article offers a substantially documented contextual analysis of an unexpected phenomenon in 2010 Florida: the development of Brightline, a high-

speed railway line. The privately funded project will serve major tourist attractions in the state once it is completed. Schorung first details the major stages of the transformation of Florida into a tourist hub—by both American and foreign visitors—, then reviews the decisions made by the local authorities to develop infrastructures promoting car and airplane travel especially as of the 1950s, thus emphasizing the formidable challenge taken up by the firm investing in Brightline: reintroducing the train in the urban and tourist landscape of the state, as well as recreating tourist imaginaries associated with this means of transport via a market targeting strategy.

23 In his article entitled "Slavery and Plantation Tourism in Louisiana: Deconstructing the Romanticized Narrative of the Plantation Tours", **Melaine Harnay** aims to analyze the various mechanisms and strategies of plantation tourism in Louisiana. Harnay relies on the notable cases of Houmas House and Greenhood Place, whose strategies focus on white America, opposing them to Oak Alley, Evergreen and the Whitney Plantation which have opted to reclaim slavery. The paper thus examines these choices and in particular whether they only reflect flexibility in the face of an evolving market or offer actual counter-historical narratives whose purpose is to make silent voices heard. The first part is dedicated to the plantation-museums which have created an idealized and glorified past, akin to *Gone with the Wind*, to draw in visitors, mostly from North America. Hence, the author explores their strategies and perspectives which lead him to define these places as outgrowths of the "Lost Cause" and a mystified approach, all at once witnesses and products of the legacy of the Confederacy. The author evidences that the ploys used manipulate the representation of history by inviting to a form of nostalgia that negates the very conditions of the enslaved. Harnay further demonstrates that some of these institutions have become as though altars erected to the glory of the South, posing as collectors and offering to gather artefacts related to Southern history, such as the confederate statues removed from public spaces. However, Harnay also observes that a certain societal pressure to acknowledge and render visible African American history has triggered notable changes in the strategies of some plantation-museums, which have opted for a display of a plurality of voices in order to present a more realistic image of the South. These institutions thus provide an alternative perspective and rely on different practices, placing slavery and the enslaved back at the center. However, reinterpretation is not homogeneous as some institutions propose optional tours of the slave quarters while others display memorials and plaques dedicated to the enslaved, attesting to tangible memorialization and inclusion. As a result, what these plantations-museums offer today oscillates between sacred territories of a mystified South and inclusive and polymorphic spaces of memory, thus underlying the various reasons that lead visitors to travel to these plantation-museums.

24 In "An analysis of Southern Advertising from the Jimmy Carter Era: The Origins of the Fragmented Image of the Tourist South", **Giuliano Valenzani** examines tourism in the South of the United States. Relying on the fact that, for twenty years, the tourism industry has gained traction, especially in this region, Valenzani highlights the importance of Southern identity and its issues, shaped by images and myths. The author draws from the advertising strategies of four states from the Deep South, namely Alabama, Mississippi, Georgia and South Carolina, perceived as the essence of the South, and he argues that they are meant to draw tourists but also to create, or recreate a Southern image and identity. It leads him to consider a presumable evolution of this image which, until the 1970s, significantly relied on the "Old South",

that of the Belles and the Lost Cause. The author argues that the 1970s marked a turning-point, that would prompt a change and in particular, a search for new myths. Governors understood that quite well: tourism is a financially promising industry and as the time of family vacation is no longer, the offer range must expand, an evolution that reckons on the perceptions of the territory. Valenzani hereby explains the creation of Civil Rights trails and tours, and by and large the development of what was at first hesitant African American tourism, which would encourage these states to rehabilitate their image. The range of tourism products and services has indeed expanded, from Blues to Amerindian history and legacy to, far more recently, local cuisine. As a consequence, Valenzani argues, these states have created a fragmented image that is displayed in the many images and photos in the brochures, guides and other advertising contents. If this fragmentation occurred then, it has accelerated since: the author illustrates how the offer has multiplied, aiming to highlight the variety and infinite possibilities of experiences, far from a monolithic vision of the South as the land of plantations. Valenzani thus concludes that while the "Old South" has remained a major attraction, the promises of modernity have been increasingly present and strategies have become more global, in order to lure more visitors.

25 In "Access to Labor and Leisure in Cars: Early Black Motorists' Automotivity in Miami", **Helen Gibson** analyzes the impact the automobile had in the early 20th century on the identity development and social liberation processes within the African American community, and most notably in the segregationist South. Gibson first proposes an analysis of the racialization of mobility and leisure in the United States (especially in the most visited parts of Florida), by highlighting the road as a historical place of humiliation and terror perpetrated against African Americans. She then examines the African American community's experience of the automobile, highlighting the fact that despite the lethal dangers of the road, they took ownership of the car turning it into a tool to represent themselves and gain access to the world of work and leisure. In particular, the author refers to the significant case of Miami, which was at the heart of Florida tourism at the beginning of the century but also a place of fierce southern racist violence, and where claiming cars as their own meant accessing public spaces, whether for work or leisure. Studying the responses of the black community to the white community's systematic and violent attempts to forbid access to the automobile to the black community in the city, Gibson evidences that, as of the 1920s, the black community's resistance to these bans led to the weakening of the racialized economic system in Miami and the rise of the car as the preferred means to socio-economic progress for African Americans.

26 **Terence Young**'s article entitled "Outdoor Imaginaries: The Emergence of Camping in Modern America" analyzes the social, cultural and technological issues at the heart of camping practices in the United States. Following its advent as a recreational practice at the end of the 19th century, camping established itself as a preferred practice in the context of American modernity at the beginning of the 19th century, which was especially defined by the antimodern movement; while this school of thought did not entirely dismiss urban realities and their mixed attractiveness, it mostly emphasized the values of the American wilderness as a source of regeneration for the city-dwellers trapped in a morose daily life, through their artistic productions, and especially literary ones. This movement also historically restored the pre-modern link between Americans (of European origins, let us not forget) and nature. The revival of Jefferson's agrarian vision and the past romanticized imaginaries about the frontier and the

American wild west, which are central elements of the white American antimodern movement, have been on display in guides, brochures and other various advertisements, emphasizing camping as pertaining to the pioneering spirit. Young evidences that past and present campers, being involved in the antimodern movement, link history and stories and emerge transformed by the experience that strengthens their sense of belonging to the nation. In his social and cultural history of camping practices, the author emphasizes racial issues that have contributed to their development as well as the technological progress that effectively participated in the alteration of the practices.

27 The role of communication and advertising campaigns as tools of differentiation and self-assertion of the identity of a tourism area is fundamental. In that regard, **Pascale Nédélec**'s "'*What happens here, stays here*' : origines, cristallisation et recomposition des imaginaires touristiques de Las Vegas" provides an analysis of the undertakings of tourism entrepreneurs driven by the fame and attractiveness of Las Vegas. As such, the author argues that local leaders, operators and tourism developers have fashioned their communication so as to turn Las Vegas into a worldwide recognizable tourist destination that benefits from a distinctive image. By doing so, they have contributed to the creation of specific tourist imaginaries and practices that are largely based on gambling, entertainment, and even excess. Nédélec relies for a large part on the "What happens here" campaign to identify the marketers' objectives, but also the way tourists receive, perceive and internalize these strategies of area branding. Retracing the origins of Las Vegas tourist imaginaries, the author demonstrates how the exposure to sources of information produces images that strongly influence the choice of a tourist destination. Nédélec thus raises a few questions related to communication strategies. Referring to an earlier question, Nédélec also reflects on what impact cinematographic images, such as those found in the movie *Hangover* (2009), can have on Las Vegas's tourist imaginaries? In the end, one may also consider whether imaginaries are fixed or flexible. But is it possible to reshape a tourist brand name?

28 **Aude Le Gallou**'s paper, entitled "Imaginaires de l'abandon et pratiques touristiques à Détroit : des marges urbaines entre stigmatisation et valorisation", deals with a new niche market tourism practice. This practice, known as the exploration of abandoned places (or "tourisme de l'abandon"), at the crossroads of urbex (*urban exploration*) and more conventional tourism, has been growing since the early 2000s in the United States and elsewhere. A symbol of 20th century industrial capitalism, the city of Detroit provides a perfect case study to work out a definition of this practice—both positive and negative. The author first surveys the history of Detroit, marked by a long period of growth, followed by decades of decline. This history has left deep scars both in the built environment and in the heart of its inhabitants, particularly those who have been hit by deindustrialization. She then explores the idea of "negative imaginaries", fed by this industrial, social and urban history. Le Gallou shows how, because of the global spread of aesthetic images of the ruins of Detroit on the Internet, tourist imaginaries about the city have turned from an industrial city facing decline into an alluring object for those looking for a unique and somehow morbid, tourist experience. Incidentally, this market niche practice has offered economic opportunities for innovative entrepreneurs who set up—otherwise illegal—visiting tours. The author also evidences how racially structured this "exploration" is, as white entrepreneurs mainly offer white tourists tours in African American neighborhoods. In this regard, Le Gallou further

demonstrates how this practice is perceived. While some inhabitants are quite indifferent, others look at it as violently intrusive (going as far as naming it *Ruin Porn*). As for the local authorities in charge of the attractivity of Detroit, they aim to promote a renewed image of the city.

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NOTES

1. Conference organized by the University of Versailles Saint Quentin (UVSQ), sponsored by the Centre d'histoire culturelle des sociétés contemporaines (CHCSC), the Maison des sciences de l'homme (MSH), The University of Paris-Saclay and the Institut des Amériques (IDA).
2. Here, "US territory" must be understood in a broad sense: the 48 contiguous continental states, the two peripheral states of Alaska and Hawaii, the five insular Pacific territories (Guam, Northern Mariana Islands, American Samoa) and Caribbean territories (Puerto Rico, US Virgin Islands), the nine US Minor Outlying Islands. Needless to say, these territories are not on an equal footing when it comes to tourism.
3. Let us note that in France, alongside geography, sociology has played a major role in the development of tourism and leisure studies, especially with the work of Joffre Dumazedier on the emergence of a "civilization of leisure" (1964), or yet again with that of Jean Viard on "social time," AKA vacation (Viard, 1984).
4. See pages 140-146.
5. If New York City stands out as the main urban pole when it comes to international tourist attractiveness, it also exerts a major domestic attraction. Hence, in 2018, NYC hosted 65.2 million visitors, among whom 13.5 million foreigners and 51.6 million Americans. They generated $16.1 billion in revenue for the local economy in 2017, compared with $13.5 billion for the city of Paris the same year (Gradt, 2019).
6. See in particular, among the first amusement parks: The Pike in Long Beach, opened from 1902 to 1979, or Luna Park on Coney Island, opened from 1903 to 1944.
7. Source: National Park Service (https://www.nps.gov/)
8. However, the 2.9 million visitors in 2020 represent a dramatic decrease, linked to the specific context of the Covid-19 pandemic and the subsequent limits on international travel. Indeed, the Grand Canyon National Park usually ranks second in terms of visitation of national parks. Thus, in 2018, 6.4 million visitors travelled there, tailgating the Great Smoky Mountains National Park (11.4 million visitors), and ahead of the Rocky Mountain National Park (4.6 million visitors). Conversely, the increase in the number of visitors at the Great Smoky Mountains National Park

between 2018 and 2020 (from 11.4 to 12.1 million visitors) seems to illustrate the impact of a transfer of tourist mobility in the domestic market.

9. The Yellowstone National Park visitation also decreased (from 4.1 million visitors in 2018 to 3.8 million in 2020), yet to a lesser extent than the Grand Canyon National Park.

10. To which one may add the turnover of induced activities, meaning 1,182 billion dollars. It represents 2,381 billion dollars in total for the overall tourism sector in 2017 (1,199 + 1,182); Source: US Travel Association (https://www.ustravel.org/). As a result, we estimate that the tourism activity represents 12.2% of the GPD (2,381/19,540 billion dollars, 2017 GDP).

11. According to our estimate (1,199/19,540 billion dollars, 2017 GDP).

12. Source: PopulationData.net (https://www.populationdata.net/palmares/tourisme/)

13. Travel exports (255 billion) - travel imports (196 billion) = 59 billion; source: US Travel Association (https://www.ustravel.org/).

14. The US population amounted to 5 million inhabitants in 1800, 76 million in 1900, 281 million in 2000, 331 million in 2020.

15. However, one needs to be more nuanced as in the United States, the concept of "authenticity" has emerged, leading to the recreation of Amerindian villages or the opening of Southern plantations.

16. A few indicators allow to compare France and the United States based on differences in labor law (except for specific agreements linked to labor agreements or local regulations): the number of hours in a week (35 hours in France versus 40 hours in the United States), paid leave (25 days in France versus 9 days in the United States); national holidays (11 days versus 10 days). In 2020, on average, French workers worked 1,402 hours, while Americans worked 1,767 hours (source: https://fr.statista.com/).

17. Forget (2012), *ibid*.

18. In 1977, Tahca Ushte (AKA John Fire Lame Deer) published his autobiography with the help of historian and journalist Richard Erdoes. Partaking in the new literary movement of the Amerindian renaissance, it both criticizes colonization and highlights Amerindian philosophies, especially the Lakota culture (Sioux). The French version was published in 1989 by Pocket (collection "Terre humaine"), under the title *De Mémoire indienne. La vie d'un Sioux, voyant et guérisseur*.

19. Because of the transformations they may engender in the areas where they happen, such urban operations may raise major criticisms. As an example, we may quote the case of South of Market (SOMA), downtown San Francisco, and the *Moscone Convention Center*, which was eventually inaugurated in 1981 despite tensions caused by the impact of this urban project on the inhabitants of a working-class neighborhood (Hartman, 2002).

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Florida: From Tourism to Troubles

Floride : du tourisme aux problèmes

Stephen J. Whitfield

Introduction

1 The history of Florida is punctuated with a mystique–which none of the states of the union may need, but which a few have nevertheless invoked and transmitted. In this respect Florida differs from, say, New Hampshire, or Missouri, or South Dakota. To be sure, such states have their virtues, but none has the mythic status that Florida projects. It claims to be a kind of hologram of paradise, a place where the most ancient memories of our species are somehow reinvented in the form of modern fantasies (Arsenault, 2019, p. 10). In that sense, no state has been more authentically American. "In the beginning all the world was America," John Locke philosophized in his *Second Treatise of Government* (1689); and less than a century later, exultant colonists bent on revolution claimed the power to revitalize human experience itself. The new nation was primed to write a "whole [new] chapter in the history of man," Thomas Jefferson exulted (Locke, 1980, p. 29; Jefferson, 1975, p. 484). "We have it in our power," Thomas Paine added in 1776, "to begin the world all over again" (2009, p. 53). Were that power properly deployed, a sequel to Eden might be found in the new United States. No part of it (except California) promoted itself more ardently or successfully as a successor to Eden than Florida. It can be considered "a state of mind" as much as it is a "state of being" (Derr, 1989, p. 13; O'Sullivan and Land, 1991, pp. 11-13).

2 The mystique of Florida has therefore drawn tourists. They have come for the purpose of pleasure; and other travelers have subscribed to an agenda–such as business–that is more varied. The distinction is easily blurred, but tourists should be considered travelers who buy commodified experiences. Tourism often entails predictable and standardized itineraries, and in that sense has been historically less adventurous than travel. The split between travel and tourism emerged in the early nineteenth century, and whether the difference remains tenable is debatable (Revels, 2011, p. 6; Macintosh, 2019, pp. 4-5, 6, 7, 11, 12). What is inarguable, however, is the appeal of Florida. The

official tourism marketing corporation called Visit Florida, "a public/private partnership" that Governor Lawton Chiles created in 1996, estimates that 118 million domestic visitors came to the state in 2018, along with 3.5 million Canadians and 10.8 million other foreign visitors. Such statistics, if reliable, are staggering. The mystique with which culture framed nature drew the crowds. But then the crowds made nature less sublime and less viable. Such is the argument of this essay, which synthesizes literary evidence, economic data and press reports to show the role of Florida in the history of tourism as well as the impact of tourism upon a state that once promised proximity to nature. This essay therefore reinforces the tendency of environmental historians to blur at least some of the lines between humanity and its habitat. If civilization and landscape are not "mutually exclusive" (Schama, 1995, p. 14), the history of Florida–especially over the course of the last hundred years or so–shows how entwined they are.

History

3 Evidence of the idyllic impact that Florida historically registered upon visitors is easy to cite. For instance, the journalist Edward King toured the defeated South in 1873 for *Scribner's Monthly*. Spending his first night in Jacksonville, he found the milieu "slumberous, voluptuous... Here beauty peeps from every door-yard. Mere existence is a pleasure... Through orange-groves and grand oaks thickly bordering the broad avenues gleams the wide current of the St. Johns River," he exulted. Yet King also envisioned prospects of economic development there. He thus already signaled a counter-myth, in which the intrusion of capitalism or an industrial machine disrupts the garden (1972, pp. 380-81; O'Sullivan and Land, 1991, pp. 144-48; Rowe, 1978, pp. xi, xiii-xiv). Although *joie de vivre* was not something that the Puritans and their descendants extolled, even Harriet Beecher Stowe managed to distance herself from that heritage when she strolled along the St. Johns River. She wrote in 1872 that "life itself is a pleasure when the sun shines warm, and I sit and dream and am happy and never want to go back north." The rhapsodic reaction of no other visitor shows more effectively the power of Florida, because happiness was hardly the goal that her religious faith fostered (Rowe, 1992, p. 5). The cultural shift therefore needs to be made explicit. The awareness that hedonism might replace moral duty as the purpose of life, that traditional codes of conduct might yield to the definition of a state as a playground, anticipated the state's winking advertisement of the 1960s: "The rules are different here." Unobstructed desire, which Christianity was historically designed to stigmatize, gave way to a late-twentieth-century enticement like "Florida. When you want it bad, we got it good" (Mormino, 2005, pp. 120-21).

4 With its natural sites and natural springs, postbellum Florida was soon open for business. Bucolic marvels like Sunken Gardens, Cypress Gardens and Weeki Wachee became tourist attractions; and Silver Springs became the state's most celebrated and promoted natural wonder. There tourists could hop onto a glass-bottom boat, an unusual vessel that enabled passengers to see sixty-feet down into the pure depths of Silver Springs. Among the nineteenth-century Americans who seized this opportunity were Mrs. Stowe, Ulysses S. Grant and Thomas A. Edison. In the era of Jim Crow, black tourists could board glass-bottom boats downriver, at Paradise Park. It was Florida's only roadside attraction pitched specifically to African-Americans (Mormino, 2005,

pp. 86-90; Revels, 2011, pp. 20, 36-37; Vickers and Wilson-Graham, 2015, p. 11). By law and by custom, commitment to white supremacy made Florida recognizably Southern, of course; and only closed societies like Mississippi, for example, permitted the racist record of Florida to escape full scrutiny. Of the eleven states of the former Confederacy, Florida had the lowest percentage of African-Americans, and was also the only one, as the journalist John Gunther awkwardly noted, to have "an Indian problem" (1947, p. 655). In 1940 no Southern state had fewer residents—not even Arkansas. Little more than six decades later, however, Florida jumped ahead of New York as the third most populous state, which suggests an increasing friction with the usual meaning of "the Southern way of life." It was historically agrarian, and its hamlets were inextricable from its farms and plantations. But no Southern state is currently more urban than Florida, where tourism easily outranks the economic importance of agriculture.

Visitation rites

5 Boosting numerical growth has been the industry that now dominates the state's economy. Indeed, more tourists visit Florida than any state, other than the nation's largest, California. How did the allure of Florida get so powerfully emitted?

6 Historian Tracy J. Revels, the author of a scholarly study of Florida tourism, has listed four conditions for success: "a population with adequate funds and time for travel, reliable transportation, comfortable and safe destinations, and a body of images and descriptions designed to excite the imagination and lure patrons" (2011, p. 104). The wealthy fit her first category. From the beginning, in the late nineteenth century, they were the only kind of tourists who came to Florida. They hunted, fished and sailed; they played golf; they socialized among themselves during those wish-you-were-here winters. And why not? The state could boast of a tranquil beauty that featured glistening beaches. None of the lower 48 states enjoys a longer seaboard, so that seawater is never more than sixty miles away from any spot on this peninsula (Whitfield, 1993, p. 416). Railroads were constructed to bring the rich to the state, with the tracks going to and going through St. Augustine, Tampa and Miami. Hotels were built to let the leisure class luxuriate in the comfort to which they were accustomed in Newport and on the Riviera. If the characteristic manmade structure of Florida could be identified, the architectural choice would not be a cathedral or a church, not an office building or a mansion, not a tower or a skyscraper, but a hotel (Cox, 2011, pp. 137-38; Rothchild, 1985, p. 57). Catering to Northeastern elites, St. Augustine's lavish Ponce de Leon Hotel started a trend that included the Vinoy Park Hotel in St. Petersburg.

7 But a playground restricted to the privileged could not be permanently assigned to Florida. The ethos of democracy encourages the many to hope to emulate the few, and the Roaring Twenties marked the takeoff for the tourism of the masses. "For a significant proportion of the American populace," historian Cindy S. Aron concluded, vacations became "an important component of an acceptable standard of living" (Aron, 1999, p. 244). Roads complemented trains; and Henry Ford enabled the common folk—Americans of limited means and plebeian tastes—to go on the move for pleasure. In Florida another populist, three-time Presidential candidate William Jennings Bryan, hawked real estate investment. The masses to whom Ford and Bryan appealed lacked the leisure to "winter" for an entire season in Florida. Their vacations were necessarily

brief. Yet the Model T and the land craze (which the Marx Brothers mocked in *The Cocoanuts* in 1929) sparked the invasion of ordinary or "Tin Can" visitors. By 1925 about 2.5 million of them were arriving annually, and many tourists would decide to stay. Miami ballooned from 5,471 in 1910, to 29,571 in 1920, and to 110,637 in 1930. In the decade of the 1920s, no metropolitan area in the nation grew faster than Miami; Tampa-St. Petersburg came in sixth (Revels, 2011, pp. 2, 68; Cox, 2011, pp. 139, 146-48; Rugh, 2008, p. 3; Tindall, 1965, pp. 76-83, 109-11). Other visitors would soon stampede to Florida in greater hordes.

8 And why not? Contrast its winter season to the Northern and Midwestern cities—not only because of their sometimes bitter cold but also because residents wake up in the dark and return from the day's work after sundown. St. Petersburg therefore contrived an easy job—a public relations director—and became the first community in the state to make such an attempt to live up to the billing of a "Sunshine City" (Arsenault, 1988, pp. 145, 186, 203, 261-62). St. Petersburg had no manufacturing base, but long attracted honeymooners as well as the very aged. That peculiar demographic pairing led to the jibe that St. Petersburg attracted "the newly wed and the nearly dead" (Revels, 2011, p. 73; Mormino, 2005, p. 79; Rothchild, 1985, p. 52). How poorly some startup marriages eventually fared can be gauged from Ring Lardner's bleak short story, "The Golden Honeymoon" (1922), set in St. Petersburg. Black tourists took their chances too. By the 1930s, *The Negro Motorist Green Book* became an indispensable guide in alerting African-Americans to accessible hotels, restaurants and gas stations. Barely three decades later, the interstate highway system would enable black motorists to feel safer. Had they still been forced to wind their way through Florida's backroads, such strangers would have been dangerously conspicuous. By then the state was becoming less parochial, however. Facing Latin America, Miami welcomed more foreign visitors to its airport than any other besides New York's Kennedy (formerly Idlewild) (Seiler, 2006, pp. 1110-11; Derr, 1989, p. 338; Gunther, 1947, p. 729). Postwar affluence, advances in travel such as the jet plane and above all the widespread use of air-conditioning became crucial to the allure of Florida.

9 The decades immediately after the Second World War marked what one historian called "the golden era of family vacations." Typically, these vacations were paid, thanks to the power that the New Deal had bestowed on the labor movement. The maps and atlases of the American Automobile Association and of Rand McNally taught geography to children and made road trips easier. So did the burgeoning numbers of motels that soon became the favored form of roadside lodging. Such vacations provided families with a sense of cohesiveness and of enjoyment that could be shared. Many veterans who had been stationed in Florida during the war loved the state so much that they relocated there with their families (Rugh, 2008, pp. 1, 10-12, 17, 35, 43, 45).

10 To visit Florida became so accessible and so fashionable that the Pulitzer Prize-winning columnist for the *New York Times*, Russell Baker, made fun of such tourists. In a story datelined Ormond Beach, Baker invoked the satiric tradition of Mark Twain's *The Innocents Abroad* (1869) by reporting that "the first thing people do when they plan a Florida vacation is buy a lot of pink and yellow clothing. Everybody then puts on these funny clothes, gets into the car and drives past nine hundred miles of billboards advertising monkeys and beer... It is very hot," Baker reminded his readers. "The children snarl at each other... Eventually they arrive at... a gigantic shopping center... It is just like home, except that the houses are painted lavender and orange to match the

customer's clothing." He noticed that "the vacationer feels terrible about being pale. Pale skin marks him as a tourist, and the worst thing about being a tourist is having other tourists recognize you as a tourist. And so, for three or four days, he broils himself mercilessly in the sun... hoping he will become inconspicuous enough to have a wonderful time," which Baker suspected "isn't easy." By the mid-twentieth century, he already suspected trouble in paradise. "There is a lot to be said for fun and comfort," he wrote in a bittersweet conclusion from Daytona Beach. "But total fun and total comfort wind up being total bores, and in the process, pleasure is lost" (1965, pp. 68-70, 71).

11 Some tourists could afford luxury hotels on Miami Beach like the Fontainebleau and the Eden Roc. Many other visitors ended up staying in seedy motels, of which a fictional example is described in the Miami writer Carl Hiassen's *Tourist Season* (1986): "The Flamingo Isles was not a classic Miami Beach motel. There was nothing charming about the color (silt) or the architecture (Early Texaco). At this motel there were not striped canvas awnings, no wizened retirees chirping in the lobby, no lawn chairs lined up on the front porch, no front porch whatsoever. Basically, the Flamingo Isles was a dive for pimps... and hookers. Rooms costs ten dollars an hour, fifteen with porno cassettes" (pp. 30-31). Such settings suggested a devotion to tackiness, if not to downright ugliness, and inspired recourse to derogatory Yiddish terms like *shlock* and *dreck* to label the knickknacks commonly for sale in Florida. They have ranged from the shellacked blowfish and plaster flamingoes to the pirate heads carved from coconuts and the pelicans made from seashells (Gopnik, 2013, p. 105; Revels, 2011, p. 118; Rothchild, 1985, pp. 2-5). The democratization of travel and the achievement of prosperity cannot be entirely separated from the widespread evidence of tastelessness.

12 By the second half of the twentieth century, nature was increasingly yielding to culture–and its dominion could easily turn sinister. Here the memoir of journalist Edna Buchanan may be symptomatic. Coming from New Jersey in 1961, Buchanan was stunned when she first saw Miami Beach, "all pink, radiant, and bathed in sunlight." She was thrilled to discover that "everything is exaggerated" in such scenery, "the clouds, the colors too bright to be real [and] the heat." She got used to "drifting clouds [that] glow golden at sunset and rosy at dawn" (1987, pp. 31, 43). But Buchanan also realized that local violence was exaggerated too, and she became a crime reporter for the *Miami Herald*. Her stories showed how terrifyingly far Miami-Dade County would stray from Revels' definition of "safe destinations" for tourists. The crime wave that hit Miami in 1993-94 brought Buchanan's shocking reporting to national attention. For example, ten foreign tourists were murdered; and the number of visitors from abroad, especially from Britain and Germany, fell by a fifth. To lessen vulnerability to theft, kidnapping and homicide, rental car companies removed the distinctive license plates that marked the automobiles as rented (Revels, 2011, p. 140). Foreigners were presumably safer when traveling incognito. Not all the local rustics on the west coast of the state adhered to the welcoming messages from the Chamber of Commerce. A columnist for the *St. Petersburg Times* once spotted a more menacing sign than conventional advisories against trespassing: "My dogs can make it to the fence in three seconds. Can you?" (Klinkenberg, 2008, p. 8; Mormino, 2005, p. 121).

13 Although not every longtime resident was hospitable, the trajectory of the vacationers choosing Florida as their destination is astonishing. Their number increased from 4.5 million in 1950 to over 9 million by the end of the decade. The number doubled again in 1967. In 1971, when the Magic Kingdom at Walt Disney World opened, Florida

attracted 23 million tourists (Revels, 2011, pp. 102-3; Arsenault, 1984, pp. 597-628; Mormino, 2005, pp. 95, 96). Their spending habits raised the income of the local inhabitants, but the blessings must be classified as mixed. Take what happened on the day after Thanksgiving, in 1971, when about 56,000 tourists tried to get into the Magic Kingdom. Backing up traffic for ten miles, they made the apocalyptic traffic jam that famously opens Jean-Luc Godard's *Weekend* (1967) seem prophetic. Though Disney World is justifiably celebrated for its efficiency in crowd control, the park had to shut down its ticket window early that November afternoon. Yet such harrowing episodes posed no deterrent to Florida's tourists. Their numbers swelled to more than 70 million in 2000 (Revels, 2011, p. 126; Mormino, 2005, p. 115), and six years later 83.9 million visitors swarmed into Florida–so many that an exasperated Carl Hiassen fantasized confining them solely to "Disney property until their vacation money runs out" (Hiassen, 2001, p. 20; Revels, 2011, pp. 142, 149).

14 Of course, the mass appeal of Florida needs a context. In January 1944, when Franklin D. Roosevelt listed "leisure" along with adequate shelter and the elimination of hunger among his proposed Second Bill of Rights, he could not have foreseen how devoted posterity would be in exercising the option of tourism. Vacationing in the developed world has become the third largest family expense, right after food and housing (Elsworth, 1991, p. F4). No country has been pulling its weight more fully than France–the planet's most popular destination, according to the United Nations World Tourism Organization. Nor has any museum ever attracted more visitors than the Louvre, which set a record of 10.2 million art lovers in 2018. In that year, throughout the world, visitors who stayed at least one night in a foreign country reached 1.4 billion. In the United States, however, recent fears of a "Trump slump" roiled the international travel industry, which supports 15.7 million jobs and generates $2.5 trillion in economic output. Nearly 80 million foreigners visited the US in 2018. That was a record high. But the American share of the international travel market skidded 13.7 percent from 2015, to the lowest level since 2006. Had the 2015 level remained steady, the US would have welcomed 14 million more international visitors, a magnitude that would have generated enough demand to employ 120,000 more Americans (Nayeri, 2019, p. C1; Mzezewa, 2019, p. TR2). The scale of these missed economic opportunities is poignant.

15 Tsunamis of tourists nevertheless continued to pour into Florida. Over 5 million foreign visitors per year still flock to the theme parks around Orlando, and they have shifted tourism away from south Florida. So dependent is central Florida upon tourism that one in twenty workers in the Metro Orlando area earns a paycheck from Disney World; and the Universal Studios theme park hires as many Florida employees as does Walmart (the largest private employer in the world). Absent significant manufacturing in the state, a whopping four in five jobs there are credited—directly or indirectly—to the service industry. It provides food, lodging and entertainment for tourists and other travelers in a state where most governmental revenue comes from sales and hotel taxes. Florida does not impose an income tax, a policy that encourages many tourists to become residents. Only Nevada tops Florida in the proportion of the population born outside the state. But the boost that Florida gets in the census count does not bring a commensurate increase in state revenue to match social needs. Dependence on tourism also affects the labor market adversely. As liberal economists never tire of declaring, the US has suffered less from a lack of jobs than from a paucity of *good* jobs; and employment in Florida's service industry tends to be low-skill and low-status (Revels, 2011, pp. 3, 126, 132-33, 151; Mormino, 2005, pp. 114, 181). The pay is so low that very

many employees cannot afford to live near where they work. The infrastructure that keeps Disney World humming so smoothly, for instance, is subterranean. That is where many of its employees toil, deprived of the sunlight that draws Disney World's "guests" to Florida. Shorn of glamour, such jobs are intended to make the influx of vacationers as frictionless an operation as possible, and to keep these eager out-of-state visitors coming.

Trouble

16 Yet a glum paradox is embedded in the recent history of Florida. "I spent thirty years of my life trying to get people to move down there," a former mayor of Orlando, Carl T. Langford, has recalled. "And then they all did" (Painton, 1991, p. 58). He was neither the first nor the last person to learn that in dreams begin responsibilities, and that neither action nor inaction can avoid repercussions. Promises also entail problems. They have included environmental degradation, traffic congestion, gridlock on expressways like the Palmetto and the Sawgrass, as well as the sort of sprawl that can seem almost indigenous to Florida. The structure of services and amenities, as well as the infrastructure, is bound to buckle under the weight of so many people. The underground aquifers are already so depleted that even during the rainy season lawn-watering restrictions have been imposed. This melancholy decline in the quality of life is bound to affect the impressions and experiences of tourists too. The fate of Florida thus exemplifies what economists call "induced demand." It is defined as an increase in availability (such as more highway lanes and larger parking lots), which instigates an increase in consumption, which worsens traffic congestion. When Langford, the longtime booster, decided to retire, he moved to North Carolina (Grunwald, 2004b, pp. 28-29; Mormino, 2005, pp. 28-29), making the conclusion inescapable: ballyhoo has its downside. Some of its consequences can be tabulated here.

17 The balance between nature and artifice has become disrupted, risking the prospect of dystopia. The Army Corps of Engineers, with its can-do motto of "*Essayons*" (let us try), has indeed been trying very hard to worsen that imbalance, journalist Michael Grunwald charged. The Corps has energetically put on coasts "environmentally damaging seawalls [and] artificial dunes," and installed "levees and canals and pumps" into the eastern Everglades in particular, so that it "was converted into wall-to-wall sprawl" (Grunwald, 2004b, p. 27; Burleigh, 2020, pp. TR1, 4-5). And now "the financial and environmental bill for a century of runaway growth and exploitation is coming due," Grunwald added. "The elaborate water-management scheme that made southern Florida habitable has been stretched beyond capacity, yo-yoing between brutal droughts and floods, converting the Everglades into a tinderbox and a sewer, ravaging the beaches, bays, lakes and reefs that made the region so alluring in the first place." Mercury has contaminated fish, and algal blooms have clouded the bays of south Florida. The depleted marine life, the leaching landfill sites, the "awful traffic," as well as "red tides that have made it tough for sunbathers to breathe at the beach," have been among the effects of Florida's relentless overdevelopment (Grunwald, 2004a, p. 26, and 2008, pp. 28, 29, 30; Davis and Arsenault, 2005, p. 6). Grunwald should know; he lives in Miami-Dade County. Below Tallahassee, the glass-bottom boats at Wakulla Springs barely run, because tannic acid from the state capital polluted waters that were once so pristine that tourists could see straight down for 120 feet. What remains is

what Revels calls “a murky brown stew” (2011, p. 150). The new term for this phenomenon, in which too many visitors bear down on an unsustainable infrastructure, is “over-tourism” (Nayeri, 2019, p. C1).

18 The most notorious instance is undoubtedly Venice, a city that in recent years has been subjected to considerable flooding. It is not an entirely natural catastrophe, but is instead due to what the Venetian literary scholar Shaul Bassi has called an “indiscriminate tampering with an ecosystem nurtured by Venice for centuries, the impact of the cruise ships, excavations of the lagoon and the rapacious investment in tourism.” Admittedly profitable for residents, over-tourism has threatened to supersede all other aspects of civic life there. Far too many earthlings have explored the singularity of Venice and have been wearing the T-shirts to prove it (2019, p. A23). But if Venice goes under and becomes uninhabitable, the durability of the fake Piazza San Marco near Orlando will offer little consolation. The ecological peril to a fragile and unique city like Venice, Italy has been widely publicized. The danger posed to Venice, Florida and vicinity is less known but is surely worthy of concern as well.

19 Any student of “over-tourism” need look no further than Walt Disney World. Covering 43 square miles, which is twice the size of Manhattan, this theme park has become the planet’s biggest tourist attraction. The Florida legislature expedited this achievement in bestowing on Disney’s so-called Reedy Creek Improvement District what amounts to its own government. Endowed with extraordinary political and legal authority, Walt Disney World has written its own building codes, formed its own fire department and even granted itself the power to tax. “They could build a nuclear plant out there,” an Orlando City Commissioner grumbled, “and there’d be nothing we could do about it.” Such sovereignty has even provoked comparisons with the Vatican (Mormino, 2005, p. 104; Painton, 1991, p. 54), however slight the danger of either of these tiny states going nuclear. The shadow that the Magic Kingdom and EPCOT (the Experimental Prototype Community of Tomorrow) casts is nevertheless formidable. Marine craft afloat in Walt Disney World are so numerous that soon after the opening of the theme park, its flotilla constituted the ninth largest navy on the planet. Great Britain, once the greatest naval power in history, must currently reconcile itself to the reduced status of luring fewer tourists than Disney World does (Elsworth, 1991, p. F4).

20 Orlando can be now reached by direct flights from cities as distant as Rio and Frankfurt. Prior to the pandemic, the 2,558-square-mile metropolitan area of Orlando boasted the largest concentration of hotel rooms (76,300) in the nation, as well as the highest occupancy rate (79%). Orlando became second in the nation in the number of conventions that the city hosts, and also in the number of attendees at those conventions (Painton, 1991, p. 52; Mormino, 2005, pp. 116, 117; Whitfield, 1993, p. 431). Because Disney World inspired the installation of other theme parks, such as Sea World and Universal Studios, Metropolitan Orlando became, by the final decade of the twentieth century, the fastest growing region in the US; and Disney World was welcoming approximately thirty million “guests” per year. Unsurprisingly, the hospitality industry had not fully braced itself for such an impact. Take late December 1986, for example. All motel rooms were then reported to be reserved and occupied on I-95 between Richmond and Savannah; and on December 29, an attendance record was set when 148,500 visitors clamored to get inside Disney World. This recreational colossus bypassed and then extinguished the tourist sites that offered to Mrs. Stowe the

splendors of natural springs (Revels, 2011, pp. 127, 132-33; Mormino, 2005, pp. 106, 108).

21 Such spectacular success demands an explanation. For most customers, Walt Disney World seems to deliver. Its dream world is predictable and formulaic. Its atmosphere is antiseptic and courteous. It provides wholesome, banal entertainment. Nor should the superb safety record of Walt Disney World be ignored, especially when contrasted with a water park in Vernon, New Jersey, called Action Park. There so many patrons left with chipped teeth, bruised knees and concussions that attorneys nicknamed it Class Action Park. So many patrons ended up with broken bones that physicians in local hospitals nicknamed it Traction Park. Within one two-year period (1984-85), there were 26 head injuries—indeed, so many that Action Park bought the town of Vernon new ambulances. Between 1978, when the park opened, and 1996, when it closed, six deaths were reported–by drowning and by electrocution. A test dummy was sent on a ride that was about to open and came out of the tunnel missing its head. After this decapitation, the son of the owner demonstrated his confidence in the safety of the ride by inaugurating it and managed to come through the tunnel intact. As a precaution he protected himself by wearing hockey equipment. Disney helped put such amusement parks out of business (Barron, 2019, p. A18).

22 Not all of the guests have been satisfied, however. EPCOT Center, which opened in 1982, "has accomplished something I didn't think possible in today's world," the satirist P. J. O'Rourke observed. "They have created a land of make-believe that's worse than regular life. Unvarnished reality would be preferable," he wrote in a deliriously dyspeptic book entitled *Holidays in Hell*. He was evidently taken for a ride. Journalist Mark Derr, based in Miami Beach, has complained that "the attractions" around Orlando "offer little of Florida, and no one seems to care." To compare Orlando to its famous nearby theme park is to corroborate the claim of the sociologist Jean Baudrillard that "the city and the park are looking more like each other every day" (O'Rourke, 1988, pp. 184-85; Whitfield, 1993, p. 431; Mormino, 2005, p. 104). This common objection to tourism echoed what the historian Daniel J. Boorstin and the critic (and novelist) Umberto Eco formulated too. Such tourist sites risk calling reality itself into question. What Eco called "hyper-reality," he argued, distorts actuality, and has represented a standard criticism of such theme parks ever since Boorstin's broader condemnation of the mediated "pseudo-events" that can make modern experience so disorienting. In *The Image* (1962), he offered nature as a counterpoint to culture, or at least to the sort of culture that permeates so much of the texture of ordinary life through the ubiquity of media (Boorstin, 1962, pp. 4-5, 11; Whitfield, 1995, pp. 211-21). He was only partly right, however, because the relation to nature is also interactive.

Nature

23 In 1962, ecological consciousness barely existed; and sensitivity to the devastation of the natural environment was not common. Scientists were not yet warning of the penetration of the ozone layer. The bill now needs to be paid. The American preference for artifice over actuality (as Boorstin argued), as well as the reckless despoliation of the landscape, has now caused nature to retaliate.

24 The destruction of so many mangrove forests has made the west coast of Florida especially subject to flooding. According to one 2015 study, the Tampa-St. Petersburg

metropolitan area ranks first in urban America in vulnerability to storm surges. Fort Myers is fifth, and Sarasota ranks seventh (Davis, 2017, p. 521). In Florida hurricanes have long incurred a fear as vivid as it is warranted; they have been lethal. But climate change has expanded the season from June to November. In 2004, one of the four major hurricanes that hit the state shut down the theme parks around Orlando for three days. Such hurricanes are likely to become more frequent, more powerful and more destructive. The southeastern part of the nation annually gets more rain than any other section, and the hurricanes bring more than danger. One resident of central Florida has defined the hurricane season in terms of "the humidity that frizzes your hair. It's the lizard that crawls inside your coffee mug." The air is "sticky." To walk outside may not mean to encounter exquisite beauty but palmetto bugs instead, as well as "hills of fire ants and heaps of molehills." Central Florida, she added, is where "the sky cracks open and floods the roads" (Davis, 2017, p. 338; Revels, 2011, p. 145-46; Arnett, 2019, pp. C1, C4). Nature has struck back by heightening the dangers of flooding and sinkholes, which is why Craig Pittman, an environmental reporter for the *Tampa Bay Times*, warned tourists: "Watch where you step." But "because of the hurricanes," he added, "always keep an eye on the skies." They are not entirely friendly. Though some like it hot, the piercing of the ozone layer has made ominous a term like "Sunbelt." The yearning to become much less pale that once intrigued Russell Baker now looks foolish, an invitation to risk skin cancer rather than signal robust health (Mervosh, 2019, p. A17). Compared to the icy winter of the Northeast, fierce hurricanes and oppressive heat do not automatically favor Florida.

25 The promoters of Florida had presented nature as mostly benign and hospitable. They showed the state to be primarily pastoral and irenic, a revived Garden of Eden. According to Genesis 3:1, only a single serpent could make trouble. But Florida seems less of a paradise than in the untamed nineteenth century. A bull shark got close enough to the shore of the Panhandle to bite off the arm of a swimmer who was training for a triathlon, while another attack near Destin proved lethal for a teenage girl. In central Florida wild hogs can grow to four hundred pounds. At least 72 species of mosquitoes have been found in the state; and in the summer, park rangers in the Everglades must often be outfitted with special clothing, including head nets. Tourists have reason to be apprehensive. They need to be advised that some creatures unmentioned in the Bible have found a home in Florida, thanks mainly to smugglers of exotic animals. Feckless monitoring at the Port of Miami led the Department of Justice to estimate that only the trade in drugs exceed the profits that can be derived from the importation of invasive species. They include Cuban tree frogs that are big enough to have gobbled native-born frogs, as well as the water hyacinth, the Asian walking catfish and the African tree snail (Bilger, 2009, p. 85).

26 Among the least charming of such creatures is the Burmese python, which began to appear in the Everglades in 1995. These reptiles were probably released by a pet shop, or by a breeder or by an owner confronted with the challenge to having to provide a diet of mice, rats and rabbits. Burmese pythons can grow to a length over twenty feet, can weigh two hundred pounds and can live for more than twenty-five years. According to the account in the *National Geographic*, a group of tourists walking not far from the main entrance to the Everglades in 2003 watched a Burmese python fight a full-grown alligator to the death. That pythons are not venomous is hardly reassuring, because "their upper jaws are fitted with a quadruple row of sharp, inward-curving teeth, their lower jaws with a double row." Their teeth can hold onto prey until the

Burmese pythons "can coil their body around it." They can swallow leopards and six-foot alligators. Almost as much as tourists, Burmese pythons seem pleased to visit Florida, and have been found as far west as Tallahassee and as far north as Jacksonville. These reptiles are also believed to be growing more numerous. Along a canal, or in a secluded park, children who are smaller than either leopards or gators should be especially careful (Bilger, 2009, pp. 82, 83, 85, 86, 97). No invasive species is more frightening or resilient or ferocious than the Burmese python.

27 A close second, however, is an African lizard called the Nile monitor. It can grow up to seven feet in length. Its powerful legs enable an adult monitor to outrun a human being. This vicious creature has tapered jaws that are like daggers, and it is not picky about what it eats–which is basically whatever can fit inside its mouth. And whatever does not meet that test can be torn apart, from limb to limb. In the wild the Nile monitor can "hunt on land or in the water, climbing trees [and] digging up burrows," according to science writer Burkhard Bilger. "Monitors often hunt in packs." A biologist from the University of Tampa added that "they're very aware, very intelligent." Their disposition is quite disagreeable; and though they generally leave human beings alone, they attack if cornered. By now Florida may be harboring thousands of them. Because some have been spotted west of Fort Myers, at euphonious Cape Coral, the encounter between humanity and nature may be particularly fraught there. Cape Coral is the largest city between Miami and Tampa. "At the millennium," historian Jack E. Davis noted, "Cape Coral was the fastest growing US city with a population of 100,000 or more." The four hundred miles of canals in this planned community were intended to give homeowners some property next to water. Instead, the swamp—and, along with it, the Nile monitor—has come to them (Bilger, 2009, p. 89; Davis, 2017, p. 409), a reckoning that they could hardly have anticipated or sought.

28 The Burmese python and the Nile monitor are among the more than two hundred non-native species of wildlife estimated to be living outside of captivity in south Florida. In 1992 Hurricane Andrew set loose animals that had been confined to the Miami Zoo. They included baboons, orangutans and capybaras, which are rats that grow to the size of hogs. Many fled into the Everglades National Park. Though its 1.5 million acres exhibit less diversity than the Amazon, the mixture of both tropical and temperate species makes this huge section of south Florida unique. Hence southern crocodiles splash around next to northern alligators; and some plants are so weird that they are carnivorous (Goodnough, 2004, pp. 1, 21; Bilger, 2009, p. 82).

29 Most famous is the official state reptile, the native alligator. Somewhere between a million and a half and perhaps two million gators inhabit the state. But drought has reduced their natural habitat, forcing them to move toward places where Floridians have built swimming pools, canals and ponds. The incessant commitment to commercial and residential growth and the extension of agriculture into wetlands have limited the terrain that the gators once considered their own, resulting in a dramatic increase in fatal attacks against household pets and sometimes against humans. Alligators have become so aggressive that over sixteen thousand calls a year are placed at the state's hot line, reporting nuisances and threats, often in backyards (Lemonick, 2006, pp. 48-49; Grunwald, 2004b, pp. 28-29; Bilger, 2009, p. 88). Consider the iguanas as well. The National Weather Service in Miami advised visitors as well as residents in south Florida to watch the skies again, because at night iguanas climb to treetops to rest. But these lizards, which are not native to the state, cannot maintain their grip

when the temperature dips low; and they drop to the ground. Many can recover and slink away when it gets warmer. But tourists have been warned that they might not appreciate having a five-foot lizard land on them (Ortiz and Zraick, 2020, p. A26). Even when compared to the rats in the subways of New York City, the alligators on the lawn and the iguanas in the skies make Florida less enchanting.

30 No wonder then that contemporary Florida fiction is so attuned to ecology. The exploitation of the land has produced a body of work in which "ambition, appetite and absence of memory," according to one critic's summation, "lay waste to a once exquisitely delicate environment of wetlands and beaches." For instance, the protagonists in Hiaasen's novels "dislike nature. Whether they are predatory developers, corrupt politicians, greedy sugar barons, sleazy corporate lobbyists," they barely notice the environment, unless they imagine how "to drain it, pave it, dredge it, and otherwise exploit it... They bulldoze mangrove swamps and hardwood hammocks into gated communities and strip malls" (Gopnik, 2013, p. 104; Grunwald, 2004a, p. 33). The urgency of the problem of imbalance did not happen to concern the Nobel laureates in literature who lived in the state—Ernest Hemingway on Key West, Isaac Bashevis Singer on Miami Beach. But if present ecological trends continue unabated, a refuge for retirees like Singer's Oceanside community will be entirely underwater in three decades. When Groucho Marx was auctioning off Miami real estate in *The Cocoanuts*, he promised the suckers that "you can have any kind of home you want. You can even get stucco. Oh, can you get stuck-o!" The cynical joke from this 1920s Florida boom stemmed from the phony plots of land that were sold "by the gallon." But nature will have the last laugh, and it will be grim.

Conclusion

31 Perhaps none of these alarming troubles lack equivalents elsewhere. But such portents seem to loom larger because of the shadow they cast on the mystique, because Florida has exercised such imaginative power over so many human beings. Too many visitors have come to the state; too many have stayed. Yet as historians Jack E. Davis and Raymond Arsenault observed in 2005, with some consternation, "Florida tourism has received very little scholarly attention in general, and the environmental implications of thirty to fifty million annual visitors have all but been ignored." That is why Florida should be identified as a test-site of whether an erstwhile ideal of paradise can be squared with growth. Florida is where assumptions about economic and demographic growth have defied the fragility of the environment, where the relentless assault of the American way of life may have reached its limits. Has the remorselessness of "progress" therefore become the nemesis of wellbeing? Certainly, the installation of the machine in the garden has constituted one way of thinking about American history in general, but that injection applies especially to a state where prosperity depends so heavily on tourism. When John Muir, a founder of the Sierra Club and the instigator of the conservation movement in the US, arrived in Florida in 1867, he acknowledged the "thorny plants" and the "venomous beasts" that he saw around him. But Muir also revered nature for its powers of rejuvenating humanity, and he objected to the utter subjugation of the environment to social and economic desires (Davis and Arsenault, 2005, p. 19; Davis, 2017, pp. 243-44). The current troubles that Florida faces hint at the timeliness of Muir's warning. How commerce can be reconciled with conservation, how

over-tourism can somehow be accommodated to the natural order is the challenge that the history of Florida presents. It is a disconsolate reminder of the Fall that is integral to the myth of Eden.

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ABSTRACTS

Among the fifty states of the American republic, only a very few can project a mystique, a special mythic spirit. From the middle of the nineteenth century, when natural springs and lush foliage attracted some explorers and well-to-do visitors, to the present, when Walt Disney World welcomes many millions of tourists, Florida has offered alluring pleasures. Since the land boom in Miami in the 1920s down to our own day, the state has become home for millions of Northerners and Midwesterners in particular. Very few states have grown faster –too fast, it seems. For the natural basis of harboring so many millions of residents and tourists is buckling under the strain of excessive demands upon resources, and nature is now striking back. The growth upon which Florida has depended for prosperity has become an ecological threat, and the dream of paradise that once drove so many Americans to live in the state is turning sour. Once a source of enormous pride, tourism has become a serious problem for residents and above all for the balance between civilization and nature.

Parmi les cinquante États de la République américaine, peu sont associés à une mystique, à un esprit mythique particulier. Depuis le milieu du XIX^e^ siècle, lorsque les sources d'eau naturelles et la nature luxuriante attiraient quelques explorateurs et visiteurs aisés, jusqu'à aujourd'hui, où Walt Disney World accueille plusieurs millions de touristes chaque année, la Floride a toujours proposé des plaisirs séduisants. Depuis le boom foncier de Miami dans les années 1920 jusqu'à nos jours, cet État est devenu le foyer de millions d'habitants, venus du Nord et du Midwest en particulier. Très peu d'États américains ont connu une croissance aussi rapide – trop rapide, semble-t-il. En effet, les conditions naturelles qui permettent d'accueillir ces millions de résidents et de touristes cèdent sous la pression d'une demande excessive de ressources, et la nature contre-attaque. La croissance, dont dépendait la prospérité de la Floride, est devenue une menace écologique et le rêve de paradis, qui poussait autrefois tant d'Américains à venir vivre dans cet État, s'écroule. Auparavant source d'une immense fierté, le tourisme est devenu un sérieux problème pour les résidents, notamment pour l'équilibre entre civilisation et nature.

INDEX

Mots-clés: voitures, espèces invasives, Orlando, surtourisme, Walt Disney World
Keywords: automobiles, invasive species, Orlando, over-tourism, Walt Disney World

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A Train Among Cars and Planes in Florida? The Brightline Private Rail Project in the First Touristic Region of the United States

Un train au milieu des voitures et des avions en Floride ? Le projet ferroviaire privé Brightline dans la première région touristique des États-Unis

Matthieu Schorung

Introduction

1 The Brightline project is a private railway, both in terms of its governance and its financial structure. Led by Florida East Coast Industries-LLC (FECI), the idea is to re-establish a passenger rail service in Florida by launching a specialist operator and making use of a rail corridor originally created in the early 20th century. The Brightline project proposes to create a high-speed rail service between four cities: Miami, Fort Lauderdale, West Palm Beach and Orlando.[1] The service will use 312 kilometers of existing lines, and a new 64-kilometre stretch is planned to connect the Treasure Coast, north of West Palm Beach, to Orlando's international airport. FECI is keen to highlight the wholly private nature of this operation, since the State of Florida has witnessed several failed attempts to set up a high-speed train line in the past.[2] The purpose of this article is to examine this project, with a particular focus on two of its principal characteristics: firstly the importance of tourism in the design and promotion of this rail project, which is intended to connect the three main hubs of Florida's tourist industry; secondly the fact that this rail project is taking shape in an inauspicious context where carbon-heavy modes of transport (airplanes and cars) account for the overwhelming majority of tourist mobility and everyday mobility, and where both public perception and the tourism landscape have been shaped by the predominance of cars. This article thus sets out to study the relationship between high-speed rail and

tourism by analyzing the planning and implementation of a railway project in an unfavorable territorial context, oriented towards carbon mobility. The aim is to understand how Brightline has built its business strategy and how a new transport infrastructure can have potential effects in Florida in a territory where green mobility is a minor issue both in terms of infrastructure and public policy and in the practices of residents and tourists. The project is original in several respects: firstly, because it is an attempt to create a new collective transport service which is not dependent upon the public sector; secondly, because of the context of mass tourism; finally, because it requires the construction and operation of new stations which will aim to make the railway an established part of Florida's landscape and transport habits. This article presents a case study to understand the territorial effects of tourism. Accessibility is a determining factor. Tourism has become one of the predominant objectives of transport network development (Page, 2009). Public authorities and even private companies play an important role in the development of tourism in the region, particularly by financing new transport networks: first the railways, then the motorway network and the airports. Transportation makes it possible to open up an area to tourist traffic and activities on different scales and is traditionally a powerful argument for the installation and investment of private companies, such as the French government's investment efforts (extension of the RER A suburban train line, TGV station, motorway slip road) to accommodate the Disneyland Park in Marne-la-Vallée. In some cases, operators or transport companies may also become tourism players, such as the ARRC in Alaska (Schorung, 2016). In the case of Brightline, we are talking about a conglomerate that is making a major investment in passenger rail transport in order to develop a new branch of activity and deploy a commercial strategy based on tourism and leisure activities. It is therefore interesting to see how a new entrant in the Florida mobility system is positioning itself.

Methodology and scientific literature

Research methodology

2 This research is based upon analysis of a substantial corpus of grey literature, as well as field work conducted between 2017 and 2019 for the purposes of my doctoral thesis in geography, focusing on passenger rail services in the USA. Studying a transport project obviously requires the gathering and analysis of documents relating to the project itself, published by the parent company FECI, the State of Florida and the federal government. The richest source of grey literature is to be found in the reports prepared by FECI for submission to the federal government (Federal Railroad Administration, FRA) in order to comply with regulatory requirements, particularly environmental obligations. To this we can add the documents produced by local and regional stakeholders, and consultancy firms seeking to ascertain the impact of the rail project, as well as data taken from the websites of these institutional stakeholders. Since the project itself is relatively recent–work began in 2015, with the first phase completed in mid-2017–academic writing on the subject is scarce. Finally, the national, regional and local press provide invaluable information regarding the perception of the project by local elected officials and residents, and how such perceptions evolve in response to new developments. The field research, conducted in 2017, focused on several locations: the Miami metropolitan area (MSA), the beach resorts of West Palm Beach and Fort

Lauderdale, home of the two most modest stations on the line, and the Orlando metropolitan area. This field trip enabled me to gather data and documents which will be of use in the analytical phase of this project, as well as visiting the construction sites of three of the four planned stations (the Orlando station is located within a future airport terminal, and the construction site is closed to the public). This methodology is, however, limited in one aspect: it does not include semi-directive interviews with any representatives of the project, who declined requests for a formal interview.[3] The answers referred to the information contained in the presentation brochures and on the website. This refusal can be interpreted in three ways: a reluctance for a private company to provide sensitive information on a project in the course of financing and construction; a reluctance for the private actors of the railway sector to discuss projects relating to passenger transport; a reluctance relating to the instability of such a project which constitutes a bet in a territory unfavorable to the train and relating to the uncertainty of its commercial success. The absence of interviews forced me to rely on documentary research and the press and consequently to try to build a critical view without insights from the actors carrying the project.

The relationship between high-speed rail and tourism

3 Over the course of the 19th and 20th centuries, innovations in transportation expanded the reach of tourism. Successive transport revolutions–trains, boats, automobiles, air travel, high-speed rail–allowed for unprecedented spatial diffusion, as new destinations became accessible to tourists for the first time (Gay, 2006; Gay and Mondou, 2017, pp. 17-19, 24-31). Transport providers also became key figures in the tourism industry. In order to boost passenger numbers on their trains, rail companies invested directly in the development of stations at tourist attractions within their networks or at the end of their existing routes, a phenomenon which can be clearly observed in the USA and Canada (Gay and Mondou, 2017, pp. 58-60). It is in Japan, however, where rail companies have invested most heavily in tourism. Adopting a policy of vertical integration and business diversification, train operators have played and continue to play a vital role in the development of tourist attractions and activities (zoos, theme parks, parks, ski resorts, hotels, restaurants etc.) (Aveline, 2003). The development of tourism is a major factor in urbanization, including the development of coastal holiday destinations, where available space is limited and demand is particularly strong. The appeal of "artificial tourism,"[4] especially theme parks, is a powerful vector of metropolization and suburbanization, with Disneyland Anaheim and Disneyworld Orlando the most emblematic examples. Many tourist attractions are dependent on the existence of extensive supporting infrastructure, especially theme parks.

4 Tourism is an activity which necessarily involves mobility, and thus transport infrastructure. The accessibility of a location and the ease of the journey come into play when tourists are choosing a destination, and thus have an impact on the development of tourism, both domestic and international (Prideaux, 2000; Lumsdon and Page, 2007; Page, 2007). Since the 1960s, the issue of the role played by high-speed rail services in the development of tourism has given rise to a sizeable corpus of academic literature (Bazin, Beckerich, Blanquart, Delaplace and Vandenbossche, 2011). Some scientific works have investigated the effects of transportation on tourism markets (Sands, 1993; Masson and Petiot, 2009; Urena *et al.*, 2009; Wang *et al.*, 2012; Pagliara, La Pietra, Gomez and Vassallo, 2015). It seems that increasing the supply of transportation, especially

high-speed rail, may increase some of these markets (Bazin, Beckerich, Delaplace and Masson, 2006; Bazin, Beckerich and Delaplace 2010, 2011; Delaplace and Dobruszkes, 2013; Bazin-Benoît and Delaplace, 2015; Billard and Bertrand, 2018). There is a large body of scientific literature on the structural effects of transport on tourist numbers and activities, on the potential benefits of improved accessibility (Berion, 1998; Mannone, 1995; Berion *et al.*, 2007; Masson and Petiot, 2009; Chen and Haynes, 2012; Wang *et al.*, 2012; Bazin-Benoît and Delaplace, 2013; Coronado *et al.*, 2013), and on the potential effects on tourists' choice of destination (Valeri *et al.*, 2012; Delaplace *et al.*, 2014, 2015; Pagliara, Delaplace and Vassalo, 2014, 2015; Albalate *et al.*, 2017; Pagliara, Mauriello and Garofalo, 2017). Finally, since high-speed stations are generally located in urban areas and cities are seeking to capitalize on the attractiveness of high-speed rail, scientific work has sought to analyse the effects on urban tourism and business travel (Faye, 1998; Bazin, Beckerich, Blanquart *et al.*, 2010, 2011; Delaplace, 2012, 2016; Bazin, Beckerich and Delaplace, 2013, 2014; Ruggeri, 2013; Delaplace and Perrin, 2014; Mondou and Pébarthe-Désiré, 2018).

5 Based largely on *ex post* analyses, the existing literature displays a tendency to downplay the dynamism associated with the creation of high-speed rail services. High-speed rail may serve to boost the dynamism of the tourism sector within a given territory on three conditions: a clear improvement in the all-round accessibility of the territory, a general strategy to develop and promote the territory's amenities involving both public and private stakeholders, and finally an intermodal strategy to improve urban transportation within the territory and effectively manage passenger transfers. Furthermore, the relationship between transport and the development of tourism is dependent on three factors beyond the realm of transportation: local potential, local strategies to prepare for the arrival of high-speed services, and the targeting of specific categories of clients by private actors (Masson and Petiot, 2009).

1. Florida: A destination of choice for American tourists

The early development of tourism in Florida driven by its transport infrastructure

6 Florida is now one of the USA's principal centers of tourism, primarily as a result of the state's beaches, weather conditions and attractive scenery, as well as a thriving leisure industry and "artificial tourism" sector embodied by the state's many theme parks. Since the mid-19th century, the state's positive reputation has been linked to the rise of tourism on the Florida panhandle. Tourism and territorial development have always gone hand-in-hand in Florida (Revels, 2011).

7 In many ways the history of tourism in Florida begins with Henry Morrison Flagler, a wealthy industrialist who made his fortune working with John D. Rockefeller. Flagler recognized the great economic potential of St. Augustine, building three hotels in the city including the flagship Hotel Ponce de Leon (a luxury hotel with 450 rooms). He transformed the city into a bustling tourist destination by playing on its natural charms (beaches and sunshine), while also creating an attractive artificial environment within his hotels. Flagler then set about developing Florida's rail network. He took ownership of some of the smaller lines in the north of the state and began to expand

the network to span the whole peninsula, while continuing to invest in tourism projects. He was firmly convinced of the exceptional potential of Florida's south-east and southern coasts as tourist destinations. In 1892 he obtained permission from the state government to build a rail line stretching down the coast as far as Palm Beach. He began building vast hotel complexes in what is now Palm Beach, and then extended the line down to Miami. This line became the Florida East Coast Railway.[5] Once again, this new investment was accompanied by the construction of a grand hotel (The Royal Palm), capitalizing on the clement weather and spectacular landscape of the bay of Miami. Flagler thus played a prominent role in the urbanization of Florida:

- his workers' camps were subsequently incorporated into a single entity, which would become West Palm Beach;
- the city of Miami underwent major changes (the streets were paved, an electricity network was installed, piers were built to welcome steamboats, new schools and hospitals sprang up etc.).

8 Henry Bradley Plant was the second major figure in the development of Florida's tourist industry, and a direct competitor of Henry Flagler. Plant made Tampa (on the state's west coast) the base for his ambitious economic project: he renovated the city's railway network, developed its port and built a 500-bedroom luxury hotel (the Tampa Bay Hotel). He bought and renovated a series of hotels located along his railway lines (Hotel Kissimee, Ft. Myers Hotel, Ocala House). Between them, these two businessmen profoundly altered the image and indeed the geography of Florida (Revels, 2011, p. 55). The history of Florida as a tourist destination is part of the tourist revolution, analyzed by the MIT group (Mobility, Itineraries, Tourism). In particular, coastal summer tourism and vacationing are profoundly transforming the world of tourism. From the 1930s, the hedonistic model based on the "3 S" (*Sea, Sand and Sun*) spread from Hawaii and then to Florida (Équipe MIT, 2005, 2011; Monot and Paris, 2019, p. 103).

9 In the early twentieth century, Florida's cities were beginning to consider the potential of more affordable tourism aimed at the middle classes. The global context was particularly conducive to this development, with rapid transformations in mobility behaviors and a period of economic prosperity which saw working hours becoming shorter, wages rising and consumer lending on the rise. Florida's tourist destinations witnessed a property boom, as the state rapidly adapted to the rise of motorcar ownership–the first highway connecting Jacksonville, in the north, to Miami, on the state's southern tip, was inaugurated in 1911. By 1925, Florida was already attracting 2.5 million tourists each year and the number of people employed in the tourism sector had doubled. The state was hit hard by the 1929 stock market crash and its after-effects–spending on leisure and tourism is the first thing which households sacrifice in times of financial uncertainty–but rebounded relatively quickly when the New Deal gave the tourism sector a vital boost, not least in the form of the ambitious scheme to reinvent and redevelop the Keys. Florida's continued growth post-1945 was primarily driven by tourism: the state's population topped 1.9 million in 1940, rising to 2.7 million by 1950. The post-war context was also highly auspicious for the Floridian tourism boom:

- the national situation was positive: post-war prosperity, demobilization of some of the army, the *baby boom* and the attendant increase in family holidays;

- circumstances were also favorable in Florida: the ongoing expansion of the highway network, the opening up of the state to air travel, the increased availability of air conditioning and the draining of marshes to reduce mosquito numbers.

10 By 1959, Florida was attracting 11.3 million visitors each year and was firmly established as a prime tourist destination. Tourism in Florida was built on three main pillars: the state's beaches (abetted by changing attitudes to sunbathing and seaside holidays, as well as the emergence of the spring break phenomenon);[6] "roadside tourist attractions" (around thirty sites aimed at families but still relatively modest in size, located in the vicinity of the Everglades National Park and including Cypress Gardens, Marineland, etc.); and smaller attractions (secondary tourist spots looking to capitalize on the influx of tourists, the majority of which were subsequently wiped out by the arrival of Disney).

11 Walt Disney's decision to create his new theme park in Florida is probably the most significant event in the history of tourism in the state. In June 1965, Disney purchased over 11,000 hectares of land spanning Orange and Osceola counties, near Orlando. Locating the park in the Orlando area meant that it could remain operational all year round, in a region where land was plentiful and inexpensive, and easy to reach by car. When negotiating their arrival in Florida, Walt Disney Co. demanded a number of concessions, including work to widen Interstate 4, the construction of three new junctions on this highway, specific rights of first refusal on additional land and the transferal of essential infrastructure to Disney's control (sewers, water supply, electricity, the internal road network). The entire district was declared a politically autonomous zone, with the incorporation of two new cities (Lake Buena Vista and Bay Lake). Walt Disney World opened its doors on 1st October 1971, and within a few years had revolutionized Florida's economic geography and tourism industry. Over the course of the 1970s, 20,000 new hotel and motel rooms were created. Ever since, Orlando has been renowned as the world's theme park capital (Revels, 2011):

- 1973: opening of Sea World Florida;
- 1982: opening of the first extension to Disney World, EPCOT Center;
- 1989: inauguration of Pleasure Island (for night-time activities) and Typhoon Lagoon (waterpark) as well as a further extension to Disney World (Disney-MGM Studios);
- 1995: opening of a new rival theme park, Universal Studios, and further work to expand Disney World (Animal Kingdom);
- 1999: expansion of Universal Studios with new attraction Island of Adventures (Revels, 2011, pp. 125-134)[7].

12 This building frenzy, catalyzed by the fierce competition between Universal and Disney, was accompanied by a scramble to build more hotels, restaurants and all sorts of other tourist facilities. This had major consequences for Orlando, not least the fact that the city's population doubled between 1971 and 1999. Orlando is a city built on tourism, whose residents are dependent upon the tourism industry and thus live in the shadow of the theme parks (Gladstone, 1998). In central Florida, theme parks and more modest attractions also began to modernize and expand (Busch Gardens, SeaWorld). In the 1990s, the Floridian tourism industry endured a period of uncertainty. Its image was in decline, and Florida was becoming synonymous with mass tourism, superficiality and overcrowding. Key industry stakeholders (the state government, promoters, large companies) totally overhauled their marketing strategy in response to this threat: a new promotional agency called VisitFlorida was launched, the sector was an early

adopter of the internet, products were revamped and new commercial niches were developed. This policy soon bore fruit: 48 million visitors in 1998 (up to 83.9 million in 2006) bringing in revenue of 41 billion dollars for the tourism sector.[8] It would be no exaggeration to say that the tourist economy has shaped modern Florida, and that there is a clear and strong correlation between the leisure and tourism sector, urbanization and economic development in the state (*cf.* table 1)[9]. Hence the aim of the Brightline project to connect the main tourist hubs of south-east and central Florida, and its heavily tourism-oriented commercial strategy.

Table 1. The importance of tourism to the Floridian economy (in 2018)

Sector	**GDP (in millions of dollars)**	**Jobs (thousands)**
Tourism sector (total)	91.3	Direct employment: 1005 Total employment: 1500
Of which:		
Accomodation and food services	30	688
Real estate and rental	14.1	84
Arts, entertainment and recreation	7.8	188
Retail trade	6.5	144
Transportation	5.4	105
Sector	**Spending by tourists (in billions of dollars)**	
Tourist spending (total)	94	
Of which:		
Lodging	26.6	
Food and beverage	21.3	
Shopping	15.4	
Transportation	18.7	
Entertainment and recreation	12	

Source: Rockport Analytics, 2019

Concentration of tourist activities in a small number of nationally and internationally-renowned hubs

13 In 2019, Florida welcomed a total of 131.4 million tourists from the USA and overseas[10]. Almost 89% of these visitors were Americans (116.8 million in 2019), confirming Florida's reputation as the USA's favorite holiday destination—these domestic tourists come primarily from the North-Eastern states, the Midwest and Texas.[11] Canada was the biggest source of overseas visitors, with 3.4 million tourists, followed by the United Kingdom with 1.4 million. The economic impact of this tourism is immense: tourist spending was 94 billion dollars in 2018, with more than 1.4 million direct and indirect jobs in the sector and 12 billion dollars in tax revenue (state and city taxes).[12] Annual visitor totals have continued to grow steadily over the years (with the exception of 2001-2002, due to the repercussions of the 9/11 attacks): 20 million in 1980, 40 million in 1990, 70 million in 2000, 81 million in 2010.

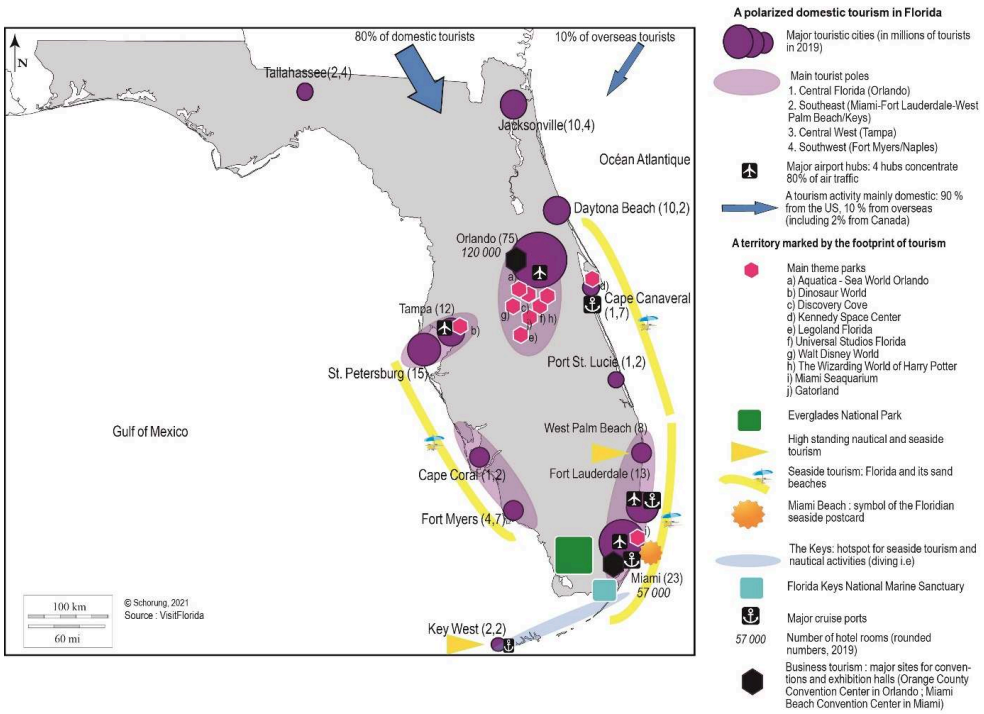
14 Domestic tourism in Florida is concentrated in four main zones: central Florida including Orlando (32% of American tourists), the south-east with the Miami-Fort Lauderdale-West Palm Beach agglomeration (18%), the central west coast around Tampa and St. Petersburg (14%) and the south-western coast around Cape Coral and Fort Myers (10%). At the county level, five counties attract almost 55% of all tourists from within the USA: Orange (28.9%), Hillsborough (8.1%), Broward (6.4%), Miami-Dade (5.9%), Duval (4.3%) (FDOT, 2012, pp. 3-12). Analyzing tourist flows is complicated by the extremely limited nature of the available statistics on interurban mobility in the USA, and particularly the total lack of surveys focusing on the travel habits of Floridians for tourism and recreational purposes. It is thus not possible to precisely quantify the origins of Floridian tourists, nor their destinations. This is a major constraint when it comes to examining the workings of Florida's tourism market, and taking tourist flows into consideration when analyzing transport projects. We can only offer the hypothesis that a new rail service connecting two major hubs of tourism (Miami and Orlando) could have an impact on the organization of internal flows of tourists within Florida.

15 The principal components of Florida's tourism industry (*cf.* figure 1) (Colburn & Dehaven-Smith, 2010) are as follows:

- Beaches: 63.4% of hotel and motel reservations are concentrated in beach resorts. The presence of numerous natural lagoons has been a boon for the coastal economy, as Florida has made the transition from a state associated with traditional maritime activities to a destination clearly focused on seaside tourism (Klein *et al.*, 2004; Klein and Osleeb, 2010; Onofri and Nunes, 2013). Florida's natural assets make it ideally suited to this kind of tourism (climate, sandy beaches, lagoons), with an attractively tropical image (sunshine, turquoise waters, white sands).
- Theme parks: central Florida is home to the world's largest concentration of theme parks. Six of the world's top ten most popular theme parks (in terms of visitor numbers) are found in the Orlando area.[13] The agency responsible for promoting tourism in Florida (VisitFlorida) estimates that 36% of tourists arriving from outside Florida travel to this central region, and that visiting a theme park is the primary motivation for more than half of them. Between now and 2030, annual visitor numbers are expected to exceed 150 million. This will make Orlando the USA's most-visited metropolis, ahead of New York, Chicago, Los Angeles and Las Vegas (FDOT, 2017, p. 6-12).

- Cruise ships: in 2016, over 15 million cruise passengers set sail from one of Florida's ports. Miami is the world's biggest cruise port, while three other Floridian ports serve as "feeding" and redistribution hubs: Port Canaveral (4.2 million passengers in 2016), Port Everglades (3.8 million) and the Port of Key West (0.7 million).
- Urban tourism: Miami is the primary destination for urban tourism, for its beaches but also for conferences and business meetings. There are also numerous attractions including a number of iconic Art Deco buildings and art galleries, and the city has a dynamic cultural scene. Three additional destinations are effectively tourist annexes of the Miami metropolis: nearby Miami Beach, a mecca for luxury beach tourism with its seaside skyscrapers; West Palm Beach, specializing in luxury tourism and yachting; the Keys archipelago, which, in addition to its villas and smaller luxury hotels, is very popular for sailing and diving–the city of Key West, at the end of the highway which connects the archipelago to the Miami metropolitan area, is a destination in its own right.

Figure 1. Tourism in Florida: A popular vacation destination for Americans



16 In its official communications and press releases, Brightline insist on the structural significance of creating a new rail line in this heavily-frequented tourist destination, connecting Florida's major beach resorts—Miami and West Palm Beach—with Orlando, the theme park capital. This new service could become a major tourist route for Florida, firstly for Florida residents who travel within the state for their holidays, secondly for American tourists visiting from outside Florida, and also for foreign tourists thanks to its connection to Orlando's international airport. In the second section of this article, we will look in closer detail at the key characteristics of this rail project, and the actors involved.

2. The Brightline project: A rail line which aims to become the backbone of Florida's tourism sector

A project which describes itself as entirely privately-funded: Who are the stakeholders?

17 The Brightline project[14] broke ground in mid-2015, and the first section of line (Miami-West Palm Beach) was inaugurated in late 2017. The project is led by Florida East Coast Industries LLC (FECI), a major real estate group which owns the rail infrastructure between Miami and the Treasure Coast on which the Brightline trains will run. The company's activities are split between four main branches: Flagler (commercial real estate), Flagler Global Logistics (integrated logistical chains), Parallel Infrastructure (rail management) and All Aboard Florida (intercity train lines). Brightline is a high-speed intercity train service which will ultimately connect four cities—Miami, Fort Lauderdale, West Palm Beach, Orlando—using 312 kilometers of existing rail lines. Only the final stretch from the Treasure Coast up to Orlando will require new infrastructure, a total of 64 kilometers of track (Schorung, 2019). According to FECI, the service will run at an average of 170 km/hour between Miami and Orlando. The line will have three city-center stations (Miami, Fort Lauderdale, West Palm Beach), thus firmly anchoring the service within the vast Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) of Miami. However, the choice of location for the Orlando terminus is entirely different. The company has opted not to create a new train station in the center of Orlando, but instead to build a station within the new terminal currently under construction at Orlando International Airport (All Aboard Florida, 2015, pp. 1-1-1-4).[15] Air-rail intermodal transfer has thus been prioritized. We might advance two hypotheses to explain this choice: a decision to prioritize tourists over interregional travelers; and a desire to avoid building a new railway line into central Orlando, which would have considerably increased the overall cost of the project–Brightline does not own any existing infrastructure within the city, where the only current line is a private freight line used by national carrier Amtrak. This new rail line is part of a commercial strategy to diversify the activities of the parent company which is based on three pillars: mobility by offering a new mode of travel between Miami and Fort Lauderdale and then to Orlando; tourism, since the network serves three major tourist regions of Florida and deploys commercial offers in connection with the tourism and events sectors; urban and real estate development through land and real estate development projects in the surrounding area.

18 At time of writing, the company plans to operate sixteen services daily between Miami and Orlando, with one train per hour in each direction throughout the day. The planned journey time between Miami and Orlando is 3 hours and 10 minutes, 1 hour 50 minutes between West Palm Beach and Orlando and 1 hour 20 minutes between West Palm Beach and Miami. Three different speeds of travel have been envisaged: a top speed of 200 km/h on the Orlando-Cocoa section of the line,[16] a top speed of 175 km/h between Cocoa and West Palm Beach, and a top speed of 125 km/h between West Palm Beach and Miami. The service will actually use two different types of line. The Orlando to Cocoa line will be a new infrastructure specifically designed for passenger trains, with no level crossings; this means that the trains will be able to travel at greater speeds than elsewhere on the line. The Cocoa to Miami line is a former freight line which is being modernized to handle both freight convoys and passenger

trains. The modernization work will also serve to increase the average speed of freight trains on this route, thus boosting the capacity of the line, despite the fact that train paths will now be shared with the new passenger service (Briginshaw, 2016; All Aboard Florida, 2017, pp. 3-60).

19 This project is innovative in terms of both its financial and its organizational structure. FECI is the parent company supervising the implementation of this new transportation service, while also retaining responsibility for rail freight operations and activities connected with local development and promotion. The project was initially known as All Aboard Florida, a name which has been gradually abandoned and replaced by "Brightline" in official documentation and for commercial purposes. Nonetheless, Brightline is not actually a branch of FECI. If FECI had pursued such a structure, the company would have been directly financially responsible in the event that the Brightline project should fail. In reality, Brightline is operated by three subsidiary companies of which FECI is the majority shareholder: the first is AAF Holdings LLC, which owns the physical assets (rolling stock, land around the stations), the second is AAF Operations Holdings LLC, which handles the general supervision of the group's projects, and the third is AAF Operations LLC, responsible for the operational and financial dimensions of the project. This seemingly complex structure actually allows FECI to retain ownership of the infrastructure–the modernized line between Miami and Cocoa and the new infrastructure being built between Cocoa and Orlando–while also protecting the parent company from financial losses and the potential fall-out if Brightline should prove to be a commercial failure (Saginor and Dumbaugh, 2018, p. 34). In order to finance the necessary investments, and with the approval of the United States Department of Transportation, AAF Operations has raised 1.75 billion dollars in private activity bonds (PAB). These bonds are tax free and managed by the Florida Development Finance Corporation (FDFC), an agency delegated by the State of Florida to stimulate economic development. Jesse Saginor and Eric Dumbaugh (2018), in their initial analysis of the project, point out that details on how these bonds will eventually be amortized and paid back remain vague.

20 In summary, this is a passenger transportation project using a pre-existing privately-owned line and being developed thanks to private investment–the only assistance received from the State of Florida is the mechanism allowing the PABs to be considered tax-exempt. In this manner, Brightline has got round the strong political and societal opposition in Florida to projects involving substantial public investment in infrastructure other than highways, as well as the absence of public funding for intercity passenger rail services (Schorung, 2019). This leaves the company with total freedom over its commercial strategy and rail services, as well as its building and real estate strategy for the stations and surrounding areas. Major public-sector stakeholders (the federal government, the State of Florida) have only marginal involvement in the project: they retain control over the regulatory framework which governs transport projects, for example in terms of the preliminary environmental studies required; they also control the fiscal facilitation mechanism used by the project. Local public-sector stakeholders, particularly city and county authorities, also have peripheral involvement with the project as a whole, largely in matters relating to road networks and minor adjustments to public spaces in the vicinity of the stations. The body responsible for public transport in the Miami region, the South Florida Regional Transportation Authority, worked with Brightline to allow the metropolitan rail service to reach Miami Central Station. With these exceptions, the public sector is not involved

in this private rail project. As a result, there is little interconnection between this new service and other public transport services at the metropolitan or state level (Schorung, 2019).

A constantly evolving project whose focus on tourism is becoming more pronounced

21 Upon launching, the service was an immediate commercial success, with passenger numbers exceeding the company's initial targets. In Q1 2018, when the service was partially operational between Miami and West Palm Beach, Brightline trains transported 17,800 passengers in January, 24,100 in February and 32,900 in March. Brightline offers two types of ticket: "*select*" (first class) and "*smart*" (second class). For the West Palm Beach-Fort Lauderdale services, prices are set at between 10 and 15 dollars in *smart* class and 20 dollars for a *select* seat. For West Palm Beach-Miami, tickets cost around 20 dollars in *smart* and 30 dollars in *select* (Broadt, 2018a). In 2018, the first full year of operation, the Brightline service transported almost 600,000, despite the fact that MiamiCentral and the Miami-West Palm Beach service only became operational in May of that year (TNM Staff, 2019). In 2019, passenger numbers exceeded 900,000 (Wile, 2020). The company's promotional materials are aimed at tourists, but also intercity travelers and commuters within the Miami-West Palm Beach metropolitan area. At the time of writing, no information is available regarding the socio-demographic composition of passengers nor the nature of their journeys (length, frequency, demand, user requirements etc.). It seems entirely possible that, in the long term, this private service may play a major role in satisfying the day-to-day demand for transport services for commuters.

22 The company's directors insist that the whole service, all the way up to Orlando, should be on line in the first half of 2021.[17] In order to finance the second phase of the project, from West Palm Beach to the international airport in Orlando, the company has submitted a request to issue further tax-free bonds to the tune of 1.15 billion dollars (Sorentrue, 2017; Spear, 2017). As a result of these plans, a legal battle ensued between Brightline and the Florida Development Finance Corporation, on one side, and the counties of Martin and Indian River and the CARE FL citizens' group on the other. The latter parties aimed to block the extension of the service to Orlando. They opposed the project on several grounds: first among them was the safety of the new rail service–since early 2018 several fatal accidents have occurred as a result of pedestrians not paying due attention near railway lines as trains enter the cities; they also cited the impossibility of using public money to fund private activities; finally, they argued that federal environmental impacts should take the opinions of local government bodies into account, seeking permission from all counties concerned—three counties on the Treasure Coast (Indian River County, St. Lucie County, Martin County) have formally expressed their opposition to the project (Rosenburg, 2018). In August 2018, the court rejected all of the plaintiffs' objections and the FDFC was able to approve Brightline's bond issue request (Ostrowski, 2018).

23 The original project, launched in 2015, is already being expanded in new directions. Brightline has launched a call for tender for the construction of a new station on the Treasure Coast. The company has invited four cities to submit proposals–Stuart, Fort Pierce, Sebastian, Vero Beach–but only Fort Pierce appears to meet Brightline's criteria

(Gardner, 2018). Two new intermediate stations are being planned in Martin and Brevard counties. Brightline and the city of Boca Raton have agreed terms for the construction of a new station which will further enhance the service's coverage of the Miami metropolitan area (Solomon, 2019). A plan to extend the line up to Tampa was already in the works, even as Phase 2 to Orlando had only just been confirmed. In June 2018, Governor Rick Scott announced that the State might be interested in renting land in the vicinity of Interstate 4 with a view to developing a high-speed rail corridor. Brightline has since tabled plans to create a line running alongside I-4 between Orlando and Tampa. The rights to this land are currently held by the Central Florida Expressway Authority, under the aegis of the State Transport Department. Patrick Goddard, President of Brightline, advanced two major arguments in favor of this new infrastructure: the opportunity to connect one of Florida's biggest tourism hubs (Miami) with the state's second most populous city (Tampa); and the fact that the Tampa Bay area is one of the most economically and demographically dynamic regions in the whole country (Broadt, 2018b). On 29 October 2019, Brightline announced a new extension of its service to the port of Miami, specifically its cruise terminal. A deal has been reached between Miami-Dade County and the company for the construction of the new "Brightline PortMiami Station." The idea is to provide cruise passengers arriving in Miami (the world's busiest cruise port) with direct access to an intercity transport solution.[18] A similar extension which would stop at Disney World, near Orlando, is now the subject of discussions between Brightline and Disney. The latest extension projects (Port of Miami, Disney World) underline a new attitude of large tourism companies towards the Brightline project. The analysis of the chronology of the project shows a clear lack of interest on the part of these large companies in relation to this railway line, the initial stations of which are not located near major tourist facilities. Florida's transport system is very well suited to the automotive character of tourist activities: major facilities, amusement parks, shopping centers, cruise terminals are served by an efficient network of highways, by huge car parks. and by a highly developed car rental sector. The automotive system aims to make travel by car as easy as possible. These extension projects under discussion would testify to a shared desire between those responsible for Brightline and private tourism operators to offer tourists a new mode of travel. An unknown remains concerning the last mile of trips: tourists arriving by train at a Brightline station, for example near Disneyworld, would need a car to get around the parks area and the metropolitan area of Orlando. According to data from the Florida Department of Transportation, nearly 45% of domestic tourists arriving by plane in Florida rent a car from a rental company within the airport.

3. What is the territorial scope of the Brightline project? A rail corridor in a territory whose environment, public image and mobility practices have all been shaped by automobile and air travel

Brightline is a new arrival in a territory designed for automobiles

24 Florida is a state heavily dependent upon automobiles: almost 90% of Floridians commuted to and from work in cars in 2018 (79.8% in their own cars, 8% in car-pooling schemes) with only 2.2% using public transport (3.8% in the Miami-Fort Lauderdale-

West Palm Beach metropolitan area, just 1.9% in the Orlando-Kissimmee-Sanford metropolitan area). This high proportion of automobile travel has remained stable over time (79.9% of commuters took their own cars and 9% car-shared in 2010) (FDOT, 2018, pp. 1-2). With regard to travel within the state, the dependency on carbon-heavy modes of transport is even stronger: the number of vehicle-kilometers has increased by 4.3% since 2013, while Amtrak passenger numbers have fallen by 3.3% over the same period (FDOT, 2015, pp. 4-6). Mobility habits and tourist travel in Florida are very heavily dependent on modes of transport with high carbon emissions (*cf.* figure 2): almost 50% of tourists arrive by plane, with almost 48% arriving by car (FDOT, 2015, pp. 7-8). Furthermore, almost half of all US tourists who arrive by plane then rent a car to get around during their stay. Along the route served by the Brightline project, there are already two federal highways (I-95 and the Florida Turnpike) which run up the east coast of Florida from Miami to Orlando. Traffic on these two major roads is expected to grow by 52% between 2007 and 2040. Almost all sections of the road will have reached maximum capacity by 2040. There are several reasons for this saturation: the substantial increase in both the local population and visitor numbers, and the scarcity of room for maneuver in terms of further expanding the highway network (All Aboard Florida, 2015, p. 2-4).

25 Florida's busiest international airports are:

- Orlando International (MCO): 40.1 million passengers in 2019 (five main airlines: Southwest 24.7%, Delta 14.8%, American Airlines 13%, Spirit 12.8% and JetBlue 11.8%);
- Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International (FLL): 26.8 million passengers in 2019 (predominantly travelling with three budget airlines: Spirit 23.5%, JetBlue 21.4% and Southwest 21%);
- Miami International Airport (MIA): 21 million passengers in 2019 (two main airlines: American Airlines with a 68% market share, and Delta with 11.7%);
- Tampa International (TPA): 19 million passengers in 2019 (three main airlines: Southwest 31.8%, Delta 17.1%, American Airlines 16.2%)[19].

26 Almost 80% of tourists arriving by plane land at one of four airports: Orlando, Miami, Fort Lauderdale or Tampa. There are more than thirty flights everyday between Orlando International Airport and the airports of West Palm Beach/Fort Lauderdale and Miami. Florida's internal air travel market is modest in scale–no Floridian airport features in the top ten domestic destinations from either Miami or Orlando–but there are still more than sixty direct flights every week between Miami and Orlando.

27 Florida does not have a high-speed rail infrastructure connecting it to its neighboring states, nor a high-speed or very high-speed line within the state. The number of Americans who use Amtrak long distance services to travel to Florida is negligible (FDOT, 2012, pp. 3-4; Schorung, 2019). Amtrak only offers three such long-distance services (Silver Star, Silver Meteor, Auto Train), which are severely limited both in terms of their coverage and the number of trains available—an average of two return journeys per day. These rail services have had a very limited impact on Florida's mobility landscape: in 2018, Amtrak services in Florida carried 885,000 passengers; the Amtrak station in Miami saw fewer than 64,000 passengers over the whole year, while Orlando served around 124,000 travelers. And yet, a brief look at the most popular rail journeys reveals that there is indeed a potential demand for train travel within Florida. Of the five most popular destinations out of Miami, four are in Florida (Tampa, Orlando,

Lakeland, Winter Haven), while three of the top destinations out of Orlando are within the state (Tampa, West Palm Beach, Miami) (NARP, 2019).

Figure 2. Florida's mobility habits are not conducive to train travel

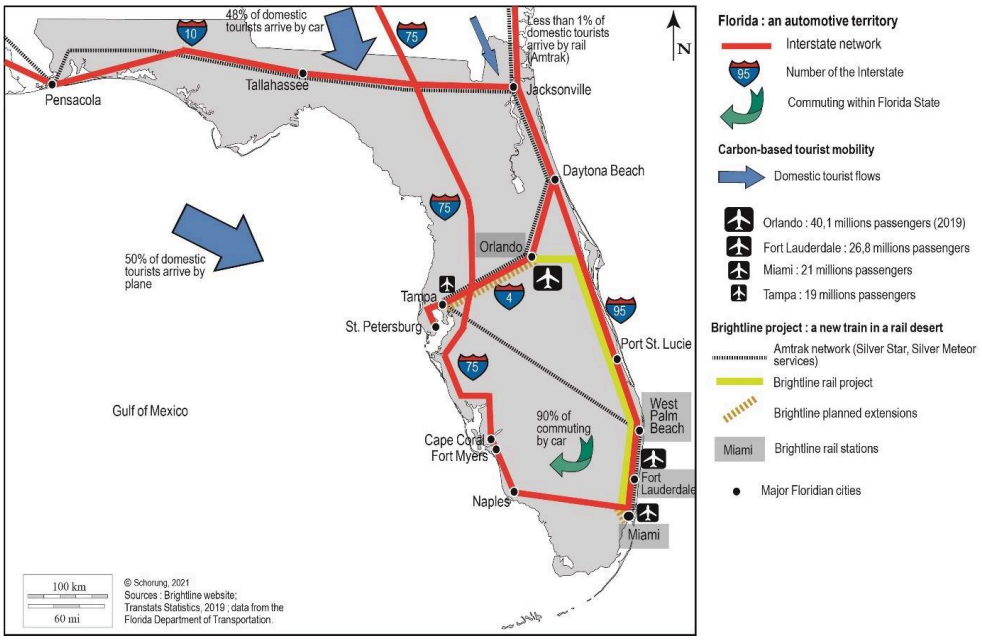


Table 2. What position to adopt in terms of competition with other modes of transport? Modal comparison on the basis of journey times and cost

Route	Train (Amtrak)	Bus	Airplane	Car
LONG JOURNEYS				
Journey time (in minutes)				
Miami-Orlando	360	300	60	285
Fort Lauderdale-Orlando	300	270	60	255
West Palm Beach-Orlando	225	235	60	220
Cost of journey (in dollars)				
Miami-Orlando	55	50	150	50
Fort Lauderdale-Orlando	50	50	100	45
West Palm Beach-Orlando	40	45	100	40
SHORT JOURNEYS				
Journey time (in minutes))				
Miami-Fort Lauderdale	45	55	/	50

Miami-West Palm Beach	105	115	/	105
Fort Lauderdale-West Palm Beach	60	85	/	75
Cost of journey (in dollars)				
Miami-Fort Lauderdale	5	10	/	10
Miami-West Palm Beach	10	15	/	20
Fort Lauderdale-West Palm Beach	10	15	/	10

Source: FECI, 2015, pp. 60-61

28 FECI has conducted research to identify the potential market for its Brightline service, and the modal share it is capable of achieving (*cf.* table 2). According to these projections, Brightline should be able to capture over 10% of the long-distance market (tourists and non-tourists)—cars will account for 88.2%, with air travel covering 0.8%, coaches 0.6% and Amtrak 0.1%. The majority of Brightline's passengers (60%) would come from a modal shift away from cars, plus induced demand of around 20% (FECI, 2015, pp. 117-118). The remainder would be diverted from air and car travel in a secondary manner. The completion of Phase 2 to Orlando thus appears to be an essential priority in order to ensure that the overall project is profitable and reaches its projected passenger numbers. It is interesting to note that the company considers breaking into the short-distance travel market to be a more difficult prospect. In the short term they expect that travelling by car will retain its quasi-monopoly, with Brightline capturing a modal share of just 1.2%.

The new Brightline stations: tourism strategy, symbolic presence and catalyst for real estate development projects

29 As well as being innovative in terms of its financial structure and governance, the Brightline project requires the construction of three new train stations (Miami, Fort Lauderdale, West Palm Beach) and a connection to the new terminal at Orlando International Airport. The first three stations, particularly Miami, are essential to Brightline's property and real estate strategy (Schorung, 2020).

30 MiamiCentral station is located in downtown Miami near the city's main business district and the famous waterfront, one of its major tourist attractions. This real estate development and urbanization operation spans six blocks and includes multiple components: the train terminal, which will house three rail services (Brightline, Metrorail, Metromover) and include a sizeable commercial center, two high-rise residential blocks and two office buildings rising to over 30 storeys, currently known as 2MiamiCentral and 3MiamiCentral.[20] The development will include some 800 residential units, almost 17,000 m² of retail space (including Central Fare, the city's largest food hall spanning almost 4,600 m²), and just under 28,000 m² of office space. The residential units, some of which are already on the market, fall into the luxury category.[21] Brightline is also building a new skyscraper christened One MiamiCentral, with construction commencing in 2019. This flagship building will stand some 300 m tall,

marking a new addition to the Miami Downtown skyline and housing 280 luxury residential units, 250 hotel rooms and almost 56,000 m² of office space.[22] A fourth building just to the north of the station will contain 17,600 m² of office space and a large car park, while the fifth and final tower will be located to the west of the main station building and contain retail premises on the ground floor with twelve floors of offices above. Taken as a whole, the project will create around 93,000 m² of professional and commercial spaces, along with 1,300 new residential units (apartments and condominiums) (*cf.* figure 3).

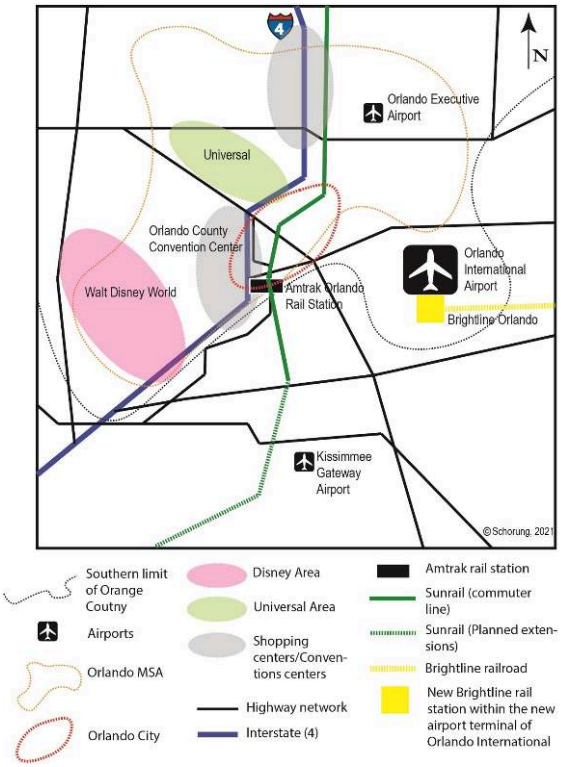
Figure 3. Real estate opportunities connected with the new Brightline stations

Source: The top two images show real estate opportunities connected with MiamiCentral; the bottom two are adjacent to the West Palm Beach station. These architect's projections (and one actual photo) are taken from the website www.gobrightline.com (accessed 29 June 2020).

31 The Brightline service also has two new, modestly-sized intermediate stations at Fort Lauderdale and West Palm Beach. The Brightline station is located in the center of Fort Lauderdale, a beach resort with a population of 130,000 in the vicinity of the Miami urban area. In fact, the station is right in the commercial and cultural center of the city, within easy reach of the Museum of Discovery & Science, the F.A.T Village Arts District and the Broward Center for the Performing Arts. It is also right next to the Broward County Bus Station, and two blocks away from the SunTrolley hub (trolleybus service connecting the city center to Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International airport). Here again we can observe the lack of effort to connect and coordinate the state's different transport networks. The Fort Lauderdale Tri-Rail Station is, by comparison, a while away from the city center. There is a clear separation between the two stations. The spatial configuration of transport networks is broadly similar in West Palm Beach. The new Brightline station is located right in the city center, a short walk from the Government Center, the Civic Center and the waterfront. It offers no connection to the Tri-Rail network, nor is it within easy reach of the city's bus (Palm Tram Bus) or trolleybus (Palm Trolley) services. Last but not least, the final Brightline station which should extend the existing rail service to Orlando by 2020-2021, is located within a new terminal of the city's airport, illustrating the priority afforded to air-rail connections.

32 The new Brightline stations serve as showcases for this new passenger rail service, and this includes the stations of Fort Lauderdale and West Palm Beach which are not on the same scale as the others. Their striking architecture is designed to promote the project and make it a distinctive feature of the region. The two main Brightline stations (Miami, Orlando) thus enjoy a favorable position within their respective territories (tourist mobility, proximity to major tourist attractions), despite their shared lack of a connection to the main rail networks and the failure to take multi-modal transport into consideration (*cf.* figure 4).

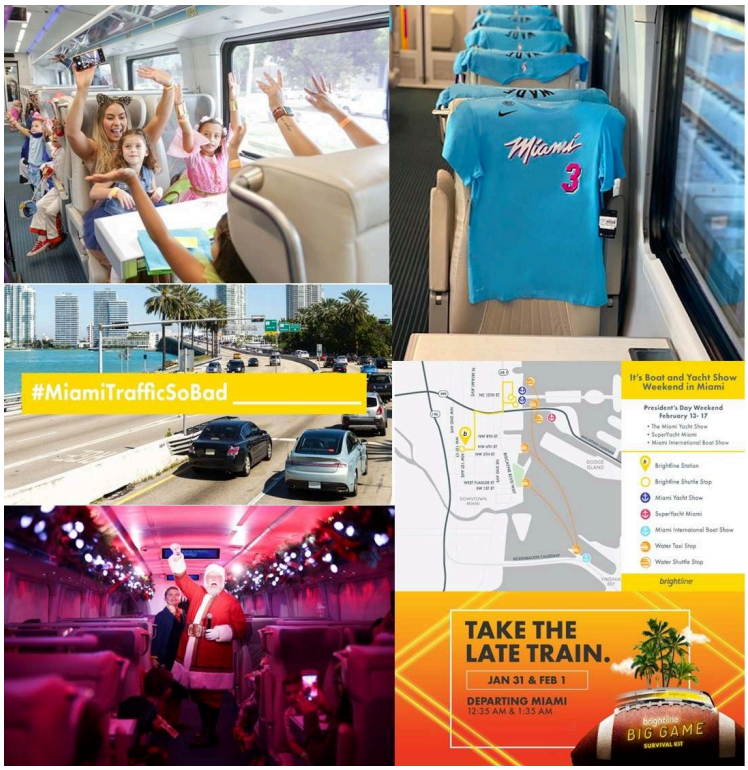
Figure 4. The territorial positioning of the Brightline stations: proximity to major tourist attractions, the Orlando example



A potential reinvention of Florida's public image?

33 Tourism is universally acknowledged to be a driver of territorial development, a tool for promoting natural, cultural and historical assets, and a powerful influence on individual and collective perceptions of destinations. Over the past two centuries, rail networks have given rise to new forms of tourism (Gay, 2006). The USA has a certain tradition of combining tourism strategies with transport services. Rail operators doubled as travel agencies for visitors to the American west in the early 20th century. Yosemite National Park was created in 1864, and by 1907 was accessible via a railway line operated by Southern Pacific; by 1901 the Santa Fe Railroad Co. had a passenger service to the Grand Canyon, where the company had constructed the first hotel. Advertisements from this era bear witness to the tourism-focused strategies of the rail operators as they sought to capitalize not so much on the benefits of train travel, but instead on the attractions and imagery of the American west.

Figure 5. Brightline's digital communication: Constructing a new public image for rail travel



These images (©GoBrightline) were published on the Brightline Twitter account. Digital communication via social media has, by and large, replaced traditional poster advertising. These Twitter posts are designed to convey the company's marketing strategy, but also to create a new image of rail travel focused on tourism, festivities and entertainment, family outings and the comfort of travelling by train.

34 At time of writing, a number of companies (such as Brightline) and rail operators (including national rail company Amtrak) are using their advertising to promote a new visual vocabulary of themes and representations, with a view to creating a new public image for train travel in general, and particularly the tourist experience of travelling by rail. Brightline is using its digital communication efforts (website, social media) to promote this new image–the photographs posted on the Brightline Twitter account (*cf.* figure 5) are primarily focused on the experiential qualities of train travel, on cultural and sporting events accessible by train, and on sharing often irreverent takes on the difficulty of travelling by car in the state's increasingly congested metropolitan areas. As part of this marketing strategy, Brightline hopes to promote its train services at cultural and seasonal events (e.g., special events connected with Halloween or Christmas), sporting events (for example the home games of local basketball team Miami Heat) and professional conferences and exhibitions (the Miami Boat & Yacht Show, for example). Other companies, such as the Alaska Railroad Corporation, have gone as far as organizing integrated package deals offering transport, accommodation and excursions (Schorung, 2016). In the long term, this might also be an option for Brightline.

Conclusion

35 The Brightline project is an innovative attempt to develop a high-speed rail service led by a private company which owns the accompanying rail infrastructure. In their public declarations, Brightline insist on the structurally-significant nature of this new line, running through such a tourist-friendly territory and offering a connection between Florida's most popular beach destinations–Miami and West Palm Beach–and Orlando, the world's theme park capital. In the context of this project, the new stations are considered as assets contributing to the visibility and profitability of the economic model of the future service, above and beyond their architectural quality.

36 The Brightline rail project is an example of an entirely new infrastructure and a new intercity transport service being created in a territory which is already heavily developed and where the tourism industry is highly advanced. Trains, not even high-speed trains, do not generate tourism, but they can intensify and reinforce the polarization of tourism around key transport nodes. Brightline appears to have fully appreciated the potential impact of high-speed rail on tourism, structuring its commercial strategy around this potential. Perhaps the most obvious expression of this strategy is the company's decision to create an air-rail hub at Orlando international airport rather than build a station in the middle of the city. The construction of these new stations, particularly those in Miami, West Palm Beach and Fort Lauderdale, is based on the assumption that existing tourist hubs will be reinforced by such an addition. This rail corridor will connect the most popular tourist destinations in central and eastern Florida, and in doing so hopes to boost the tourism sector—thanks to improved accessibility, a larger and more diverse selection of holiday options, the development of new combined services, and a new approach to the articulation between local and regional travel. In order to further examine and monitor the progress of this developing project (it will not be completed until 2021 at the earliest), it would be interesting to study the impact of this new intercity transport service on the number of tourists visiting the cities along the line, looking at the composition of this tourist clientele—regional, national or international—with an eye on potential partnerships between Brightline and private companies in the tourism sector. Furthermore, it would be interesting to conduct surveys with passengers to analyze the weight of tourism in the commercial activity of the Brightline service and the trajectories and practices of users' mobility.

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NOTES

1. A rail system can be considered "high-speed" when its average operating speed is between 150 km/h and 200 km/h. However, true "high-speed" status is generally reserved for trains rolling on dedicated infrastructure and achieving speeds of 250 km/h and more, or trains travelling at over 200 km/h on conventional tracks (Ruggeri and Schorung, 2017).

2. Two previous attempts to create high-speed rail services in Florida ended in failure: the first attempt collapsed in 1991 due to lack of funding, while a second project was scuppered in 2004 by a sudden change of heart by Republican governor Jeb Bush (Schorung, 2019, p. 71-172). In June 2019, Arnaud Passalacqua presented a thesis for his Accreditation to Supervise Research (HDR) qualification entitled *Ce que porte le transport (XIXe-XXIe siècles). Une illusion au pays du rêve : le TGV et la Florida (années 1980) [The import of transport (19th-20th centuries). An illusion in dreamland: high-speed rail in 1980s Florida]*; 3 volumes (unpublished), Université Paris-Est, Marne-la-Vallée (France)], in which he unpicks the complex history of attempts to create a high-speed rail service in Florida.

3. All of the provisional dates and figures cited herein were announced before the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic. It seems highly likely that some of these dates and forecasts will be revised by the operator during 2022.

4. "Artificial tourism" refers to the reconstruction of real attractions or the creation of artificial, utopian realities to create attractive, festive, convivial and idealised spaces. It represents a material and symbolic transformation of public space, smoothing away any rough edges, any differences, indeed any trace of the "outside world", in order to create an apparently sterile and uniform environment (Garnier, 2008). Theme parks provide the most obvious example of artificial tourism.

5. The FEC Railway is the ancestor of the present FECI and still owns this rail line, on which FECI's specialist subsidiary operates the Brightline train service. The current high-speed rail project is in this respect a continuation of Flagler's legacy. The Flagler Company stopped all its passenger services by 1968, after more than twenty years of difficult financial conditions and unprofitable passenger services.

6. *Spring break* is a brief holiday of one or two weeks between academic semesters. Traditionally, many college students travel to beach or mountain destinations to make the most of this break.

7. Since the turn of the two millennium, these two major rivals have continued to expand their parks and open new attractions. In 2016, Universal Studios launched an entire new park dedicated to the Harry Potter franchise. In the meantime, other attractions have sought to reinvent and develop their appeal (Marineland, Orlando Aquarium). In July 2017 the Orlando region saw the opening of a new waterpark visible far and wide, thanks to the presence of a 30-metre-tall replica volcano at its center. This information comes from the website of VisitFlorida.

8. All financial figures in this article are given in American dollars. All data in this section are from VisitFlorida, a non-profit corporation created as a public-private partnership by the Florida Legislature in 1996, and the EDR (Office of Economic and Demographic Research) of the State of Florida.

9. Florida's economy has also grown, excluding tourism, thanks to agriculture (plantation crops, citrus fruits, greenhouse crops), the phosphate industry, the space sector and real estate. The phenomenon of heliotropism allows Florida to attract many American retirees, in permanent or temporary residence (more than one million retirees settle in Florida during the winter). Real estate activity in various forms (office parks, towers, shopping centers, condominiums) has profoundly transformed the economy and landscape of Florida's major cities (Colburn and DeHaven-Smith, 2010; Mayda, 2013).

10. The Covid-19 pandemic has led to a collapse of tourism in Florida: 87 million tourists in 2020, 122 million in 2021. The outlook for 2022 suggests that tourist numbers could return to pre-pandemic levels.

11. This information is taken from the website of VisitFlorida: https://www.visitflorida.org/resources/research/, accessed 21 May 2020.

12. This information is taken from the website of VisitFlorida: https://www.visitflorida.org/, accessed 14 June 2019; see also: https://www.visitflorida.org/media/30679/florida-visitor-economic-large-impact-study.pdf, accessed 21 May 2020.

13. The biggest theme parks are (visitor numbers for 2019): Disney World Magic Kingdom (20.9 million visitors), Animal Kingdom (13.8 million), Epcot (12.4 million), Hollywood Studios (11.4 million), Universal Studios (10.9 million), Islands of Adventure (10.3 million), Sea World Orlando (4.5 million), Busch Gardens-Tampa (4.1 million) (AECOM/TEA, 2019).

14. In this article I use the name of the company–Brightline–to refer to the commercial identity of the rail service. For a spell, Brightline's directors had a marketing and branding cooperation agreement in place with major multinational Virgin and its CEO Richard Branson. For a period of around a year, starting in May 2019, the commercial identity of Brightline trains was actually "Virgin Trains USA" (Crooks, 2018). In August 2020, Brightline suddenly announced the end of this collaboration with no official explanation. The split could be connected to a failure on Virgin's part to make good on their investment promises (Associated Press, 2020).

15. All of this information is available on the Brightline website: https://gobrightline.com/about-us/ and the FECI website: http://feci.com/companies-all-aboard-florida.html (accessed 20 June 2021).

16. Cocoa is a town near the Treasure Coast which marks the terminus of the Brightline rail corridor.

17. This provisional schedule was announced pre-Covid-19, it seems likely that work on the infrastructure up to Orlando will be delayed.

18. See the Brightline press release: https://press.gobrightline.com/showPressRelease/100066903, accessed 15 November 2019.

19. See the figures published by the Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS): https://www.transtats.bts.gov/airports.asp?pn=1, accessed 26 August 2020.

20. Information taken from the website: http://miamicentral.com/welcome, accessed 17 December 2018.

21. A. Gardner, “MiamiCentral Housing is Coming and It’s Decidedly Non-Luxury”, *Curbed Miami*, 11 November 2015.
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ABSTRACTS

The state of Florida is a major hub of the US tourist economy, particularly renowned for its beaches and its extensive commercial and leisure infrastructure (not least its many theme parks). The state is a popular destination for Americans, with US citizens accounting for ¾ of all visitors. Florida is also one of the US states with the highest rate of dependency on carbon-heavy modes of transport (cars and airplanes), for both everyday and occasional forms of mobility. In this unlikely context, a private company by the name of Brightline has been working since 2015 to create a rail link between Miami and Orlando, with the first section of the line (Miami-West Palm Beach) inaugurated in late 2017. This project is original in more than one respect: it is being led by a private company, with no initial public investment and without the involvement of any government bodies; it also runs through a territory which, in theory, has an aversion to train travel and where tourist mobility is virtually synonymous with car and air travel. My objective in this article is three-fold: to examine the key role played by transport in the emergence of Florida as a *tourist mecca*; to analyse the key features of the Brightline project and its relation to the tourism sector; and to weigh up the territorial potential of this new line and its capacity to change established ideas and mobility patterns among tourists visiting Florida. I draw several conclusions from this analysis: the Brightline project has the potential to capture substantial tourist flows thanks to its proximity to many tourist attractions; tourism has been systematically prioritised in the company’s strategy and communication efforts; stations have an important role to play in attracting passengers; and mobility practices in Florida are evolving.

L’État de Floride est un pôle majeur de l’économie touristique des États-Unis, particulièrement connu pour son tourisme balnéaire et pour ses nombreux équipements commerciaux et récréatifs (parcs à thème notamment), et prisé des Étatsuniens qui représentent plus des trois quarts des visiteurs. La Floride est par ailleurs l’un des États américains où les mobilités, quotidiennes comme occasionnelles, sont les plus dépendantes de modes de transport carbonés (automobile et aérien). C’est dans ce contexte que l’entreprise Brightline développe depuis 2015 un projet de liaison ferroviaire entre Miami et Orlando, dont le premier tronçon (Miami-West Palm Beach) a été inauguré à la fin de l’année 2017. Ce projet est original à plus d’un titre : il émane d’une entreprise privée et ne dépend ni d’un investissement public initial ni d’un quelconque acteur public ; il s’inscrit dans un territoire *a priori* défavorable au train, où les mobilités touristiques se font quasi exclusivement en voiture ou en avion. Cet article a un triple objectif : présenter le rôle moteur des transports dans la construction de la Floride comme *tourist mecca* ; analyser les caractéristiques du projet Brightline et son implication dans le domaine touristique ; discuter du potentiel territorial de cette nouvelle ligne ferroviaire et de sa capacité à modifier les imaginaires et les mobilités touristiques floridiennes. Il en ressort plusieurs éléments : le potentiel du projet Brightline dans la captation de flux touristiques importants de par la proximité avec de nombreuses activités touristiques ; la prise en compte systématique de

la dimension touristique dans la stratégie et la communication de l'entreprise ; le rôle des gares dans cette stratégie de captation de flux et d'évolution des pratiques de mobilité en Floride.

INDEX

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Access to Labor and Leisure in Cars: Early Black Motorists' Automotivity in Miami

L'accès au travail et aux loisirs en voiture : les premiers automobilistes noirs à Miami

Helen A. Gibson

AUTHOR'S NOTE

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1 Automobiles significantly changed access to leisure for Americans at the beginning of the twentieth century, spawning interest in and growth of resort towns like Miami and West Palm Beach, Florida. Florida was one of the most dangerous places for Black Americans at the time; white Americans lynched Black Americans at the highest rate of any state in the South between 1890 and 1930 (McLeod, 2019, p. 29). The occupation of chauffeur was a site of both class conflict and anti-Black terror, shaping local touristic settings from the advent of driving along white supremacist lines. At stake was access to a commodity and a profession with an exhilarating potential to upend social, political and economic norms, remolding communities in ways that promised leisure for local Black motorists, chauffeurs, and vacationers.

2 Just as early-twentieth-century Miami can be posited as a cosmopolitan borderland region between Spanish, British, and American empires, the car itself operated as a

liminal site of subjectivity in which chauffeurs determined some parameters of their access to both work and leisure. The automobile—a material space of physical and emotional negotiation—helped transform Miami from a former Tequesta ancestral home and settler-colonial outpost into a site of consumption-oriented identities. I argue that Black chauffeurs in Miami were at the vanguard of efforts by local Black communities to create and claim pleasurable space and its attendant leisure via driving in a profoundly racist touristic climate.

State of Research and Methodology

3 To make the above argument, this article analyzes Black chauffeurs' pursuit of work and leisure in early-twentieth-century Miami. Three main contributions follow, expanding conversations within the field of tourism studies, the historiography of driving, and mobility studies. Within tourism studies, this article contributes an analysis of the important occupation of chauffeur. This analysis extends existing scholarship on the experiences of service workers in the leisure industry as well as a growing body of literature on the history of tourism and the history of racialization in Miami. Recent studies have highlighted both the binary practices of racialization experienced by Miami's Bahamian communities at the beginning of the twentieth century and the fluidity of identity in the 'Latinization' of Miami decades prior to the 1959 Cuban Revolution (McLeod, 2019; Capó Jr., 2017; Rose, 2015). Yet the important occupation of chauffeur and its contested character remain under-examined.

4 This article contributes to the historiography of driving and of labor, one of the first studies of the founding of Black chauffeurs' clubs, which operated across the United States at the beginning of the twentieth century as mini-unions. As a setting in which Black motorists' right to drive was deeply contested, Miami is one of the only examples of chauffeuring for Black motorists during the first two decades of the twentieth century to be referenced in multiple secondary sources (Bay, 2021; Castillo, 2000; George, 1979). Few studies to date have analyzed the occupation of chauffeur and the ways in which driving shaped Black Americans' access to leisure and work in the first two decades of the twentieth century (Bay, 2021; Borg, 2007). Analysis of chauffeuring in Miami, a city incorporated in 1896 in large part to facilitate white leisure via tourism, puts into relief class tensions and racialized semiotics of consumption within the space of the car. This case study of driving in Miami elucidates racialized, gendered, and classed meaning making in and around the leisure-oriented setting of cars in the first several decades of the automotive century.

5 Within mobility studies, this article establishes the space of the car as one that allowed the frequently simultaneous pursuit of both work and pleasure in driving. I foreground the practice of driving oneself, the significance of which Paul Gilroy has termed 'automotivity' (Gilroy, 2010). Unlike the word 'automobility,' which references the practice of driving a car, 'automotivity' emphasizes the personal agency inherent in the act of driving. Emphatically relevant to experiences of mobility and racialization, automotivity evokes the self-reflexive ethnography of Zora Neale Hurston, whose palimpsestic transposing of time, space, and 'spirit' frequently entailed the medium of driving, in Florida, and elsewhere (Brooks, 2021; Stewart, 2021; Hurston, 1945, 1935). Automotivity speaks to the profound "emotional and kinesthetic" significance of driving for Black motorists in "resisting and surviving White supremacy" (Alderman

et al., 2019, p. 10; Alderman and Inwood, 2014, p. 8). My analysis of the dual use of the car for labor and leisure departs from Paul Gilroy's portrayal of the car as a primarily pleasure-inducing commodity that implicates consumers in a straightforward political ontology and moral economy of consumption. This departure exposes a conventional political ontology of automobility as fraught and contestable.

6 To read about the history of driving in the first two decades of the twentieth-century United States is to encounter the erasure of Black drivers. This erasure has been posited within mobility studies by Michael Pesses as "an overall absence of true critical reflection within geographic and historical study and a production of 'white supremacy' [...]" (Pesses, 2017, p. 679; Berg, 2012). This production of white supremacy is especially significant in light of Paul Gilroy's positing of the private automobile as "a kind of *ur*-commodity lodged at the meeting point: the crossroads of moral and economic relations" (Gilroy, 2010, p. 13). Echoing myriad Black studies theorists, Gilroy writes of the "metaphysical potency of racism" and the general unwillingness of academics to feature histories of racism in ways that highlight mutually constitutive categories of difference (Gilroy, 2010, p. 73; Weheliye, 2014a, 2014b; Spillers, 2006). This frequently leads to analysis of space in which categories of racialization (e.g., 'white' and 'Black') violently forged in segregated settings are accepted as a given, and the vectors of time and space that actively contribute to the constitution and maintenance of these categories are under-examined. Highlighting the significance of racialization to the field of geography, Perry L. Carter argues, "differences between White and Black travel preferences, at least in the realm of leisure travel, are either superficial or are artifacts of the nation's racial history" (Carter, 2008, p. 267).

7 Scholars have only begun to investigate the 'metaphysical potency of racism' in driving and artifacts of racialization in cars at the beginning of the automotive century. Mia Bay is the first historian to analyze the driving experiences of Black motorists in the first two decades of the twentieth century as a central part of her examination of the history of Black mobility (Bay, 2021). Two of the most recognized historians of American automobility, James Flink and Cotten Seiler, implicitly posit driving by Black motorists as tangential, rather than foundational, to the practice of liberal 'democratic' motoring in the United States (Flink, 1988, 1975, 1970; Seiler, 2008). Legal historian Sarah Seo analyzes rates of car ownership and driving by Black Americans in the 1910s and 1920s as reported by the United States Census Bureau, finding the results inconclusive (Seo, 2019, p. 32). Gretchen Sorin and Candacy Taylor, authors of two groundbreaking, comprehensive histories of driving for members of Black American communities in the mid-twentieth century, do not address the experience of driving in the first several decades of the century in detail (Sorin, 2020; Taylor, 2020).

8 This article is structured in two parts: theoretical background and historical case study. I begin my analysis with a discussion of racialized (im)mobility and leisure in Florida and in the United States at large at the turn of the twentieth century. I then turn to analysis of the experience of automotivity for early Black motorists, many of whom were employed as chauffeurs. I establish the space of the car as one that allowed the frequently simultaneous pursuit of both work and pleasure in driving. I then put this analysis to a case study of early Black motorists' access to labor and leisure in cars in Miami, for which I analyze articles from two historical newspapers, the *Miami Herald* and the *Miami Metropolis*.[1] Situating the start of my analysis with the patenting of automobiles in 1895 and the incorporation of Miami in 1896, I conclude the article in

1920. By 1920, Black motorists in Miami represented close to half of all drivers in the city, up from an almost total prohibition on Black automotivity in Miami just a few years prior (Castillo, 2000, p. 97-98). Analyzing Black chauffeurs' efforts to claim space in cars in Miami during this time period highlights the importance of driving for early Black motorists at large and the significance of the car as a site of labor and pleasure in otherwise violent white supremacist settings.

Racialized Mobility and Leisure around Ships, Trains and Cars

9 The pursuit of leisure in settler-colonial Florida prior to the twentieth century was largely delineated along racialized lines. Settler Floridians policed the semiosis (production of meaning via signs and symbols) of race via practices of terror in mobility-oriented settings. Nineteenth-century restrictions on Black mobility in Florida spoke to the profound capacity of the movement of sailors on ships from the Caribbean to alter local racialized subjectivities. White Floridians implemented terrorizing juridical restrictions like the Seaman Act of 1832, enacted in the aftermath of Nat Turner's rebellion in Southampton, Virginia in 1831. This law made the entry of 'free' Black people (such as Bahamian sailors) into Florida illegal and stipulated that the person seeking entry be sold into slavery for five years for the second alleged offense.[2] White Floridians practiced extralegal terror via lynching to undermine Black mobility to and within the state.

10 Restrictions on mobility were foundational to the continual production of racialized meaning across the United States during enslavement and afterwards. Elizabeth Stordeur Pryor writes of 'public conveyances' in the antebellum era, "To assert white authority in these spaces, stagecoach drivers, steamship captains, railroad conductors, and white passengers threatened, insulted, and forcibly ousted colored travelers to insist that access was white-only domain" (Pryor, 2016, p. 45). Black Americans in the late-nineteenth century and beyond experienced continued legal racial segregation in public spaces, a practice sanctioned by the U.S. Supreme Court in the 1896 decision *Plessy v. Ferguson*. Black passengers at the turn of the twentieth century frequently reported train travel as humiliating. The experience of humiliation on public transportation is arguably the most persistent trope in the historiography of the Jim Crow era, from roughly 1896 to 1965 (Wells, 2014; Pickens, 1923; Du Bois, 1920, 1903). Humiliation was not merely personal; it was an intersubjective experience that made race real (Sorin, 2020; Bonilla-Silva, 2019; Holloway, 2013).

11 A powerful account of humiliation, leisure, and mobility comes from William Pickens, a prominent Black scholar, orator, and activist who wrote and spoke widely on the emotional terror of segregated train travel. Pickens frequently engaged in Black studies as a 'mode of knowledge production' while riding trains during his decades of employment as director of branches with the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (Weheliye, 2014b, p. 18). He wrote in typical fashion for *The Nation* in 1923:

> I sit in a Jim Crow as I write, between El Paso and San Antonio, Texas. The Jim Crow car is not merely an institution to 'separate the races'; it is a contrivance to humiliate and harass the colored people and to torture them with a finesse unequaled by the cruelest genius in the heathen world. The cruder genius broke the

> bodies of individuals occasionally, but Jim Crow tortures the bodies and souls of tens of thousands hourly.[3]

12 Pickens' unique power as a scholar lay in the juxtaposition of impediments to desired physical mobility (in this case, high-speed travel between El Paso and San Antonio) and the conjuring of an affective world—humiliation, harassment, and torture—that laid bare the ontological horizons of modern temporalities, torturing "the bodies and souls of tens of thousands hourly." Not only was the affective space of the segregated train car torturous to Pickens in its relentless degradation of Black passengers, Pickens elsewhere made explicit that the everyday torture of humiliation on trains was worse than the threat of lynching.

13 The threat of lynching and the experience of being racialized via humiliation in everyday public settings were, as Pickens knew and implied, mutually constitutive rather than discrete. "To the Editor of the *Evening Post*," Pickens once wrote in response to a newspaper editor's request for explanations for the Great Migration of Black Americans from the South to the North after World War I:

> Sir: The cause is complex and many-angled, not simple and categorical. Perhaps the greatest element of all is the Jim Crow car. It is worse than lynching; lynching occasionally kills one man; the Jim Crow Car perpetually tortures ten thousand.[4]

14 This stance that the Jim Crow car "is worse than lynching" is revealing of the ontological stakes of humiliation, which threatened one's metaphysical right to exist. This discussion of humiliation and terror evidences what Derek Alderman calls a 'biopolitics of mobility.' "From a biopolitical perspective," Alderman writes, "discrimination in tourism is part of a larger history and geography of controlling black bodies, lives, and affects" (Alderman, 2018, p. 718). Calvin Warren takes the biopolitics of mobility further, theorizing 'ontological terror' as a frame for beginning to address the metaphysical constraints of racialization. Warren explores the concept of "temporality without duration," positing that blackness exists in a time without space, a space without time (Warren, 2018, p. 97). Blackness is an idea—"the nodal point of semiotics," Warren writes—that provides order to an anti-Black world (Warren, 2018, p. 149).

15 In early 1920, William Pickens witnessed the shooting of a Black carriage driver—a student—while Pickens was employed as head of the department of Greek and sociology at Wiley College (Pickens, 1923, p. 165). The historically Black college (HBCU), founded in 1873, was run by the Northern Methodist Episcopal Church in Marshall, Texas, "only forty miles from Shreveport, Louisiana,—one of the worst sections in all this round world, certainly for any Negro to live in" (Pickens, 1923, p. 169). Pickens relates in *Bursting Bonds: The Autobiography of a 'New Negro'* that "the white population of the town and county had not yet conceded a human status to the colored people, who greatly outnumbered the white" (Pickens, 1923, p. 170-171). He continues, addressing the hazardous space of the road for Black motorists and pedestrians:

> In addition to the usual oppression of Jim Crowism, disenfranchisement, segregation, and the denial of public accommodation and privilege, colored individuals were visited with occasional beating and bullying in the highways and the awful terror of lynching (Pickens, 1923, p. 171).

16 Pickens corroborates his account of the terror of the open road with a story about a student who drove the president of the college's carriage, "selected for that position because he was polite, tactful, level-headed, and would know how to get through the streets of this dangerous community" (Pickens, 1923, p. 173).

17 A “pound officer” shot the student—“emptied his six-shooter at the boy”—while he was out driving one day in January 1920 (Pickens, 1923, p. 173). “This is why:” Pickens writes,

> while the boy was driving the president’s carriage, a vehicle known to all the whites of the town, keeping close to the right-hand curb, the pound officer came from the opposite direction in his buggy, staying right in the middle of the street, so that his buggy just barely touched the vehicle driven by the boy. Neither vehicle was injured in the slightest, and so light was the touch that the boy barely perceived it, as he drove along laughing and talking to another boy on the seat beside him. The officer simply stepped out of his buggy and emptied his gun at the back of the body of this boy (Pickens, 1923, p. 174).

18 Especially significant to this anecdote is the fact that the boys in the front seat, driver and passenger, had been “laughing and talking,” enjoying themselves. The pound officer both provoked the incident by driving in the middle of the street, taking up extra public space, and terrorized the boys by shooting the driver in an apparent reaction to the students’ joy and vitality. A second officer who came to investigate the scene continued the terrorization, hurling racial epithets at the student, who had been shot in the legs, and saying, “I’d shoot him, too!” (Pickens, 1923, p. 174). Witnesses to the scene eventually helped get the original officer “indicted, tried and lightly fined,” but he appealed the case and nothing more came of the indictment (Pickens, 1923, p. 175).

19 Black studies scholars, geographers and historians have written of the terror of the open road, such as that perpetrated by the officer who shot the student chauffeur in Wiley, Texas in 1920, and the imperative for Black motorists to follow the protective travel recommendations of guide books, the most famous and examined of which is Victor H. Green’s *Green Book for Negro Motorists* (Bay, 2021; Taylor, 2020; Sorin, 2020; Alderman *et al.*, 2019; Pesses, 2017; Alderman and Inwood, 2014; Hall, 2015; Holloway, 2013; Gilroy, 2010; Green, 1936-1966). “Not to put too fine a point on it,” Jonathan Scott Holloway writes, “but the *Green Book* and *Travelguide* [a competitor guide] were trying to keep African Americans alive” (Holloway, 2013, p. 71). Reiterating the ontological terror that undergirded Black Americans’ interest in driving, Gretchen Sorin credits “the overarching, if unstated goal of all these travel guidebooks” of “keeping African Americans from being killed on the road” (Sorin, 2020, p. 165).

20 Pleasure in travel and tourism against the backdrop of humiliation, fear, and terror in practices of racialization is an analytical frame absent from many historical accounts of driving for Black Americans (Alderman *et al.*, 2019, p. 3). As Eduardo Bonilla-Silva writes in theorizing a ‘racial economy of emotions,’

> Work on RE [“racialized emotions”] has mostly focused on “negative” emotions, such as Whites’ hatred and anger (Pardy 2010), and the sadness, anxiety, and shame of the racially subaltern (Wilkins and Pace 2014). This approach seriously limits our understanding of RE, as all actors experience the full range of emotions. (Bonilla-Silva, 2019, p. 8)

21 Examining the roles of pleasure and joy in driving is imperative to understanding the historical appeal of automotivity for Black Americans. “While all Americans—white and black—enjoyed the freedom and privacy that the automobile afforded,” Gretchen Sorin writes, “these advantages were more profound for black Americans” (Sorin, 2020, p. 38). In a world whose public contours nationwide were defined by terror and

humiliation, cars promised Black drivers a semi-private escape into pleasure via leisure.

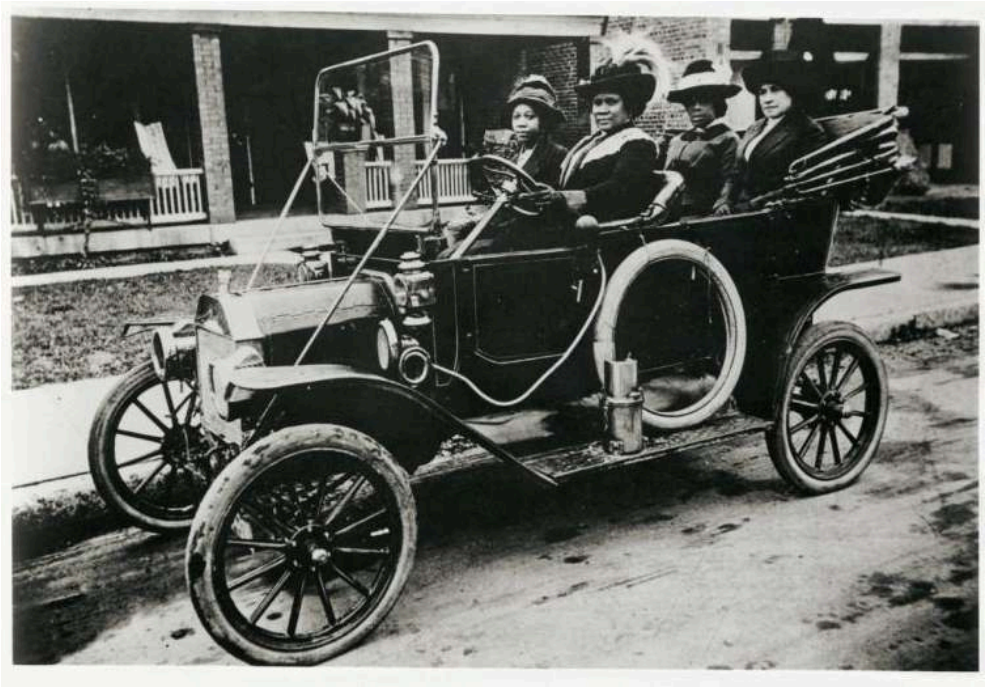
22 Automobiles and their attendant capacities for shifts in semiosis were, from their advent, more complex than those of trains. Much as trains were a technology that frequently elicited humiliation for Black passengers, cars provided many Black motorists opportunities to experience the world on their own terms, including in pursuit of pleasure and joy (Sorin, 2020; Gilroy, 2010). Black drivers in the early twentieth century experienced automotivity as radical physical mobility and emotional freedom that engendered new spatial and temporal realities. Members of Black communities across the United States embraced the early automobile as a vehicle of self-representation, enjoying car-based worlds of their own making.

23 Cars enabled access to multifaceted realms of spatial, temporal, economic, affective and emotional mobility that other consumption-oriented settings did not. Genevieve Carpio describes the automobile as "a symbolic system through which personhood was given meaning" (Carpio, 2019, p. 143). Long before the *Green Book* and competitor travel guides like William H. Butler's *Travelguide: Vacation & Recreation without Humiliation* made explicit the relationship between humiliation-avoidance and pleasure-seeking for Black motorists, Black drivers, including chauffeurs, posited themselves as quintessentially modern consumers of time and space in the leisure-oriented setting of the car (Pesses, 2017; Butler, 1947-1957; Green, 1936-1966). Opposition to Black automotivity was strongest in settings where modern subjectivities—identities enriched by access to consumer goods—were most at stake.

Early-Twentieth-Century Black Automotivity

24 Keenly aware of the significance of self-representation in the consumptive practice of automotivity, wealthy American entrepreneurs like women's beauty magnate Madam C. J. Walker and world heavyweight boxing champion Jack Johnson helped establish the private vehicle as a celebratory, semi-private space for Black motorists in the early twentieth century (Bay, 2021; Gilroy, 2010). Madam C. J. Walker was known to leak news of her pleasure in driving to the press. An article reporting a 1914 business trip by Walker to Jamaica stated: "Her chief delight, as she puts it, was in taking long trips in her car with friends from city to city in this most beautiful country."[5] Walker's trip to Jamaica is evidence of the automobile's capacity to facilitate simultaneous access to labor and leisure. The setting of Walker's joyrides in Jamaica hints at a fluid semiosis of vacationing in the Caribbean, while the article's description of driving as Walker's "chief delight" points to the joyful sense of mobility cars facilitated for tourists of the era (Williams, 2018).

Image 1



Madam C. J. Walker (driving) with (left to right) her niece, Anjetta Breedlove; Madam C. J. Walker Manufacturing Company factory manager, Alice Kelly; and Walker Company bookkeeper, Lucy Flint, in 1911.[6]

25 Madam C. J. Walker, depicted in a 1911 photograph at the wheel of her Ford Model T on a New York City street chauffeuring her niece, Anjetta Breedlove, and two employees, Alice Kelly, and Lucy Flint, is a commanding presence.[7] Walker presents herself as a motorist par excellence, with mastery of both the technical and mechanical aspects of driving. The flamboyant, fanciful feather in her hat is anything but somber, marking her automotive experience as one of leisure. Walker, who could have chosen to photograph herself alone in what seems like a staged studio portrait, chose to include her niece and two employees, rendering the car a celebratory space of Black womanhood as much as one of personal achievement and status. This choice indicates that the space of the early automobile was a social space, one in which Walker's wealth and prestige could be read against the backdrop of her companions' chic but more understated fashion choices. The roof of the vehicle is open, allowing for maximum visibility of the car's occupants and rendering the Ford a decidedly public space. Walker has placed her left hand on the wheel in apparent anticipation of driving; the four women in the car are poised to move, and it seems that a single feather may be left in their wake.

26 Automotivity, such as that exhibited by Madam C. J. Walker, had a brief history in the United States prior to the twentieth century. Train travel had taken hold of the country in the 1860s and was supplemented by selective use of the bicycle for long-distance travel in the mid-1880s. In anticipation of more comfortable joyrides, wealthy bicycle hobbyists formed the League of American Wheelmen in 1880 to improve America's roads and highways. By 1897, the League's constitution and by-laws stipulated racialized membership exclusively for "Any amateur white wheelman of good character [...]" (Bassett, 1897, p. 4). The National League for Good Roads, founded in

1893, furthered the mission of the League and put into motion a national focus on road building that came to be known as the Good Roads Movement. This movement, with its origins in the pursuit of [white] leisure, culminated in the eventual establishment of the Interstate Highway System (Flink, 1988, p. 4-5). A flurry of development of automobiles in Europe and the United States in the late nineteenth century led to numerous concurrent automobile patents in 1895. Ford Motor Company opened by 1904, and the first Black-owned automobile production company, C. R. Patterson & Sons of Greenfield, Ohio, was established as a carriage manufacturer in 1865 and began manufacturing automobiles in 1915 (Nelson, 2010, p. 1).

27 An anecdote from the second decade of chauffeuring and automotivity in the United States speaks to Eduardo Bonilla-Silva's theorization of a 'racial economy of emotions' and Saidiya Hartman's seminal examination of the 'economy of pleasure' during enslavement and in what she terms the 'afterlife of slavery' (Bonilla-Silva, 2019; Hartman, 2007, 1997). In April 1911, four Black men driving together through Fort Worth (Texas) were arrested by two separate police officers within twenty minutes—each time on the suspicion they were driving a stolen vehicle. In fact, the driver of the vehicle was the personal chauffeur of a white man from Dallas and had been given explicit permission to take his friends on a "joy ride" to the nearby city. A third police officer had apparently contemplated arresting the men earlier in the day because of their race but decided against it because they were "moving along the street so slowly."[8] Time, it seemed, operated differently when correlated with blackness.

28 Calvin Warren writes, "Black existence (what you *see* when you look at a black body, for example) is *not* anything representation can incorporate into its epistemology" (Warren, 2018, p. 150). The alleged confusion of the police officers who stopped the car to arrest the men inside before admitting that there was no ground for arrest speaks to the volatility of the semiotics of racialization in cars. The very fact of four Black men moving in an automobile, however slowly, contradicted the metaphysical contours of reality with which the presumably white police officers were familiar. Four Black men moving through time at a pace of their own choosing is an example of Fred Moten's theorization of 'paraontological' transcendence (Warren, 2017; Moten, 2017). Four Black men occupying space constitutive of time is transcendent. Four Black men likely enjoying themselves (implied in the words "joy ride") while occupying space and transforming time is transcendent.

29 At the beginning of the twentieth century, cars were worldmaking devices—at times, microcosms of the worlds Black drivers and passengers wished to inhabit. How must it have felt to move, however fleetingly, as one pleased in the heart of Texas less than fifty years after the end of the Civil War? What emotions did the occupants of the automobile in the above anecdote experience on the ride from Dallas to Fort Worth? How familiar was the conflation of "so slowly" and 'too fast' in the officers' racialization of the car's occupants? Cars altered the experience of time for drivers and passengers, allowing space to breathe, and live, while moving.

30 Black motorists worked hard at times to deflect public attention, moving slowly like the men in the anecdote above, appearing eager to work, and thus rendering the car a semi-private space with the capacity for pleasure and abandon. Was the driver of the car on the "joy ride" to Fort Worth really a chauffeur, the humble servant of a white man in Dallas, or did he own the vehicle as the entrepreneurs Madam C. J. Walker and Jack Johnson owned theirs? A chauffeur's hat was one of many theatrical props used by

Black motorists to deflect attention from police officers suspicious of their access to cars, reconfiguring the semiotics of driving while Black and cementing an affiliation with servitude rather than consumption (Taylor, 2020, p. 9-10, 26-28).

31 The earliest buyers of cars in the United States were dilettantes, doctors, businessmen and engineers (Flink, 1988, p. 28). Yet operating an automobile at the beginning of the twentieth century required significant skill and mechanical training, and wealthy owners of cars typically employed chauffeurs to drive them around. The mechanical knowledge and skill required made the job of chauffeur both sophisticated and sought-after, conferring social status and the prospect of steady employment upon those with the requisite experience.[9] Chauffeurs around the country at the beginning of the twentieth century were racially diverse, including Black, white, Latinx, Native and Asian Americans. Working as a chauffeur contrasted markedly with the employment status of the vast majority of Black Americans at the turn of the century, ninety percent of whom were agricultural workers and around ten percent of whom were non-salaried wageworkers located mainly in the North (Zieger, 2007, p. 52; Du Bois, 1902, p. 22).

32 The first Black drivers in the United States faced a maze of new opportunities in the putatively uncharted territory of driving culture. With a car, one could theoretically travel at whim, bypassing the confines of racially segregated public transportation. One could earn a living as a mechanic and a driver, organizing with other skilled chauffeurs to demand higher wages. Chauffeurs could escape the provincialism of agricultural work and enter the cosmopolitan world of consumption, deriving elevated social status and pleasure from increased access to commercial goods. Chauffeurs frequently took their employers' cars out joyriding after hours, sometimes with permission from the car owner (Borg, 2007, p. 24-25, 28).[10] Black men and women's expertise in driving and in mechanics as well as their access to the affective realms of leisure while chauffeuring have been largely forgotten in histories of this time period for members of Black communities.

33 There were approximately 460,000 vehicles registered in the United States by 1910, and over 4,500 Black male chauffeurs employed nationally the same year, including 490 in New York City and 312 in Philadelphia. Black female drivers were rare at the time, although the *Washington Bee* reported, "In Paris there are dozens of colored women who are employed as chauffeurs and cab drivers."[11] Black chauffeurs comprised more than twenty-three percent of chauffeurs employed in St. Louis in 1910, and over seventeen percent of chauffeurs employed in Philadelphia at the time (Borg, 2007, p. 21). By 1912, Black men working as chauffeurs were employed in communities across the United States and made up a majority of licensed drivers in states like Alabama (Johnston and Woodson, 1930, p. 112).[12] While few Black Americans at the beginning of the twentieth century could afford to purchase cars, economic, political, and social possibilities afforded by automotivity via chauffeuring abounded. The occupation of chauffeur quickly inspired solidarity between Black drivers in cities such as Philadelphia, Pennsylvania and Macon, Georgia, and animosity on the part of white chauffeurs from Boston and New York to Chattanooga, Tennessee and West Palm Beach, Florida.[13]

34 In reaction to vitriol and terror from white drivers around the country, Black chauffeurs began organizing chauffeurs' clubs of their own. The Professional Colored Chauffeurs' Club of America was organized in New York as early as 1907.[14] Black chauffeurs advertised the location of a Colored Chauffeurs Association' Headquarters in

Philadelphia in 1910.[15] Driving schools catering exclusively to Black men seeking employment as chauffeurs opened around the country from Buffalo, New York to Salt Lake City, Utah the same year.[16] Black chauffeurs' clubs had incorporated in Lexington, Kentucky and Macon, Georgia by 1913.[17] Like comparable clubs across various professions in late-nineteenth and early-twentieth-century America, these chauffeurs' clubs operated as small-scale unions.

35 Labor organizing in public transportation contexts has been established as essential to improved access to mobility for members of Black communities. Although cars were new, Black activists had been organizing labor in local and national arenas since at least the 1870s (Zieger, 2007, p. 25). My research indicates that a nationwide Black chauffeurs' union affiliated with the American Federation of Labor (AFL) in 1919, six years before the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters (BSCP), a union of Black Pullman car employees organized by labor leader A. Philipp Randolph, famously did the same.[18] While the history of the BSCP organizing foregrounds Black train porters as employees, hewing close to established tropes of blackness and work, an emphasis on chauffeuring reconfigures this narrative, highlighting Black motorists' access to both work and leisure (joy riding) in cars.

36 Black chauffeurs embraced their transition from horse-drawn carriage to car as one of prestige, arguing that Black motorists were quintessentially modern in their early, exclusive mastery of the skill of driving.[19] For some wealthy white automobile owners in the South, Black chauffeurs represented a continuation of the legacy of chattel slavery. A 1915 editorial in the *Miami Herald* stated, "In practically every southern city owners of cars have colored chauffeurs. In Atlanta, for instance, a majority of the privately owned machines are driven by negroes, the same as the carriages of the southern gentlemen were driven years ago."[20] While white residents of some locales around the country clung to traditions of racialized servitude in employing Black chauffeurs in the first decades of the century, white members of consumption-oriented communities like Miami saw the social and economic mobility the car afforded as a threat, fighting the presence of Black motorists in any iteration. No one cosmopolitan setting in the first several decades of the twentieth-century United States more consistently evidenced the potential of cars to dramatically shape practices of labor and leisure than Miami, Florida.

Chauffeuring in Miami: Terror and Leisure at the Intersection of Race and Class

37 Some of the staunchest advocacy of racial differentiation and segregation in the automobile world in the 1910s came from resort cities like Miami, Florida, where few Black chauffeurs were successfully employed for much of the decade. Miami was incorporated in 1896, one year after automobiles were patented concurrently in both the United States and Europe and the same year that Miami was connected to points north by railway. Forty-three percent of registered male voters who voted for Miami's incorporation (162 of 368 people) were Black (McLeod, 2019, p. 31). By 1910, there were just over 2,550 Black residents of Miami, who represented almost forty-two percent of the city's total population (Dunn, 1997, p. 77). While almost no Black chauffeurs or motorists drove cars in Miami in 1910 despite comprising a large percentage of the city's population, Black chauffeurs comprised a third of Miami's chauffeurs and Black

residents a third of the city's population by 1920 (Castillo, 2000, p. 97-98). Due to the persistence of Black chauffeurs in the face of white supremacist terror, the car became an important space of labor and leisure for members of Miami's Black communities.

38 The center of tourism in early-twentieth-century Miami was the Royal Palm Hotel, a building owned by a white industrialist (Henry Flagler) and built largely by Black workers. The hotel was constructed in 1896 on top of a Tequesta burial mound, a site where Indigenous inhabitants of the region had buried their dead, likely for centuries prior to and after the arrival of the Spanish in the region in the early sixteenth century (Dunn, 1997, p. 53). This violent form of palimpsestic colonial consumption evidences Julio Capó Jr.'s observation that "Miami's fairyland tourism operated on the premise of marketing several forms of colonial conquest" (Capó Jr., 2017, pp. 8-9). As Kyle Whyte, Jared L. Talley and Julia D. Gibson elucidate, "settler mobility has to be inscribed into the landscapes to ecosystems of the people already living there (i.e., Indigenous peoples)." Settler societies "carve" their institutions "into the waters, soils, air, and other environmental dimensions of the territory or landscape" (Whyte *et al.*, 2019, p. 326). The Royal Palm Hotel thrived economically as a center of white settler-colonial leisure carved into the local Indigenous landscape.

39 While some tourists took the train south, employing chauffeurs upon disembarking, tourism to Miami via automobile from Boston and other far-flung northern cities boomed. Many of Miami's prospective vacationers in the 1910s employed Black chauffeurs. Chauffeuring was an occupation that threatened to subvert aspects of the system of racial capitalism undergirding white leisure in Miami (Robinson, 2019, 1983). [21] Chauffeuring was a skilled profession that enabled prestige, wealth, and leisure in the form of joyriding as well as pleasure for the Black tourists and local residents whom Black Miamians could chauffeur. Black Miamians were crucial to the local tourism industry, working in building and road construction and in the service and entertainment industries. Nathan Connolly writes, "At practically every site of white leisure, nonwhite servitude proved integral to the everyday theatrics and comforts of seaside recreation" (Connolly, 2014, p. 24). Yet Black tourists were barred from many sites of recreation in Jim Crow Florida, from parks to pools to movie theaters and dressing rooms in department stores (McLeod, 2019, p. 29).

40 White chauffeurs in Miami sought not only to exclude Black membership in their clubs, such as a chauffeurs' union that was established by 1911, but also to prohibit Black motorists from driving in the city in any capacity.[22] Mia Bay writes, "The Miami Chamber of Commerce banned Negro chauffeurs before World War I," and white chauffeurs worked to enforce the ban (Bay, 2021, p. 111). There were approximately 300 automobiles in regular operation in Miami in 1911 (George, 1977, p. 6). While there were 49 Black drivers listed in Miami's city directory in 1913 and 76 listed in 1915, many of these were likely carriage drivers; only one Black chauffeur was documented for the same period (Castillo, 2000, p. 83). The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)'s periodical, *The Crisis*, reported in 1913 that white chauffeurs in Miami assaulted and beat Black drivers of automobiles.[23] White chauffeurs chased out of town a Black motorist who ventured into the city from West Palm Beach in 1915.[24] An eyewitness to a contemporaneous automobile accident in Miami described a "great number of automobiles that were racing by, chasing a negro chauffeur."[25] The potency of automotivity, in contrast to driving a carriage, is blatant in these reports of terrorization of Black motorists.

41 The occupation of chauffeur represented a racialized, gendered and classed arena of upward mobility. Newspaper coverage in the white press corroborated these facts, evidencing the mutually constitutive nature of racism and class identities. An editorialist in the *Miami Herald* argued,

> If negro men are able to take up the work of chauffeurs, it will be followed by garages operated by colored men in the white part of the city, and the color line once being broken, there will be nothing to prevent other colored business from coming in the white part of the city, and for colored residents to choose any part of the city they desire for their homes.[26]

42 Members of a suburban homeowners organization, the North Miami Improvement Association, campaigned explicitly against the employment of Black chauffeurs in Miami in 1915.[27] White supremacist association members fought efforts to "'tell the world' that Miami will protect tourists who might bring negro chauffeurs with them," citing a "custom of long standing not to employ negro chauffeurs."[28] White workers barred Black workers of various industries from joining their unions in Miami with more consistency than in many other areas of the South (Castillo, 2004, p. 461). White chauffeurs not only refused Black chauffeurs union membership, but also largely prohibited Black chauffeurs from driving in Miami in the mid-1910s. White homeowners and chauffeurs worked in tandem with garage owners and the Miami Chamber of Commerce to inhibit Black automotivity in the city.

43 The white owners of Miami's Electric Garage and Avenue C Garage told reporters of the *Miami Metropolis* in 1915 that cars driven by Black chauffeurs were not welcome for repairs.[29] The owner of the Avenue C Garage had reportedly hired a Black employee the previous year and found that white automobile owners boycotted his garage as a result. Some white garage owners insisted that Black chauffeurs work only as "helpers to mechanics."[30] Boycotting the presence of Black chauffeurs in garages in Miami was reminiscent of similar practices at the time in U.S. cities from Los Angeles, California to Fort Worth, Texas, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania and New York.[31] Cars, it seemed, were self-evidently vehicles of social and economic mobility in particularly volatile consumer settings. While Black residents of Miami were prohibited from working as mechanics, no comparable practice of racial segregation yet existed at Ocean Beach, later known as Miami Beach (Dunn, 1997, p. 62).

44 White chauffeurs, homeowners, employers, government officials and police officers continued to conspire against Black chauffeurs to make their employment in Miami untenable. In 1916, white drivers chased a Black chauffeur into the woods on the outskirts of town. Rather than reinforce access to automotivity for the owner of the car, Geder Walker, a Black man who was manager of the beloved Lyric Theater, and his chauffeur, a police officer chauffeured the car to a garage following the incident (Fields, 1974, p. 11).[32] Instance of Black chauffeurs visiting Miami without experiencing bodily harm at the hands of white supremacists made headlines in 1917; the chauffeurs were sequestered in a hotel during the length of their stays and were given police protection.

45 The owner of the car in this case, a white man from Virginia, took a train from Palm Beach and arranged for a police escort for the chauffeur from Palm Beach to the Royal Palm Hotel. The car owner hired a white chauffeur for the remainder of his stay.[33] The mayor of Miami agreed to provide police protection for a Black chauffeur accompanying a high-profile white tourist, a senator from Kentucky, visiting Miami the same month.[34] Yet two Black chauffeurs driving into Miami the same year were

cornered by white chauffeurs and "informed that no negro drivers were permitted to operate automobiles in the city." One of the Black chauffeurs, who resisted removal from his car, was reportedly arrested.[35]

46 Thousands of potential visitors to Miami who typically employed Black chauffeurs refused to visit the city in the late 1910s in protest of the effective ban on Black automotivity.[36] Members of the Colored Board of Trade (CBT), a group of prominent Black businesspeople, threatened an "exodus" of Black Miamians in 1917 in response to white chauffeurs' continued suppression of Black automotivity. This was a potent threat in a year—1917—when Miami turned away an estimated ten thousand visitors (Castillo, 2004, p. 442). Members of the CBT advocated "for protection in the right of negroes to drive their own cars, *for business and pleasure*."[37] The *Miami Metropolis* reported CBT members as stating, "*Miami is the only city in the country* where the authorities have attempted to draw the color line by permitting white chauffeurs to intimidate negro drivers without police interference."[38]

47 Days earlier, a Black chauffeur named Fred Andrews was chased through the segregated Colored Town (later known as Overtown) in Miami by white chauffeurs "in an effort to put a stop to his running a car for hire." Andrews allegedly cut one of the white chauffeurs on the hand with a knife.[39] White supremacists believed to have been chauffeurs responded by bombing a cultural center in Colored Town, Off Fellows Hall (George, 1979, p. 441).[40] This act of terrorism by white supremacists targeted the most significant center of leisure and entertainment in the local Black community, much like the car a joyful space of relative autonomy, where dances were held on Saturday nights (Castillo, 2000, p. 84; Fields, 1974, p. 11).

48 The bombing of Off Fellows Hall directly precipitated a meeting between representatives of white churches of Miami and the Colored Board of Trade as well as the local sheriff, chief of police, mayor, and two city council members. Most attendees of the 1917 meeting agreed that "Negroes are to be fully protected in their right to drive their own cars" as well as the right to hire Black car and truck drivers, drive busses with (exclusively) Black patrons, and chauffeur Black passengers. Most agreed, additionally, that Black motorists should have "police protection" of their right to drive in Miami.[41] Exactly how these measures were to be enforced in a prevailing culture of white supremacy remained open, however. The same article reported, "Members of the white committee ['representing the white churches of Miami'] admitted the absence of law for making discrimination between white and negro drivers, but urged that Miami has been built up as a 'white man's town' and the unwritten law has been that only white men should drive automobiles."[42]

49 Members of the CBT "agreed to use every influence in their power to induce colored car drivers not to do anything to irritate the white chauffeurs unnecessarily," and that Black chauffeurs would always return "at once" to Colored Town after chauffeuring a client to any other part of Miami.[43] This anecdote speaks to both the terrorizing white supremacist status quo in Miami at the time and the successful insistence of members of local Black communities that the space of the car was a desirable, deeply significant site of both work and pleasure.

50 Much as elsewhere in the country, laws stipulating racial segregation in the practice of driving were never put into effect in Miami as such (Bay, 2021, p. 111). White supremacists in the Jim Crow era instead used such diffuse tactics as vigilante terror and police surveillance of Black drivers, the revocation or non-issuance of driver's

licenses, and racial discrimination in the issuance of mandatory public liability insurance, also known as redlining (Taylor, 2020, p. 40-42; Adair, 2017; Franz, 2004, p. 143-144). Gretchen Sorin writes of indirect means of inhibiting leisure in automobiles for Black Americans: "Like the Confederate national anthem, the name of the Dixie Highway [which ran from Florida to near Canada] both humiliated and frightened black people" (Sorin, 2020, p. 92).

51 Driving a car while Black in Miami in the late 1910s was a precarious endeavor despite agreements on the part of white Miamians to support Black automotivity. News reports of the era indicated that white chauffeurs continued to terrorize Black drivers, leading to renewed vows to protect Black motorists' rights. An article by the Associated Negro Press (ANP) in December 1919 stated, after more than eight years of conflict, "Interference with Negro chauffeurs or any other law-abiding persons was unanimously condemned by the Chamber of Commerce membership meeting."[44] Intimidation had been used "both toward the white tourists and the drivers" of cars recently driven in Miami by Black chauffeurs.

52 The apparent interest of white members of the Miami Chamber of Commerce in Black chauffeurs' right to drive was likely directly connected to white chauffeurs' demands for higher wages and their protests of Black chauffeurs' right to work in the late summer and fall of 1919 (Castillo, 2004, p. 465-467). Members of the Miami Chamber of Commerce had themselves supported a ban on Black automotivity prior to World War I. Calls to protect the rights of Black motorists emphasized the perspective that a potential decrease in tourism due to white supremacist violence was bad for Miami economically. A headline in the *Miami Daily Metropolis* the same year read, "Intimidation of Negro Chauffeurs Must Stop, Demand the Business Men [...] Intimidation is Driving People to Other Cities."[45] Adhering to a similar logic of paternalism, the Board of Directors of the CBT published an op-ed in the *Miami Herald* in 1919 insisting that all Black chauffeurs meet with the Board the same day.[46]

53 By the early 1920s, many Black residents of Miami owned their own cars as well as their own homes. Black chauffeurs made up a third of Miami's chauffeurs and Black residents a third of the city's population in 1920 (Castillo, 2000, p. 97). There were at least 10,000 cars in the city by the same year (George, 1977, p. 8).[47] Black drivers (including carriage drivers, teamsters, and draymen) represented forty-four percent of all Miami-based drivers recorded in the 1920 census (Castillo, 2000, p. 98). One can infer that many Black motorists drove in Miami at the time. These numbers are particularly significant when put into comparative perspective; Black chauffeurs represented approximately 13 percent of more than 285,000 chauffeurs employed across the United States in 1920 (Castillo, 2000, p. 73; Borg, 2007, p. 29).

54 The respite from humiliation on public transportation and from what N. D. B. Connolly terms "the wider colonial experience of apartheid in southern Florida" is palpable in the significant representation of Black drivers in Miami in the 1920 census (Connolly, 2014, p. 24). Early-twentieth-century Miami exposes ways in which Black motorists insisted on their right to chauffeur local residents and tourists as well as to simply enjoy driving. They conjured a world in the physical and affective space of the car that both served as an important site of labor and facilitated leisure. Leisure for Black motorists represented a radical break from the past and relief from terrorizing aspects of the present.

Conclusion

55 As the examples of Madam C. J. Walker in Jamaica, the joyriding chauffeurs in Fort Worth, Texas and the 1917 advocacy of members of Miami's Colored Board of Trade indicate, work and leisure in cars in the first several decades of the automotive century often went hand in hand. I have argued that early Black chauffeurs in Miami claimed pleasurable space and its attendant leisure via driving in a profoundly racist, frequently terrorizing touristic climate. The important role of the material space of the car in the early history of Miami is evidenced in the difference between the initially non-segregated status of what became Miami Beach and the virulent opposition to early Black automotivity on the part of Miami's white chauffeurs. Whether by refusing physical removal from their cars or by participating in the pursuit of joy in driving, early Black drivers used automobiles to escape terror and claim pleasurable, lucrative space.

56 This article exposes ways in which white chauffeurs, homeowners, employers, local authorities, and police officers worked together to undermine Black chauffeurs' access to work and leisure in cars in the first two decades of the twentieth century. These actors' efforts to prohibit Black automotivity in Miami were more virulent than in almost any other part of the contemporary United States. By 1920, however, Black motorists and businesspeople in Miami had insisted on their right to drive. While additional studies of driving for Black motorists in Miami in the 1920s and beyond are necessary, this article's significant contributions to existing historiography lie in its analysis of the capacity of the car to facilitate more desirable experiences of subjectivity in even the most restrictive settings. In spite of local white chauffeurs' efforts and thanks in part to the profound economic interests of local businesspeople in continued tourism to the city, early Black motorists in Miami forged significant access to work and pleasure in the consumerist space of the car. Black automotivity in Miami disrupted aspects of the city's system of racial capitalism and established the car as a site of refusal, work, and pleasure.

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ABSTRACTS

Automobiles significantly changed access to leisure for Americans at the beginning of the twentieth century, spawning interest in and growth of resort towns like Miami, Florida. The occupation of chauffeur was a frequent site of both class conflict and anti-Black terror. Yet the car operated as a liminal site of subjectivity in which Black chauffeurs determined some parameters of their experience of both work and pleasure. Black chauffeurs in Miami in the 1910s were at the vanguard of efforts by local Black communities to create and claim pleasurable space and its attendant leisure via driving in a profoundly racist and exceptionally dangerous touristic climate. At stake was access to a commodity and a profession with an exhilarating potential to upend social, political and economic norms, remolding communities in ways that promised leisure for local Black motorists, chauffeurs, and vacationers. Black automotivity in Miami disrupted aspects of the city's system of racial capitalism and established the car as a potent site of refusal, work, and pleasure.

L'automobile a considérablement modifié l'accès aux loisirs pour les Américains au début du XXe siècle, suscitant l'intérêt pour des lieux de villégiature tels que Miami (Floride) et en favorisant l'expansion. La profession de chauffeur était un terrain fréquent de conflit de classe et de terreur antinoire. Néanmoins, la voiture fonctionnait comme un terrain liminal de subjectivité à travers lequel les chauffeurs noirs définissaient certains paramètres de leur expérience du travail et du plaisir. Les chauffeurs noirs dans le Miami des années 1910 étaient à l'avant-garde des efforts déployés par les communautés noires locales pour créer et revendiquer des espaces de plaisir et des loisirs afférents, conduisant dans un climat touristique profondément raciste et exceptionnellement dangereux. L'enjeu était l'accès à une ressource et à une profession présentant le potentiel exaltant de bouleverser les normes politiques, économiques et sociales, remodelant les communautés en laissant entrevoir la promesse de loisirs pour les automobilistes, chauffeurs et vacanciers noirs locaux. L'automotivité des Noirs à Miami a perturbé certains aspects du système de capitalisme racial de la ville, faisant de la voiture un terrain manifeste d'opposition, de travail et de plaisir.

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Mots-clés: chauffeur, Miami, loisirs, racisme, automobile
Keywords: chauffeur, Miami, leisure, Black, driving

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Slavery and Plantation Tourism in Louisiana: Deconstructing the Romanticized Narrative of the Plantation Tours

Esclavage et plantations touristiques de Louisiane : déconstruire le récit idéalisé des plantations-musées

Melaine Harnay

Introduction

1 Tourism in the United States, one of the leading tourist destinations in the world with close to 80 million visitors in 2019, represents an economic powerhouse (Statista, 2020). Visitors are often drawn to a form of tourism that revolves around a series of imaginaries—that is to say destinations commonly associated with certain images, such as the mythicized American West and its numerous stories about great outdoors and the wilderness. The South is also a region loaded with preconceived representations of its history, identified with the period of slavery, plantation homes and the Civil War, and embodied by the plantation tourism industry that operates as a driving force for the local economy[1]. In Louisiana, "River Road" represents the hub of plantation tourism, in a region delineated by the course of the Mississippi River between New Orleans and Baton Rouge ("The River Road," nps.gov), and which used to be the greatest symbol of slave-owning wealth in antebellum Louisiana—it was nicknamed "Millionaires' Row" because of the abundance of wealthy planters in the area. There, some of the former sugarcane plantations that were not destroyed during the Civil War were turned into historical sites which have become major tourist attractions where tour operators send busloads of visitors mainly from New Orleans[2]. They offer various activities of hospitality and tourism (Bed & Breakfast, wedding venues, restaurants, gift shops) and sometimes operate as outdoor museum sites, designated as "plantation-

museums" by Jennifer Eichstedt and Stephen Small in their 2002 groundbreaking study of plantation tourism, *Representations of Slavery: Race and Ideology in Southern Plantation Museums*.

2 Eichstedt and Small defined 'plantation-museums' as "sites based on physical structures that were originally used a part of plantation complexes during the period of slavery and which now are organized to provide exhibits and tours of southern history" (Eichstedt and Small, 2002, p. 9). In such places so closely related to the history of enslavement, one could assume that these plantation sites would focus, at least in part, on the history of both slavery and the enslaved, especially when considering that they used to function thanks to slave labor. Instead, many of these plantations offer visitors a mythical representation of the Old South during the antebellum era, which is a glorified and whitewashed version of the period of slavery–to such an extent that the 'Gone-with-the-Wind' representation of a plantation has turned into the basic image coming to mind for visitors (Carter *et al.*, 2014, p. 549). Such a representational strategy is but another addendum to the racist tradition of the Lost Cause ideology that dates back to the post-Civil-War era. This ideology was born from the ashes of the slave-based Southern society and from the white Southerners' unbearable psychological trauma of Confederate defeat, which came to define the entire white Southern vision of the past: one through which Southerners worshiped an idyllic Old South where benevolent masters lived in harmony with their happy, loyal slaves on a peaceable plantation. Over the decades following the war, Lost Cause rhetoric would find its way into books, newspapers, political discourses, meetings, ceremonies, artifacts... to the point where its ideology turned into a feature of Southern identity, a sort of civil religion that bound together an entire region (Blight, 2002, p. 258).

3 Traditional representational patterns, such as focusing on the slave-owning family's life, were used for decades by the plantation tourism industry, but they are now being debunked by new curatorial practices. The reformist trend in the plantation tourism industry these past few years can be inscribed in a larger societal pressure toward a better recognition of African Americans' past and present experiences in American society. The possible reasons for this "plantation turn" are manifold, including the greater interest of the public in the history of slavery, which has grown in part due to various factors, including the popular success of critically-acclaimed movies dealing with slavery—such as Steven Spielberg's *Lincoln* (2012), Tarantino's *Django Unchained* (2012) and above all, *12 Years a Slave* by Steve McQueen (2013), which won the Academy Award for Best Picture. The growing pressure from social activists, such as the Black Lives Matter movement[3], from scholars and also parts of the American population calling for a national reckoning on race and slavery in the public space (the debate surrounding the statues of Confederate officials being the most visible example) and in the national narrative may have also contributed to changes in plantation tours. The events and demonstrations that followed George Floyd's death on May 25, 2020, after a brutal and deadly police arrest, serve as recent instances of those pressing calls to come to terms with the history of slavery and racism in the United States. This long-standing social pressure have thus led some tourist plantations, but not all, to reconsider their business strategies in order to tap into the soaring curiosity of visitors for the institution of slavery—as is the case at Oak Alley Plantation, for example. These reforming tourist plantations may also have had no choice but to adapt to the arrival in the industry of a new actor that revolutionized the sector. Whitney Plantation indeed

serves as the trailblazer and the most conspicuous example for a renewed memorialization of slavery in plantation tourism. Opened in 2015 as the very first slavery museum in the United States, Whitney Plantation Museum offers a more realistic presentation of the history of slavery. It has since then opened a new path for the other plantations in the area to include the history of the enslaved in their tours[4].

4 The focal point of this article is not to focus on the causes of the "plantation turn" or to analyze the economic implications behind such changes. Instead, it emphasizes some of the slave-centric representational strategies and how they allow for a better understanding of slavery in three selected plantations: Oak Alley Plantation, Evergreen Plantation and Whitney Plantation—as opposed to a more white-centric approach illustrated here by the study of Houmas House and Greenwood Plantation. My aim is to assess whether the new museum strategies at some plantation sites serve as clear-cut counter representations to the sanitized version of history offered by traditional plantation tours, or whether they simply illustrate a trend toward reform within an always adapting plantation tourism industry, in which some sites are more reluctant to changes than others. This article is not an exhaustive analysis of all River Road plantations, and it will not encapsulate the plantations described in the article into closed categories. Drawing on personal visits of several of them[5], however, I do argue that the various, opposing representational patterns observed during the plantation tours are on both ends of the interpretative spectrum regarding the history of antebellum Louisiana. I will first focus on one of the most recurrent, traditional narrative patterns observed in Houmas House and Greenwood Plantation: the white-centric, and therefore whitewashed, vision of plantation history. Such a narrative tool produces a "Gone-with-the-Wind" interpretation of these historical sites, one that transforms plantation-museums into strongholds for Confederate heritage. I will then show that in a landscape of representations of slavery so much imbued with the tropes of the Lost Cause, some plantation sites have worked toward a more inclusive and more accurate interpretation of the antebellum era, by giving a voice to the enslaved in their respective tours, thus striving to debunk the myths portrayed in traditional plantation tours.

The White-centric/Whitewashed Plantation Tour

5 The foundational element of a whitewashed plantation tour is its extensive—and sometimes, even exclusive—attention to the experiences of the master's family, and especially of the slave-owning planter himself[6]. The planter is often presented through the filter of his economic success and/or of his high standing in the southern antebellum society–and later among the Confederate officials. At Greenwood Plantation near St. Francisville, LA, presented as the "best kept secret in the Feliciana Hill Country" and as "a truly magical and majestic place" on its website (greenwoodplantation.com, 2020), the tour guide seems to proudly recall the time when Greenwood Plantation was a massive complex of both sugarcane and cotton production spreading across 12,000 acres[7]. Likewise, at Houmas House in Darrow, LA, advertised as the "Crown Jewel of Louisiana's River Road" on the plantation's website and leaflet, the tour highlights the supposedly glorious past of one of the plantation owners, John Burnside, dubbed the 'Sugar Prince' by the docent. The process of glorifying the planter's past extends to the plantation advertisement, in this case a

visitor's leaflet, where one can read sentences such as "the entertaining and educational tour includes stories of the Great Sugar Barons who built Houmas House and the sugar empire."[8] The message is clear from the onset: the plantation tour will be an entertaining experience for the visitor–never mind that the enslaved who actually built the Big House and made possible the sugar empire disappear from the plantation narrative. The result of such a focus on the wealth and lavish lifestyle of the plantation owners, including beautifully set tables as well as luxurious decorations and clothing, is powerful as it produces an impression of a glorified bygone era. It also diverts the visitors' attention by lingering on objects and artifacts owned by the master's family rather than evoking the fact these objects were handled most of the time by the enslaved (when setting the table for the slave-owning family for example). A manipulation of the narrative is at work, as confirmed by scholars Alderman and Campbell who state that "managers and docents frequently use artifacts and objects once owned by plantation owners and other whites to deflect attention away from a discussion of the contribution and struggles of slaves" (Alderman and Campbell, 2008, p. 340). Such a rhetoric reinforces the idea of a "South that wasn't there," to borrow the title of Michael Kreyling's book, *The South That Wasn't There: Postsouthern Memory and History* (2010). A lifestyle in the South which, incidentally, existed only for an elite, as stated by Elizabeth Fox-Genovese in *Within the Plantation Household*: "only the very wealthiest slave-holding households remotely approximated the physical luxury and ease attributed to them in the romantic legend" (Fox-Genovese, 1988, p. 105).

6 To produce that 'romantic legend,' plantation tour narratives articulate around a series of anecdotes, with the intent to downplay the true nature of plantation life. Among those anecdotes are explanations of some popular expressions such as 'sleep tight' or 'don't throw away the baby out with the bathwater,' an effective, deceiving tool that belittles the harsh realities of life on a plantation since it will most likely make the visitor smile[9]. It is actually only one of several narrative devices used by the guides at Houmas House to trivialize the slave past. Others include lingering on trifling details that receive much attention from the docent, who, for example, is asked[10] to begin the tour by telling the visitors about the symbolical meaning of a pineapple fruit in the antebellum South.[11] The anecdotes of plantation tours are often presented as fond reminiscences of the 'good ol' days,' in an attempt to create what Ewa A. Adamkiewicz calls a "commodification of white nostalgia," that is to say a presentation of history that purposefully displays the landscape of plantations as fairy-tale like spaces, barren of any kind of racial issue. For the white audience, such presentation represents "an escape into constructed memories of a more glamorous, heroic past where slavery plays only a minor role or no role at all" (Adamkiewicz, 2016, p. 16). In this respect, plantation-museums fall into the 'edutainment' category of the tourism industry, which corresponds to places where leisure activities and educational purposes merge into a business model that eventually aims to satisfy the visitor-patron, even though it implies sacrificing one aspect of plantation tourism [education] over the other [leisure] (Bright *et al.*, 2018, p. 15).

7 In the 'edutaining' plantation tours, perhaps the most influential tool of the narrative guidelines is the resort to "symbolic annihilation" of the enslaved presence, defined by Eichstedt and Small as "a powerful rhetorical and representational strategy for obscuring the institution of slavery" (Eichstedt and Small, 2002, p. 106). This narrative artifice materializes itself by either not mentioning at all the enslaved population or by

making vague references such as ‘they,’ ‘servants,’ ‘someone’—misleading expressions employed several times by the tour guide at Houmas House on a visit of the plantation in May 2019. This speaks to the enduring unease to engage the history of slavery in plantation tours (Alderman and Modlin, 2008, p. 267). Such apprehension results in the trivialization of slavery when the tour guide does mention the enslaved, but in a way that ridicules the slaves’ experiences by using ahistorical references–for instance, when referring to the ‘whistle walk.’ The ‘whistle walk’ is one of the most recurring myths heard during plantation tours, similarly to the ‘funny’ anecdotes discussed earlier aiming at lightening the mood of the visitors and that will likely make them laugh, but one that is also ludicrous. According to the myth, the master demanded that his slaves whistle while bringing the food to the Big House from the outdoor kitchen, lest they stole from the plates. In a discussion with Ibrahima Seck, Director of Research at Whitney Plantation, Dr. Seck pointed out the nonsensical character of this alleged practice—“the most ridiculous” of all the myths conveyed during plantation tours as he puts it—wisely calling to mind that the slaves were the ones cooking meals and thus had every opportunity to discreetly sample the food it they wanted to[12]. One also cannot help but wonder how a whistle sound could travel all the way from a remote outdoor kitchen to the Big House and still be heard by the master’s family. Such a fabrication in interpreting the history of plantation life encloses the African American enslaved population in a transparent and meaningless role, one that is not even worth mentioning or at least not seriously. Tiya Miles, in her book *Tales from the Haunted South: Dark Tourism and Memories of Slavery from the Civil War Era*, sums up shrewdly the impact of such a choice of interpretation:

> The people who had mattered in these tours were the slaveholding high-society families, not their chattel slaves. African American bondsmen and bondswomen had been transformed into virtual ghosts, absent and yet eerily present in historical tours as invisible laboring bodies that made their owners’ fortunes shine. (Miles, 2015, p. xxi)

8 One of the consequences is that the visitor learns virtually nothing from the tour regarding the complexity of plantation life during the antebellum era. A series of anecdotes and/or myths does not constitute comprehensive history. Instead, resorting to such practices becomes an explicit effort to preserve a specific representation of slavery, one closely linked to the rhetoric of the Lost Cause and the enduring idea of white supremacy. The Lost Cause was a coherent narrative developed after the Civil War by former Confederate officials and apologists, writers and scholars with the intent to create a “classic image of the antebellum South as a mythical realm of handsome cavaliers, white mansions, benevolent masters, and happy slaves” (Cook, 2017, p. 6). And in many ways, some tourism plantations still constitute contemporary appendages to the Lost Cause tradition.

‘Gone-with-the-Wind Plantations’ as Offspring of the Lost Cause and Strongholds of Confederate Heritage

9 Released in 1939, Victor Fleming’s *Gone with the Wind*—the screen adaptation of Margaret Mitchell’s 1936 novel—and its romanticized image of the Old South have had such a profound impact on the American psyche that its vision became ingrained in the public imagination, to the extent that many visitors of plantation sites today come to visit these historical places with preconceived representations of antebellum

plantation life. Consequently, tourism plantation owners have tended to adapt the tour narrative to fit the 'Gone-with-the-Wind mythology' (Carter, Butler and Alderman, 2014, p. 549). The result is a narrative that upholds the tropes of the Lost Cause tradition, symbolized by the representation of the slave-owning Old South in *Gone with the Wind*. Tara McPherson in *Reconstructing Dixie* points out that:

> Tara [plantation] is more than just the house in which Scarlett was born. Like the southern colonial homes popular during Mitchell's lifetime, Tara becomes a symbol of the old ways of the antebellum South, and Mitchell's mythic imaging of those landscapes works to naturalize the relationship of land-owning southerners to their property. Of course, what such a process erases is both the initial seizure of the land from its original inhabitants and the system of slave labor that allowed Tara to 'miraculously' produce cotton in the first place. It also justifies the Civil War on the basis of saving the land, dismissing slavery as an issue in the conflict. (McPherson, 2003, p. 51)

10 One corollary of this fantasized vision is to present the Confederate South as a victim of Northern aggression. In this regard, Confederate officials were the defenders of an allegedly virtuous cause. It is therefore not surprising to hear plantation tour guides proudly present masters as actively involved in the Confederacy's decisions. At Greenwood Plantation, the tour guide highlights the fact that planter William Ruffin Barrow was one of the signatories of the Louisiana ordinance of Secession in 1861, something presented here as a real accomplishment, in a move to aggrandize once again the lives and actions of the planter elite —what tourism scholars Christine Buzinde and Carla Santos call the "prowess of white gentry" (Buzinde and Santos, 2008, p. 480). Such a narrative device goes hand in hand with the rhetorical tool of Southern victimhood, which is a major Lost Cause trope and operates as an additional artifice to shift the blame on someone else, namely the 'Yankees,' and to escape from the guilt of slavery. In *Possessing the Past*, Lisa Hinrinchsen explains that "the language of victimhood itself can paradoxically form a means of managing and disavowing trauma, shifting the focus from the reality of black racial trauma to claims of equivalent white emotional injury" (Hinrinchsen, 2015, p. 25). Hence, perhaps, such an emphasis on the fantasy of the Old South in plantation tours.

11 To be able to bring the legend to life, the plantation tour guides, in addition to telling a series of romanticized interpretations of history, are indeed in some cases asked to wear period attire—and particularly hoopskirts for the female docents. The female guides thus become the incarnation of the 'Southern Belle' stereotype, another trope of the Lost Cause tradition, in which southern women were portrayed as champions of piety and purity, and as delicate creatures to be safeguarded at all costs. At Houmas House, the practice of fetichizing the female guides as the embodiment of the southern lady is reinforced by the use of additional anecdotes about social mores in the South and the sanctified character of the elite white woman.[13] Such a representational choice also speaks to the gendered vision of plantation life, mostly centered on the master and not the mistress, with the incidental idea that she had somehow nothing to do with the horrors of slavery. Catherine Clinton details the stereotypical conception of the plantation mistress: "In antebellum society, [...] a woman remained as securely bound to the land as her husband's other property. [...] Every woman was an island, isolated unto herself and locked into place by the stormy and unsettling seas of plantation slavery" (Clinton, 1982, p. 179). Depicting the antebellum southern women in such a way is but another deceptive device allowing the tour guide not to mention the violent role of the master or the mistress. It goes without saying that there is no reference

during the tour at Houmas House to any kind of physical or psychological abuse committed against the enslaved by the master or the mistress.

12 For all these reasons, it is not a stretch to state that some plantation sites today serve as strongholds of Confederate heritage—and perhaps even sanctums for Confederate pride. Houmas House is home to several Confederate artifacts, including a small shrine to William Porcher Milles, who designed one of the versions of the Confederate Flag. These artefacts cannot be viewed as simple items to decorate a historical site. Instead, they constitute memorial objects loaded with a specific history and, therefore, serve a specific purpose made clear by Houmas House's owner, Kevin Kelly. When in April 2018, Kelly offered to bring the statues of Confederate leaders that were taken down in New Orleans[14] to the grounds of Houmas House (*The Advocate*, May 26, 2018), he revealed, behind the representational choices at Houmas House, a political agenda aiming to perpetuate the tropes of the Lost Cause and to celebrate a mythical representation of the South that glorifies the rich white man's experiences, to "save the splendor of Southern living at its finest," as one of the plantation's marketing catchphrases puts it. Incidentally, Kelly's offer to relocate the Confederate statues was endorsed by Louisiana's Lieutenant Governor Billy Nungesser, who declared that Houmas House was "an ideal place for the three important monuments to be displayed, and the history and significance of each told" (Nola.com, May 1, 2018). The same Nungesser who was photographed alongside President Donald Trump himself sporting 'Trump socks'... (*The Hill*, May 14, 2019).

13 The mythical representation of the Old South therefore occupies a significant place in the plantation tourism industry. However, in the last few years, some plantation sites have moved towards a path of reforms in their interpretation of slavery and the Old South, with new curatorial trends that try to offer a counter-perspective to the traditional plantation sites.

Debunking the Myth: Giving a Voice to the Enslaved

14 Oak Alley Plantation is one of the plantations that has taken a turn to move away from the nostalgic vision of history. The turn, symbolized by the project "ReDiscover Oak Alley," launched in 2011, has brought several significant changes to the plantation experience. As one of the most visited sites in River Road, with more than 200,000 visitors per year (Alderman, Butler and Hanna, 2015, p. 5), the fact that it has changed its representational strategies in the past few years bears significance considering its impact on the plantation tourism industry. The most conspicuous transformation in the presentation of the plantation tour is perhaps the guides' appearance. In a previous visit to Oak Alley Plantation in March 2016, it was very clear to me that the tour was still very much about selling the 'Gone-with-the-Wind fantasy,' as the staff were wearing costumes, and more noticeably hoopskirts for the female guides, while selling mint juleps to the visitors. A new visit in March 2019 showed a radical evolution: the guides were clothed in simple polo shirts and regular pants. No more period attire, no more fantasy: the staff was no longer another romanticized attraction of the tour. Such a change was pushed forward by Oak Alley's former curator, Laura Kilcer, who had joined the plantation staff in 2011[15]. According to her, getting rid of the costumes was clearly a way to "move away from that sort of nostalgic, imaginative past." It would also encourage the visitors to focus on the narrative and not on the tour guide's

physical appearance. Laura Kilcer had particularly her female staff in mind: "it reduced the amount of objectivization and sexualization for my female guides."[16] These female guides were not fetish anymore, one that could be flirted with or even groped by some lewd male tourists. But changing the physical presentation of docents to focus on the narrative would mean nothing without changing the narrative itself as well. Whereas in 2016 the tour was all about the experiences of the slave-owning family, master Jacques Roman and his wife Celina, the 2019 tour narrative acknowledged the presence of the enslaved, and, more than that, it gave them a voice. Again, under the impulsion of Laura Kilcer and her staff, the interactions between the master, the mistress and their slaves were put at the center of the narrative. These interactions were embodied by Meanna, a house slave whose story contributed to telling the complexities of plantation life. By insisting on how Meanna's particular position in the Big House was tantamount to being at the core of the master's family's experiences, the curatorial changes brought about at Oak Alley Plantation spotlighted the perspective of not only a house slave–an already particular position[17]–but that of an enslaved woman inside the Big House, in other words someone whose experiences were invisible and were in fact meant to be that way. According to Laura Kilcer, there exists a sort of fascination for the plantation mistress that needed to be counterbalanced by telling the story of another woman: her house slave, who literally lived in the mistress' shadows, and consequently was highly representative of what it was like to live in the Big House.

15 Shifting the narrative and the tour's content towards an emphasis on the enslaved African Americans' experiences often takes place in the slave cabins, or what is left of them. At Evergreen Plantation, in Edgard, LA, their twenty-two original slave cabins (*cf.* figure 1) have survived, largely unchanged since the period of slavery (evergreenplantation.org, 2020), which is a rarity across the South[18]. For that reason, the slave cabins at Evergreen Plantation are an essential part of the guided tour, the last stop of the visit. And since they are original to the place, so is their location on the plantation grounds, namely at a remote distance from the Big House, where they could actually not be seen by any visitor standing by the river levee: that is to say, at a location from which someone would not be able to see the slave village. The tour at Evergreen Plantation is, therefore, organized in such a way as to bring to the forefront the experiences of the enslaved Africans and African Americans through the visit of the very place where they built a community: the cabins. As a result, before heading to the cabins, Robin, one of the tour guides at Evergreen Plantation, asks the visitors to walk quietly toward the slave village in order to, somehow, contemplate the lives of the enslaved and as a way of "showing homage" to the people who lived there[19]. A similar attitude towards paying tribute to the enslaved population in Louisiana plantations can be found at Whitney Plantation. In a tour largely, if not exclusively, dedicated to the plantation's slave community, one significant moment is the visit of the outdoor kitchen: a place of crucial importance where the black cooks prepared the meals for the master's family but also for the entire slave community. At Whitney Plantation, the visit of the kitchen allows the tour guide to insist on the invaluable contribution of the African slaves brought in Louisiana to Southern cuisine. In shaping food culture throughout the slave South and more precisely Louisiana, the enslaved retained their African roots by drawing from the West African foodways to create staple dishes such as gumbo, jambalaya and red beans and rice. These recipes now form the foundations of Louisiana Creole cooking, one of the most respected food scenes in the entire United States (Seck, 2014, p. 120-129). The presence of former slave buildings on plantation-

museums' grounds appears to be an essential feature for any slave-centric plantation tour to be complete. In this regard, part of the "ReDiscover Oak Alley" project was the creation of a massive exhibit on the enslaved community, "Slavery at Oak Alley," through the construction of replicas of slave quarters. The staff at Oak Alley went to great lengths to build slave cabins that would resemble those in which the enslaved used to live, collaborating with scholars and universities and above all visiting the original slave village at... Evergreen Plantation[20]. However, showcasing slave buildings on plantation grounds does not necessarily mean that the tour experience all of a sudden becomes slave-centric: slave buildings on plantation grounds are merely a front if they are not fully integrated in the tour. One can therefore wonder why the slave exhibit is not part of the guided tour and remains an optional visit at the tourists' discretion–thus showing how delicate the task can be for any plantation staff willing to include slavery in their experience while having to deal with the great array of visitors' sensibilities.

Figure 1. Slave cabins at Evergreen Plantation

Photo: Melaine Harnay

16 The emphasis on giving back an identity to the enslaved, so as to offer more inclusive counter-narratives to the traditional romanticized plantation tours, is at the core of Whitney Plantation's interpretative choices. As Director of Research Ibrahima Seck puts it plainly: "the goal is to tell the story of slaves" (Ibrahima Seck, April 16, 2016). Hence the entire focus on the memorialization of slaves' experiences during the tour, an approach that was decided from the onset ever since the opening of Whitney Plantation Museum in 2014. The former owner, John Cummings[21], sums up the work that is being done at Whitney Plantation, giving it an almost activist perspective: "we try, somehow, here, to define the 'it' [slavery] and unless you know what the 'it' is, don't ask the question 'why can't they [African Americans] get over it'" (John

Cummings, August 27, 2015). In other words, contrary to traditional plantation sites, Whitney is decidedly advocating a political statement that aims at placing the issue of slavery at the very core of the national discourse about the past, as exemplified by the fact that it was advertised as the very first museum in the United States dedicated to the history of slavery—and still is today. Whitney Plantation thus offers a unique perspective in comparison to other River Road plantation-museums. It features several memorials dedicated to the enslaved on its grounds, including one that pays a special tribute to the enslaved children of Whitney Plantation. In order to commemorate their existence, each visitor receives a lanyard with a small descriptive card about the life of one of these children. Afterwards, the visitor is encouraged to actually find the enslaved child presented on the card directly on the plantation grounds: small statues of enslaved children were indeed commissioned from African American artist Woodrow Nash to produce a memorial to the enslaved children, called 'The Children of Whitney' (*cf.* figure 2). As explained on the plantation website, the statues "represent these former slaves as they were at the time of emancipation: children. Whitney presents the stories of these children as told in their own words. The visitors are introduced to the lives of the enslaved workers based on the recollections of those who endured, and who shared the stories of their lives as children in slavery." (whitneyplantation.org, 2020). Likewise, the 'Allées Gwendolyn Midlo Hall'—named after the influential Louisiana historian who created a database of more than 100,000 slaves who lived in Louisiana from 1719 to 1820[22]–are composed of commemorative plaques on walls with the names of the 107,000 Blacks enslaved in Louisiana compiled by Hall's database. This insistence on memorializing those whose names and voices were erased and silenced is a singular part of what visitors of Whitney Plantation experience during their visit, an experience that differs greatly from the fantasy-based plantation tours: there is no 'feel-good' presentation of history at Whitney Plantation. In other words, the whole range of atrocities that existed during slavery is unmitigatedly presented as part of a sobering experience for the visitor, which includes walking by a graphic, gut-wrenching memorial dedicated to the enslaved victims of the 1811 German Coast revolt[23] (*cf.* figure 3)—which Dr. Seck considers as "the most important station" of the tour[24].

Figure 2. “The Children of Whitney” at Whitney Plantation Museum

Photo: Melaine Harnay

Figure 3. Memorial of the 1811 slave revolt at Whitney Plantation

Photo: Melaine Harnay

Conclusion

17 Practices in plantation tours are progressively and undeniably evolving towards a more inclusive depiction of the history of the slave South. Nevertheless, it is also obvious that the traditional, sentimentalized vision of the Old South remains widespread in tourist plantations. It appears too that the question of the representation and memorialization of slavery during these tours is heavily loaded politically. In some cases, the content of the visit of a plantation reveals a political agenda that goes beyond the issue of slavery. It is almost as if these romanticized plantation sites have become holy territories for Confederate pride. In 2015, it was discovered that Dylann Roof, the white supremacist who on June 17 perpetrated a mass shooting at Emanuel A.M.E. Church, a Black church in Charleston, South Carolina, murdering nine African American churchgoers, had visited several historical plantations and Confederate landmarks of the region. On one of the photographs he took during his "Confederate pilgrimage," Roof can be spotted posing in front of the Big House at McLeod Plantation[25]. With such a conspicuous display of bigotry, one may easily understand the need for the counternarratives about the history of slavery in plantation tours, such as Whitney's, to become commonplace. And yet the road toward social awareness seems far ahead and the damage done by these sentimentalized tours severe. Despite the emergence of new interpretive strategies focusing on the African Americans' experiences, plantation museums remain unattractive tourist destinations for Black people, as if they had internalized the fact that these historical places were still tailored for a white audience. And they are, regrettably, not that far from the reality of plantation-museums: according to a survey conducted by scholars Perry Carter and Candace F. Bright (2016, p. 268), most of the visitors of tourist plantations are well-off white people over 50[26]. Here, tourist plantations face a business conundrum: how can they reconcile the inclusion of the history of slavery and of the enslaved with the diversity of tourists' expectations? The question implies an extensive study of visitors' typology and expectations when touring a plantation site. Some scholars have started to discuss this question, by trying to determine who the typical visitors are and how they may very well influence the content of the plantation tour itself (see Bright and Carter, 2016; Alderman and Modlin, 2016). Foreign tourists, especially Europeans, for example, tend to expect a significant discussion on slavery when they visit a plantation, but they also represent only a small portion of the patronage. Conversely, some visitors might just go on a plantation to experience the "fantasy of the Old South living." In other words, how does a tourist plantation take on the topic of slavery when one part of the visitors might welcome such an inclusion whereas another would feel deeply disgruntled about it? In both cases, the tourist plantation faces the risk of losing attendance and therefore revenues. There is also the question of Black visitors: shouldn't the plantation-museums now become places designed to welcome particularly African Americans after having neglected their experiences for so long? Jane Boddie, Director of Evergreen Plantation, told me that they were increasingly receiving descendants of slaves willing to learn more about their ancestors[27]–raising another range of questions having to do with the field of tourism, and more precisely "roots/genealogy tourism." A lot more research is necessary to answer these questionings. The motivations behind representational changes in tourist plantations may be key to understanding the reluctance of many plantation sites to fully engage in a complete incorporation of the history of slavery and of the enslaved as part of their tour experience. Sites adopting the train of reforms

simply for new business opportunities and profits are likely to fall short of their laudable intentions to discuss the topic in the first place. On the other hand, activist sites dedicated to promoting exclusively the story of the slaves from the onset, like Whitney Plantation, may encounter other representational issues. Because after all, one might argue that the type of memorialization of slavery found at Whitney Plantation is as politically engaged—some would go as far as saying ideologically tainted—as the white-centric interpretation of most tourist plantations. In a discussion with Director of Research at Whitney, Dr. Seck, reacting to this type of criticism, explained that "we cannot satisfy everyone" and that the real problem "[was] to do nothing." Quoting John Cummings, former owner of the plantation-museum, he continued: "we may be doing something wrong, but at least we're doing something..."[28]

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NOTES

1. Several operators are dedicated only to offering tours of River Road plantations, such as https://www.plantationadventure.com/ and https://plantationparade.com/.
2. Six million visitors have toured the grounds of Oak Alley Plantation since 1974, according to a self-promoting sign at the entrance of the historical site, last visited in May 2019.
3. The movement that was initially focused on mass incarceration and police brutality has recently turned into a greater civil rights movement urging for racial justice as a whole and for better recognition of the critical role of African Americans in the development of the American nation throughout its history–and particularly on the central place of slavery.
4. The origin of the opening of Whitney Plantation as a slavery museum pre-dated the above-mentioned social calls for change since the project began in the early 2000s, not long after Louisiana lawyer John Cummings acquired the plantation grounds in 1999 and decided to invest his own fortune in the creation of a plantation museum dedicated to the history of slavery. For a

detailed account of the elaboration of Whitney Plantation Museum, see Ibrahima Seck in *Bouki Fait Gombo* (2014).

5. From March to May 2019, I visited sixteen plantation-museums from Louisiana's River Road, each time taking part in a guided tour as a tourist. These tours ranged from half an hour to an hour and a half depending on the plantation site. I paid specific attention to the narrative presented by the guides, as well as to the different museum practices of each site.

6. This idea of a "whitewashed" plantation tour was shrewdly introduced in Butler's pioneering study of these "whitewashing plantations" in which he analyzed the brochures of over 100 tourist plantations throughout the South (Butler, 2001).

7. Visit of Greenwood Plantation by the author on March 21, 2019.

8. Emphasis added, leaflet collected on a visit of Houmas House in March 2019.

9. According to the tour guide at Greenwood Plantation on March 21, 2019, the expression originated in the fact that people in the antebellum era would not bathe on a regular basis and that, when they did so, the entire family used the same water – the baby being the last to be bathed. One can easily imagine the somewhat relative cleanness of the bathwater after such a process, and the tragic accident which could ensue when getting rid of the murky water...

10. Based on personal observations from two visits of Houmas House, the tour guide must follow a specific script, with close to no leeway to deviate from it. In other words, even though there are several docents in the staff, the tour narrative remains basically the same. This speaks to the relative agency of tour guides in plantation tours. For more on this issue of agency and performance of plantation guides, see Amy Potter (2015). Regarding tour guides as "creators of empathy" and how they unequally appeal to the visitors' emotions when speaking about the planter class and not the enslaved, see Modlin, Alderman and Gentry (2011).

11. Pineapple being scarce at the time, it was a sign of exterior wealth to be able to procure the fruit. A planter willing to display his wealth would therefore greet his guests with a pineapple offered as a welcoming present.

12. Personal discussion with Ibrahima Seck on April 17, 2019.

13. It was said for example that if a gentleman happened to see the ankle of a white lady, he had the moral obligation to marry her. If not, the lady's family and herself would be disgraced...

14. After a long ideological battle over the historical significance of former Confederate General Robert E. Lee's statue and whether it was a symbol of Black oppression or an honorable southern heritage, former New Orleans Mayor Mitch Landrieu, who pushed for the removal of the statue since he viewed the monument as a celebration of white supremacy, had Lee's statue removed on May 19, 2017 (*The Guardian*, May 20, 2017).

15. Personal interview with Laura Kilcer on May 23, 2019.

16. *Ibid.*

17. Beyond the romanticized representation of the house slave as an "elite" among the enslaved, which depicted them as supposedly well-fed, well-clad, and well-treated, the house slaves were to be ready to serve their master and mistress at all hours of the day, often at night too, and had to endure their whims and outbursts as well as to meet their unachievable expectations. The result was inevitably violence, harsh treatments, and abuse of all kinds against the house slaves. For their part, female house slaves experienced the double burden of toiling in the Big House and being a woman, therefore potentially bearing the brunt of their master's sexual urges and assaults. (White, 1999, p. 49-50).

18. Most slave cabins simply did not resist age and decay as they were very often poorly built– and were also not considered worth saving. Some of the cabins were destroyed during the Civil War because they were reminiscences of an inconvenient past. This is why only about 30% of plantation sites nowadays still have slave cabins standing on their grounds (Eichstedt and Small. 2002. p. 99).

19. Personal visit of Evergreen Plantation on April 17, 2019, quote from Robin's tour narrative.

20. Personal interview with Hillary Loeber, Marketing Director at Oak Alley Plantation, on May 13, 2019. For a more extensive analysis on this aspect, see Stephen P. Hanna (2015).
21. John Cummings stepped down as owner of the Whitney Plantation in late 2019. The plantation-museum is now run as a nonprofit 501(c)3 organization.
22. "The Afro-Louisiana History and Genealogy, 1719-1820" database is available at https://www.ibiblio.org/laslave/.
23. German Coast Revolt of January 11, 1811 is the largest slave revolt in U.S. history, involving about 200 slaves who marched on several sugarcane plantations towards New Orleans (Follett, *The Sugar Masters*, 2007, p. 134). The uprising was quickly quelled and the slaves in charge were beheaded. Their heads were impaled on posts displayed in front of their respective former plantations – as a gloomy reminder of what the enslaved could expect from any attempt to rise against their masters (Seck, 2014, p. 112-115).
24. Quote from a personal visit of Whitney Plantation on April 14, 2019, with Dr. Seck as a tour guide.
25. The photo can be seen at https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/dec/11/plantation-weddings-are-wrong-why-is-it-so-hard-for-white-americans-to-admit-that.
26. More precisely, according to Carter and Bright, a typical visitor would be around 50-year-old, from a white household earning more than $100k per year, living in another state, and with a college degree.
27. Personal discussion with Jane Boddie on April 12, 2019.
28. Personal discussion with Ibrahima Seck on April 17, 2019.

ABSTRACTS

Former slave plantations that are now converted into tourist attractions constitute places of memory inherently associated with the memorialization of slavery in the United States. These plantation-museums are a central element of tourism in the South, as exemplified by the numerous tour-operators organizing visits of these historical sites. Louisiana offers a prime choice for anyone willing to embark on a plantation tour. "River Road," the region following the course of the Mississippi River between New Orleans and Baton Rouge, is now the hotspot for plantation tourism in Louisiana, attracting busloads of visitors. However, tourism plantations have long constructed their tours around a fantasized vision of the slave South, and many, to this day, still offer an idealized representation of that period. In recent years, others have chosen instead to focus on a more accurate interpretation of slavery that therefore deconstructs the romanticized narrative of plantation tours. In this article, I examine curatorial practices in several plantations to analyze the deconstruction of the main narrative and the more or less defined inclusion of the history of the enslaved.

Les anciennes plantations aujourd'hui reconverties en destinations touristiques apparaissent comme des lieux de mémoire intrinsèquement liés à la représentation de l'esclavage aux États-Unis. Elles font partie intégrante du tourisme dans le Sud, comme en témoignent les nombreuses compagnies touristiques qui en proposent une visite, dans des sites qui ont longtemps élaboré leur muséographie autour d'un imaginaire reposant sur une représentation idéalisée de la société esclavagiste tout en passant sous silence les sombres réalités de l'institution. La Louisiane fait aujourd'hui figure de destination privilégiée pour la visite de ces plantations. La région de River

Road, entre La Nouvelle-Orléans et les environs de Bâton-Rouge, y forme aujourd'hui une véritable « route des plantations » touristique qui attire des cars entiers de visiteurs. Cependant, si certaines plantations continuent de proposer aux visiteurs une représentation magnifiée des lieux, d'autres cherchent désormais à déconstruire l'imaginaire mythifié de la plantation du Vieux Sud et ont, depuis quelques années, modifié leurs pratiques muséales pour offrir une mise en mémoire nouvelle de l'esclavage. Par l'examen de pratiques muséales dans diverses plantations, cet article étudie la déconstruction du discours touristique dominant vers une inclusion plus ou moins marquée de l'histoire des esclaves.

INDEX

Mots-clés: esclavage, Louisiane, plantations-musées, tourisme, mémorialisation
Keywords: plantation-museums, Louisiana, slavery, memorialization, tourism

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« *What happens here, stays here* » : origines, cristallisation et recomposition des imaginaires touristiques de Las Vegas

"What Happens Here, Stays Here": Genesis, Crystallization, and Renewal of Las Vegas Tourism Imaginaries

Pascale Nédélec

1 Las Vegas, dans l'État du Nevada, est une destination touristique de premier plan aux États-Unis, avec 42,5 millions de visiteurs en 2019, connue pour ses immenses hôtels-casinos et leur extravagance architecturale, ainsi que pour son caractère festif et ses divertissements en tous genres. Elle occupe une place à part dans les représentations collectives des États-Uniens, comme le démontre la multitude de références à Las Vegas, et à ses week-ends de débauche, dans les productions artistiques, films et séries télévisées en tête (Gragg, 2013 ; Eumann, 2005 ; Block, 2011).

2 Cet article propose de mettre en regard la popularité de la destination touristique végasienne, tant en termes de fréquentation que de place dans l'opinion publique, avec la force de ses imaginaires touristiques. Cette notion est définie dans la lignée des imaginaires spatiaux et de la géographie culturelle. Elle s'inscrit dans le champ des études sur le tourisme, qui l'a popularisée dans les années 2000-2010 (Amirou, 1995 ; Salazar, 2011 ; Salazar et Graburn, 2014 ; Gravari-Barbas et Graburn, 2016). Je propose la définition suivante, qui sera approfondie dans le corps de l'article, comme point de départ : somme des images et des représentations initialement produites et utilisées par les acteurs de la sphère touristique, puis diffusée et appropriée par le reste de la société, fonctionnant comme un système de représentations, structuré et structurant (Nédélec, 2016 b, p. 80-82). À partir d'un corpus d'œuvres artistiques et de campagnes publicitaires (*cf. infra*), j'identifie trois composantes principales des imaginaires touristiques végasiens, que je place aux fondements de son attractivité touristique : la pratique des jeux d'argent, le divertissement sous toutes ses formes et la licence, voire

la débauche. Il s'agit dès lors de décrypter les origines de ces imaginaires puis, dans une perspective diachronique, d'en identifier les différentes déclinaisons de leur apparition au début du XX^e^ siècle jusqu'au début du XXI^e^ siècle.

3 Les imaginaires touristiques étant, par définition, produits par les acteurs du secteur touristique, la dimension actorielle est étudiée en détails pour comprendre les objectifs de leur définition et de leur construction, et les mesures concrètes mises en place pour les diffuser, voire les cristalliser. Cette analyse permet de souligner l'implication précoce et innovante des propriétaires d'hôtels-casinos dans la promotion touristique et la communication à l'échelle nationale. L'article se concentre alors sur les principales campagnes publicitaires de promotion touristique menées par les acteurs du secteur du tourisme végasien. Leur marge de manœuvre est interrogée afin de mettre en évidence leurs réussites comme les limites de leurs actions, à la fois en termes de construction des imaginaires touristiques et d'appropriation par les récepteurs, que constituent d'abord les touristes, puis l'opinion collective états-unienne.

4 En effet, une fois façonnés par les acteurs du secteur touristique, les imaginaires touristiques sont appropriés, plus ou moins profondément, par l'opinion publique, qui participe aussi à leur diffusion et à leur cristallisation. L'exemple végasien est particulièrement intéressant pour articuler producteurs et récepteurs des imaginaires touristiques. Il s'agit ici de montrer, plus précisément, les formes d'appropriation par la culture populaire des campagnes de promotion touristique. La campagne « *What happens here* » est mise en exergue pour incarner les interrelations entre imaginaires, à la fois touristiques et spatiaux, le slogan éponyme étant désormais devenu une expression idiomatique aux États-Unis.

5 Cet article fait ainsi l'hypothèse que la force et la diffusion mondiale des imaginaires touristiques végasiens s'expliquent par un processus de cristallisation précoce, intervenu dès le milieu du XX^e^ siècle, et renforcé jusqu'à nos jours par les différentes campagnes de promotion touristique. C'est cette force même qui expliquerait, dans un second temps, les possibilités très limitées de leur redéfinition, en dépit d'investissements conséquents par les acteurs du secteur touristique végasien. Je démontre que les imaginaires touristiques végasiens sont ainsi caractérisés par leur inertie, en raison de leur désirabilité au sein de l'ensemble de la société états-unienne du début du XXI^e^ siècle.

6 Cet article s'appuie sur un travail de thèse consacré à la spécialisation touristique de Las Vegas et à ses conséquences sur l'urbanité de l'aire urbaine végasienne et la citadinité de ses habitants (Nédélec, 2017). Les campagnes de publicité menées entre 2000 et 2020 par la Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority (LVCVA) – partenariat public-privé de promotion touristique de la destination végasienne – sont le principal matériau mobilisé. Il est complété par un corpus d'œuvres artistiques produites sur Las Vegas depuis le début du XX^e^ siècle, issu des travaux d'Ingrid Eumann (2005) qui recense 286 œuvres littéraires écrites sur Las Vegas entre 1938 et 2002 et 250 œuvres cinématographiques ; et de Larry Gragg qui a étudié la perception de Las Vegas dans la culture populaire américaine au travers de « 150 films, plus de 200 émissions de télévisions, plus de 200 romans, près de 1 500 articles de presse et plus de 200 articles de magasines » (2013, p. ix).

7 Tout d'abord, je mesure la popularité de Las Vegas en tant que destination touristique et l'articule aux imaginaires touristiques spécifiques qui la définissent dans les

représentations collectives. Ce premier temps est l'occasion d'approfondir la définition et les ancrages théoriques de la notion d'imaginaires touristiques. Puis, les origines et le processus de cristallisation des imaginaires touristiques végasiens sont étudiés en insistant sur le rôle des acteurs locaux. Enfin, l'article interroge la capacité des acteurs du secteur touristique à renouveler les imaginaires touristiques végasiens, en cherchant à identifier les racines de leur longévité et de leur inertie.

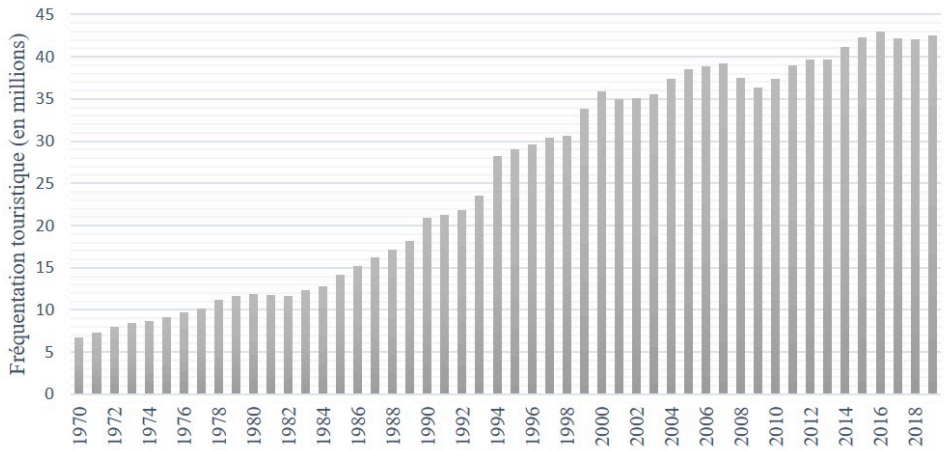
Une destination touristique mondialement connue

La capitale mondiale des jeux d'argent et des casinos

8 Las Vegas s'est imposée depuis un demi-siècle comme l'une des principales destinations touristiques états-uniennes, pour les touristes domestiques comme étrangers[1]. Même s'il n'existe pas de classement faisant autorité pour comparer les fréquentations touristiques des villes états-uniennes, il est possible d'affirmer qu'elle rivalise avec les principaux pôles touristiques du pays, à savoir : Orlando (75 millions de visiteurs en 2018), New York (67 millions en 2019), Chicago (55 millions en 2018) ou encore Los Angeles (50 millions en 2019)[2].

9 Depuis 1970, date des premières statistiques touristiques collectées par la LVCVA, le nombre de visiteurs à Las Vegas est en progression constante. Deux courtes périodes de diminution font exception : à la suite des attentats du 11 septembre 2001, qui ont fortement ralenti le trafic aérien, et pendant la récession provoquée par la crise des *subprimes* en 2007 (*cf.* tableau 1). Il n'aura toutefois fallu « que » cinq ans pour que la ville renoue avec ses niveaux de fréquentation d'avant la crise économique. Depuis 2014, plus de 40 millions de touristes se rendent chaque année en moyenne à Las Vegas, avec une fréquentation record en 2016, de 42,9 millions de visiteurs (LVCVA, 2019).

Tableau 1. Fréquentation touristique de Las Vegas (1970-2019)



Source : P. Nédélec, 2021, d'après LVCVA, 2019.

10 La grande majorité des touristes sont états-uniens (86 % en 2019), et viennent notamment de Californie du Sud (18 % du total en 2019), soit la partie méridionale de l'État, de la frontière mexicaine jusqu'au 36e parallèle, incluant les aires urbaines de Los Angeles et de San Diego (peuplées respectivement de 18,7 et 3,3 millions d'habitants

selon le Bureau du recensement en 2019). La proximité géographique avec l'une des régions les plus peuplées des États-Unis explique en partie la popularité de Las Vegas. La ville se situe à 430 km du centre-ville de Los Angeles, soit une distance-temps d'environ 4 h30 de route, très faible aux yeux des États-Uniens et d'autant plus acceptable que l'accessibilité à la ville est très bonne grâce à la liaison via l'autoroute *Interstate 15*.

11 Enfin, si Las Vegas est avant tout connue pour ses immenses hôtels-casinos et leur extravagance architecturale, elle offre bien plus aux visiteurs que la pratique des jeux d'argent. Son offre touristique se caractérise par la diversité, aussi bien en termes d'activités et de divertissements que de gammes de prix, la rendant accessible à tous les budgets.

Rôle des imaginaires touristiques et spatiaux dans la popularité touristique

12 Je propose de définir les imaginaires touristiques comme la somme des images et des représentations initialement produite et utilisée par les acteurs de la sphère touristique, puis diffusées et appropriée par le reste de la société, fonctionnant comme un système de représentations, structuré et structurant (Nédélec, 2016b, p. 80). La notion d'imaginaires touristiques s'inscrit dans le champ des études sur le tourisme (Amirou, 1995 ; Salazar, 2011 ; Salazar et Graburn, 2014 ; Gravari-Barbas et Graburn, 2016). Ils relèvent d'une catégorie spécifique d'imaginaires spatiaux, que je définis comme un ensemble d'images, de valeurs et d'associations d'idées qui confèrent une signification à un lieu ou à une catégorie d'espace, qu'elle soit positive ou négative. Ces deux définitions s'inscrivent ainsi dans les travaux de géographie culturelle (Guinard, 2019, p. 137-139, p. 171-173) portant sur l'image et l'imaginaire (Gregory, 1993 ; Monnet, 1993 ; Debarbieux, 1995, 2015 ; Lussault, 2001), eux-mêmes dans la filiation des travaux sur l'espace vécu et perçu (Lefebvre, 1974 ; Frémont, 1976). Les imaginaires intéressent les géographes en ce qu'ils ont la capacité d'orienter la production de l'espace.

13 Les imaginaires s'incarnent aussi bien dans des supports matériels et concrets (photographies, affiches publicitaires, cartographies, dessins, sons enregistrés, vidéos télévisuelles et cinématographiques...) que dans des supports immatériels, comme les récits et les associations d'idées produits par des individus isolés ou les médias (presse, télévision, réseaux sociaux). Ils s'intègrent dans un « imaginaire social » plus vaste (Zukin *et al.*, 1998, p. 629) qui articule les spécificités culturelles, historiques, idéologiques et religieuses d'un groupe social. Les imaginaires, touristiques comme spatiaux, cristallisent des jugements de valeur portés par une société donnée, à une époque donnée, et par conséquent sont des constructions sociales non figées et en permanente évolution. Une étude diachronique permet d'en identifier les invariants et les recompositions, en faisant émerger les thématiques et les leitmotivs récurrents dans l'ensemble de ces supports et en identifiant les périodes d'évolution (apparition, disparition, cristallisation).

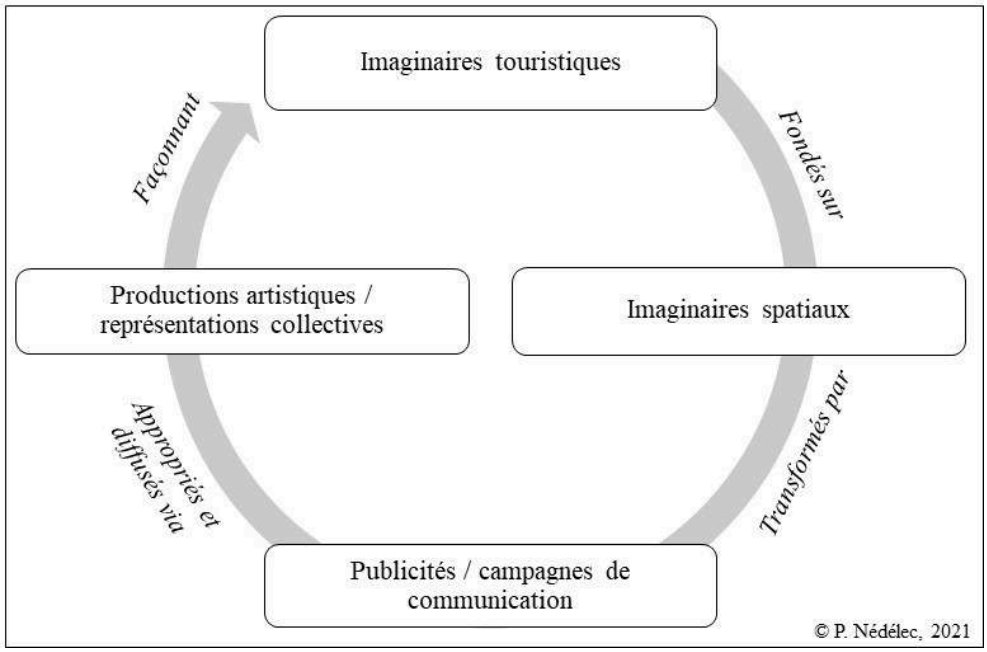
14 Les imaginaires touristiques se distinguent des imaginaires spatiaux sur deux points. Tout d'abord, leur production est initialement le fait des acteurs du secteur touristique, acteurs privés comme publics chargés de la promotion touristique (chambre de commerce, agence de promotion touristique, élus locaux...). Ensuite, les imaginaires

touristiques ne mettent en avant que des aspects attractifs et valorisants, sélectionnés avec attention et intérêt par les acteurs touristiques. En cela, ils diffèrent des imaginaires spatiaux, expressions aussi bien du désintérêt ou du dégoût, que de l'attrait et de l'appréciation.

15 Les acteurs du secteur touristique vont chercher à cristalliser des imaginaires spatiaux déjà positifs ou bien à inverser la perception d'une destination, en substituant les représentations négatives par d'autres, plus attractives, afin de capter un plus grand nombre de visiteurs et d'augmenter ainsi les retombées financières. Les imaginaires touristiques sont ainsi le fruit d'un processus de sélection et d'exclusion de certaines caractéristiques ou éléments historiques d'un lieu, afin de proposer une vision unifiée, attractive et expurgée de toute aspérité. Ils doivent dès lors informer les visiteurs de ce qu'ils peuvent attendre de leur expérience touristique et ainsi leur donner envie de se rendre dans telle ou telle destination. Ils s'inscrivent en cela dans les théories de la mise en récit ou *storytelling* (Salmon, 2007). Dans cette perspective, on peut constater des distorsions, plus ou moins grandes, entre imaginaires touristiques et imaginaires spatiaux, dont ceux produits par les populations locales.

16 La logique systémique des imaginaires touristiques s'incarne dans l'imbrication et les influences réciproques en termes de supports – entre des imageries publicitaires, des faits historiques et des productions audiovisuelles – et de catégories d'acteurs. La notion se distingue ainsi de celle de marketing touristique en ce qu'elle permet d'inclure et d'insister sur l'appropriation par les acteurs individuels, qu'ils soient touristes ou habitants des destinations touristiques concernées (Nédélec, 2017, p. 203-213). En effet, si les imaginaires touristiques sont majoritairement conçus comme un outil de promotion touristique et diffusés notamment via les visuels et campagnes publicitaires, ils ne fonctionnent toutefois pas en vase clos et sont, dans un second temps, recomposés selon une logique systémique par leur imbrication avec les productions issues de la société civile et de la culture populaire, qui influencent ou orientent à leur tour les productions des acteurs du secteur touristique.

Illustration 1. Fonctionnement systémique des imaginaires touristiques



Source : P. Nédélec, 2021

17 La particularité des imaginaires végasiens repose sur la très grande médiatisation de la ville (Eumann, 2005 ; Gragg, 2013). Dès lors, il est parfois difficile de distinguer nettement la chronologie d'apparition des imaginaires spatiaux, matérialisés par la multitude d'œuvres artistiques consacrées à Las Vegas, et celle des imaginaires touristiques, d'autant que les premiers s'appuient sur les seconds pour alimenter leur représentation (*cf. infra*).

Pratique des jeux d'argent, divertissement et licence : le triptyque des imaginaires touristiques végasiens

18 À partir de l'analyse des campagnes publicitaires et des œuvres artistiques consacrées à Las Vegas, j'ai identifié trois thèmes structurant les imaginaires végasiens : la pratique des jeux d'argent, les divertissements et la licence (Nédélec, 2017, p. 44-52).

19 Tout d'abord, Las Vegas a longtemps représenté l'unique possibilité de jouer légalement aux jeux d'argent aux États-Unis. La spécialisation touristique dans les casinos découle en effet d'une spécificité juridique : pendant 47 ans, de 1931 à 1978, l'État du Nevada était le seul du pays à autoriser légalement toutes les formes de jeux d'argent (Moehring et Green, 2005). Ce monopole a pris fin avec la légalisation des jeux d'argent dans le New Jersey en 1978, puis par la légalisation et la démocratisation des jeux d'argent dans l'ensemble du pays[3] (Findlay, 1986 ; Schwartz, 2006, p. 303-319). L'ampleur des revenus des établissements de jeux indique l'importance de ce loisir : en 2019, les casinos du comté de Clark ont collecté 10,3 milliards de dollars, dont 6,5 pour les seuls établissements du quartier du Strip[4] (LVCVA, 2019). Toutefois, la popularité des jeux d'argent diminue progressivement (*cf.* tableau 2). Depuis le début des années 2000, les tables de jeu des casinos ne sont plus les activités les plus rentables,

devancées par les dépenses d'hébergement et de restauration (LVCVA & Applied Analysis, 2012 ; Nevada Gaming Control Board, 2020).

Tableau 2. Diversification des dépenses des touristes dans les hôtels-casinos du Strip, à Las Vegas

Année	Pourcentage des recettes des hôtels-casinos	Dépenses totales
1991	57,8 %	
2000	45,9 %	4,68 millions $
2010	39 %	5,16 millions $
2019	27 %	

Note : outre les dépenses liées aux jeux d'argent (*gaming*), sont également recensées les dépenses liées à l'hébergement, à la nourriture et aux boissons, ainsi que les « autres » dépenses (attractions et spectacles divers).

Source : LVCVA & Applied Analysis, 2012 ; Nevada Gaming Control Board, 2020.

20 Les imaginaires touristiques végasiens sont par ailleurs structurés par le divertissement et le plaisir (*fun*), comme en témoigne son surnom de « capitale mondiale du divertissement » (*Entertainment Capital of the World*). La destination rassemble casinos, bars et restaurants, centres commerciaux pour le shopping, spectacles (concerts, cirque, magie…), piscines et spas, ou encore attractions à sensations fortes (grand huit, tyrolienne géante), bowlings et quelques musées. L'architecture même des hôtels-casinos est devenue une forme de divertissement en soi (Hannigan,1998, p. 81-100 ; Nédélec, 2016a).

21 Enfin, les imaginaires touristiques végasiens sont dominés par la liberté de faire la fête, jusqu'à l'excès, et de s'affranchir des normes sociales en matière d'interactions sexuelles. Las Vegas est en effet perçue comme une destination sulfureuse, où licence et débauche sont permises, voire attendues, rompant ainsi avec la bienséance et la moralité dominantes « à la maison ». La consommation ostentatoire d'alcool et la sexualisation des interactions sont des motifs majeurs d'attractivité pour de nombreux visiteurs, par exemple lors des très populaires enterrements de vie de jeunes filles/de garçons[5], dont la mobilisation dans la littérature, le cinéma ou la musique participe d'un effet de prophétie autoréalisatrice (Staszak, 2000) et conditionne en partie les visiteurs dans leurs attentes touristiques.

22 Les surnoms donnés à la destination confirment la force de cette composante des imaginaires touristiques végasiens : « ville du péché » (*Sin City*) et « terrain de jeu pour adultes » (*adults playground*). Comme le montrent les travaux de Richard Campanella (2008, p. 279-288), loin d'être triviale, l'accumulation de surnoms participe à la sédimentation des imaginaires touristiques et cristallise les attributs végasiens dans les représentations collectives. Ils témoignent aussi de l'affirmation de l'exceptionnalité végasienne dans l'opinion collective états-unienne (Nédélec, 2017, p. 65-67).

23 Reliant ces trois composantes, les imaginaires touristiques végasiens reposent sur les thèmes de l'affranchissement par rapport aux normes et du sentiment de liberté qui en découle. Las Vegas est perçue comme une destination touristique où tous les plaisirs sont accessibles aux touristes et envisageables, même si condamnés par la norme

sociale. Cette représentation de la liberté permise par la destination touristique végasienne s'explique par le contexte historique et politique de naissance de l'aire urbaine de Las Vegas.

Origines et cristallisation des imaginaires touristiques végasiens

Naissance de Las Vegas au sein du *Wild Wild West*

24 Las Vegas doit son existence à la présence de sources artésiennes dans le désert de Mojave. Cette ressource explique la fixation d'un peuplement, d'abord amérindien, puis de colons à partir des années 1820 pendant la conquête de l'Ouest. Terre de colonisation tardive, l'Ouest américain se distingue historiquement du reste du continent. Le jeu y occupe par exemple une place importante : il est très pratiqué par les colons et les mineurs, qui n'avaient que peu d'autres occupations récréatives dans ce vaste territoire peu développé. Ainsi, la pratique du jeu est attestée dès les origines du Nevada[6] (Roske, 1990).

25 Dans la seconde moitié du XIX[e] siècle, la volonté des autorités nationales d'interdire les jeux d'argent, par souci de bienséance et de moralité, est contrebalancée par le laxisme général et l'impossibilité matérielle de faire respecter les textes de loi dans une région encore largement livrée à elle-même. Progressivement, les responsables politiques locaux prennent conscience de la manne financière que représenterait un encadrement des jeux d'argent. La perspective est d'autant plus intéressante que peu d'autres alternatives économiques existent en raison de la pauvreté généralisée des sols, du climat désertique et de la faiblesse des quelques gisements miniers. L'année 1931 marque la légalisation définitive de la pratique des jeux d'argent dans l'État (Moody, 1994). L'institutionnalisation du jeu au Nevada s'explique donc par des motivations historiques, à la fois économiques et culturelles (Raento, 2003), qui constituent le terreau des imaginaires touristiques végasiens.

26 Les imaginaires touristiques végasiens se sont ainsi bâtis sur l'imaginaire de la Frontière (*Frontier*) et la conquête de l'Ouest. Las Vegas est aujourd'hui considérée par de nombreux États-Uniens comme « *wild* » (soit sauvage, dépravée) parce qu'elle incarne, jusqu'à nos jours, la grande liberté des pionniers états-uniens et leur réputation de moralité légère. En tant que territoire de la Frontière, les autorités du Nevada ont longtemps toléré, voire autorisé, des pratiques interdites ailleurs, juridiquement comme moralement. C'est par ce statut juridique unique aux États-Unis que Las Vegas a construit sa réputation d'une destination où les individus peuvent faire ce qui est interdit et condamné dans le reste du pays. De cette originalité juridique a découlé un assouplissement des normes morales et sociales, autorisant de façon temporaire la licence et des comportements sulfureux de la part des visiteurs. Une formule d'un journaliste local synthétise de façon familière la perception des comportements associés à Las Vegas : « *une passion pour le jeu, la bibine et la fête jusqu'au bout de la nuit* » (Lasker, 2011). Cela illustre le glissement de l'idée de liberté de faire tout ce que l'on veut à celle de licence.

27 L'impression d'impunité pour les touristes, aux fondements des imaginaires touristiques végasiens, est renforcée par la localisation géographique de Las Vegas, lieu isolé dans le désert de Mojave, éloigné des grands centres urbains et relativement

indépendant et autonome en termes juridiques, comme le montre la légalisation des jeux d'argent (Randlett, 2008). Dès lors, Las Vegas semble être, aux yeux de nombreux États-Uniens, située en dehors du monde normé, en dehors de la civilisation et des règles de bienséance, et, ainsi, à l'abri des règles qui régissent ailleurs la société. Cet isolement apparent renforce l'impression que les écarts commis à Las Vegas n'auront pas de répercussions sur la vie des touristes en dehors de leur séjour, que Las Vegas est une sorte d'île sur laquelle les visiteurs peuvent s'échapper pour quelques heures ou quelques jours avant de retrouver la bienséance de leur quotidien.

28 On constate ici un décalage entre l'imaginaire de l'île isolée du monde civilisé et l'accessibilité[7], aussi bien routière qu'aérienne, de la destination. Las Vegas jouit donc d'une situation qui paraît idéale pour les touristes : suffisamment éloignée des lieux de vie quotidiens, normés et régulés par la bienséance, et suffisamment proche des centres urbains, notamment californiens, pour ne pas décourager leur venue.

Une intervention précoce de la publicité

29 La promotion touristique de Las Vegas, menée précocement par des acteurs locaux, a fortement mobilisé les motifs de l'isolement, source de liberté, et de l'affranchissement par rapport aux normes du cadre quotidien. Dès les années 1920, la chambre de commerce locale puis des institutions entièrement consacrées au développement du tourisme conçoivent des campagnes de publicité mettant en scène ces imaginaires. L'historien Larry Gragg (2013, p. 19-36) décrit ainsi les campagnes de promotion de Las Vegas en tant que « *Last Frontier Town* » (dernière ville de la Frontière) mises en place dans les années 1940.

30 De plus, la proximité de Los Angeles, et des célébrités d'Hollywood, a très tôt été exploitée par les acteurs du secteur touristique. Dès les années 1940, la chambre de commerce de Las Vegas et les publicitaires des premiers casinos du Strip ont œuvré pour que des réalisateurs viennent mettre en scène et en images Las Vegas. Franck Sinatra est ainsi devenu l'une des figures phares de la promotion des imaginaires touristiques végasiens dans l'après Seconde Guerre, appuyé par ses acolytes du « *Rat Pack* »[8] (Gragg, 2013, p. 4). Dans leur sillage, de nombreuses stars de cinéma ont été invitées par les propriétaires d'hôtels-casinos pour faire la promotion de leurs établissements au travers de reportages photographiques dans des revues à grand tirage comme *Life*.

31 Dans les années 1940-1960, les publicitaires mettent ainsi en avant le glamour et le chic des hôtels-casinos de Las Vegas, incarnés par les images de certaines des célébrités considérées comme les plus attirantes de la société états-unienne se divertissant au bord des piscines ou aux tables de jeu. L'objectif conscient est de faire des vedettes d'Hollywood des vecteurs de diffusion des imaginaires touristiques, afin de donner envie à tous les États-Uniens de goûter à la vie de star. Cela démontre l'imbrication très étroite entre campagnes de marketing et cristallisation progressive au sein de l'opinion publique états-unienne de la désirabilité sociale de Las Vegas en tant que destination touristique.

32 Depuis 1955, la Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority (LVCVA), fruit d'un partenariat public-privé, est le principal acteur de conceptualisation et de diffusion des imaginaires touristiques végasiens. Elle est gérée par un conseil d'administration associant élus locaux, des échelons du comté et des municipalités de l'aire urbaine

végasienne, et dirigeants des hôtels-casinos de Las Vegas. Cette structure constitue l'un des facteurs explicatifs de la force des imaginaires touristiques végasiens. La LVCVA incarne une gouvernance touristique particulièrement efficace pour fédérer une pluralité d'acteurs privés. Elle permet de dépasser leurs rivalités afin de créer une synergie entre concurrents derrière un seul et même discours de promotion touristique et une mise en récit unique de la destination. L'adhésion des différents gestionnaires d'hôtels-casinos repose sur l'analyse que l'attractivité de la destination végasienne bénéficie à tous les établissements et donc qu'investir dans des campagnes de promotion communes est bénéfique pour l'ensemble des acteurs concernés.

Cristallisation des imaginaires touristiques : diffusion et appropriation de la campagne « *What happens here* »

33 Une campagne publicitaire en particulier est essentielle pour comprendre la diffusion et la cristallisation des imaginaires touristiques végasiens au sein de l'ensemble de la société états-unienne. Au début des années 2000, la LVCVA contacte l'agence de publicité R&R Partners pour concevoir une nouvelle campagne de promotion. Cette dernière conçoit à cette occasion une campagne intitulée « *What happens here* » (littéralement, ce qui se passe ici), raccourci de l'expression « ce qui se passe ici, reste ici » (*what happens here, stays here*). Cette expression exprime l'idée que les actions menées dans un lieu particulier, ici Las Vegas, ne seront ni diffusées ni répétées ailleurs, garantissant ainsi le secret de ce qui s'est passé à Las Vegas. Dans cette logique, il apparaît possible aux visiteurs de se comporter en toute liberté et en toute impunité dans les établissements végasiens, sans conséquence négative (jugements moraux ou religieux, disputes conjugales...) puisque les proches n'auront pas connaissance des comportements eus à Las Vegas. Quels que soient les médias employés (spots télévisés, affiches dans les aéroports, encarts dans la presse, communication sur les réseaux sociaux), la chute (*punchline*) est toujours la même : « Uniquement à Vegas » (*Only in Vegas*). Cette deuxième expression est destinée à marteler le message soutenant la campagne : Las Vegas est la seule et unique destination touristique aux États-Unis, voire dans le monde, qui permette une telle liberté de comportement. L'ambition est donc d'insister sur l'avantage comparatif de Las Vegas, aussi bien par rapport à d'autres destinations festives qu'à d'autres destinations où pratiquer les jeux d'argent.

34 Si la campagne « *What happens here* » a si bien fonctionné, c'est donc parce qu'elle synthétise à mots couverts les motifs, évoqués plus haut, de l'affranchissement et de la liberté, déjà présents dans les représentations collectives des États-Uniens. Selon J. Candido, l'un des deux créateurs de la campagne, la réussite réside dans la force de suggestion des slogans plutôt que dans une explicitation directe de l'expérience offerte par Las Vegas : « Nous savions que nous ne pouvions pas montrer ce que les gens font à Las Vegas aux heures de grande écoute à la télévision, alors le slogan les laisse deviner » (cité dans Friess, 2004). Le succès fut tel qu'une enquête du journal *USA Today* a déclaré la campagne « la plus efficace » (*most effective*) de l'année 2003 et que la revue professionnelle *Advertising Age* l'a qualifiée de « phénomène culturel » (Friess, 2004). Consécration ultime, en 2011, la campagne intègre le *Madison Avenue Advertising Walk of Fame* à New York, récompense la plus prisée du monde publicitaire états-unien, en battant notamment le slogan de Nike « *Just Do It* » (Katsilometes, 2011).

35 Cette campagne publicitaire a ainsi non seulement cristallisé les imaginaires touristiques de Las Vegas, érigeant la destination dans son ensemble en véritable marque, mais a également transcendé la portée d'une campagne publicitaire pour en faire un « phénomène culturel » au sein de la société états-unienne. Loin de se restreindre aux supports de communication officiels conçus par l'agence R&R Partners, et preuve de l'influence et de la réussite de cette campagne dans la culture contemporaine états-unienne, les expressions « *What happens here* » et « *Only in Vegas* » ont été appropriées dans le langage courant, y compris par des personnalités influentes du monde politique ou de la télévision. Comme le déclare le directeur de R&R Partners, B. Vassiliadis : « Quand quelqu'un comme Laura Bush [la première dame] l'utilise, vous savez que c'est universel [...] Quand c'est utilisé comme énigme dans [les jeux télévisés] La Roue de la Fortune ou comme une question du Jeopardy !, c'est universel. » (cité dans Katsilometes, 2011). De même, ces slogans sont mentionnés dans une multitude de productions artistiques de la culture populaire (Nédélec, 2016b) et ont même fait leur entrée sur le site collaboratif *Wikipédia* qui consacre une entrée à « *What Happens Here, Stays Here* »[9] ou dans certains dictionnaires d'idiomes familiers de la langue anglaise[10]. La campagne « *What happens here* » s'est ainsi imposée comme le principal vecteur de diffusion des imaginaires touristiques de Las Vegas des années 2000 jusqu'à nos jours.

Recompositions limitées et longévité des imaginaires touristiques végasiens

Le succès mitigé de la recomposition des imaginaires touristiques : la courte expérience d'une Las Vegas « destination familiale »

36 Ancrés dans les représentations collectives, les imaginaires touristiques végasiens se caractérisent par une grande inertie, qui se traduit par une difficulté pour les acteurs du secteur touristique à les modifier durablement. La tentative de la LVCVA, soutenue par les groupes hôteliers, de faire évoluer ces imaginaires au cours des années 1990 a ainsi connu une réussite mitigée. Cette période a été marquée par une volonté des acteurs du secteur touristique d'élargir le profil des visiteurs. Cette décision fait suite à la perte de parts de marché survenue dans les années 1980, conséquence de la multiplication des destinations spécialisées dans les jeux d'argent (casinos indiens, montée en puissance d'Atlantic City, dans le New Jersey) et de la récession économique nationale (Schwartz, 2010, p. 261). L'objectif était d'attirer de nouveaux segments du marché touristique en ciblant les familles avec enfants (Moehring, 2000, p. 271-275 ; Tracy Cohen, 2014). La transformation de la « ville du péché » en une « Vegas familiale » (*Family Vegas*) constituait une rupture fondamentale et nécessitait donc une réorientation profonde des imaginaires touristiques végasiens.

37 Ce renouvellement des imaginaires touristiques s'est appuyé sur deux types de supports. En premier lieu, des campagnes de communication menées par la LVCVA promouvant le caractère « normal » et « banal » de la ville, exprimant la volonté commune des acteurs touristiques de réorienter les représentations de Las Vegas dans la société états-unienne. En second lieu, cette stratégie de communication a été renforcée par des investissements propres à certains hôtels-casinos qui ont construit de nouvelles attractions, ciblant spécifiquement les familles et leurs enfants. Les années 1990 illustrent ainsi la diversification des supports de diffusion des imaginaires

touristiques, qui ne se limitent plus aux visuels et matériaux publicitaires développés par la LVCVA. Les mises en récit s'appuient dès lors sur de nouvelles attractions ou de nouveaux hôtels-casinos, qui ont pour fonction de renouveler l'offre de divertissements et, par extension, de modifier les imaginaires touristiques végasiens. Ceci témoigne de l'imbrication entre l'idéel et le matériel, entre la communication et la construction. Les sommes consacrées au repositionnement sur le marché touristique et à la recomposition des imaginaires touristiques furent conséquentes. Les propriétaires des hôtels-casinos auraient dépensé dans la décennie 1990 plus de 6 milliards de dollars pour donner un nouveau visage à Las Vegas (Christiansen et Brinkerhoff-Jacobs, 1995 ; Gravari-Barbas, 2001, p. 162).

38 Les années 1990 représentent ainsi une période de rupture dans la conception des hôtels-casinos, selon le modèle des « *mega resorts* », c'est-à-dire des complexes hôteliers de très grande taille, ambitionnant de répondre aux attentes récréatives de tous les segments de touristes. Cette nouvelle génération d'établissements, inaugurée par la construction du Mirage en 1989, intègre des divertissements gratuits sur les trottoirs bordant leurs bâtiments, adaptés à tous les publics y compris les enfants (*cf.* photographies 1). Ces produits d'appel ont pour ambition d'attirer les flux de visiteurs de tous âges sans heurter leur sensibilité, en espérant ensuite inciter les parents à rentrer jouer sur les tables de jeu.

Photographies 1. Attirer les familles grâce à des animations gratuites et tout public, disposées devant les hôtels-casinos du Strip

Panneau annonçant l'éruption du volcan artificiel devant l'hôtel-casino Mirage (en haut à gauche) ; spectacle de fontaines de l'hôtel-casino Bellagio (en haut à droite) ; panneau et décor de la bataille des « Sirènes de TI » devant l'hôtel-casino Treasure Island (en bas).

Crédits : P. Nédélec, 2017.

39 D'autres hôtels-casinos ont poussé plus loin cette quête d'un public familial en créant des parcs d'attraction pour enfants au sein de leur enceinte, comme « The Land of Oz » dans le Circus Circus et le « Grand Slam Canyon » dans le MGM Grand (Gravari-Barbas, 2001, p. 160-161). Paroxysme de cette recherche d'un public familial, l'hôtel-casino Excalibur, inauguré en 1990, a été entièrement conçu pour cibler une clientèle familiale grâce à sa thématique médiévale (*cf.* photographie 2).

Photographie 2. Façade principale de l'hôtel-casino Excalibur

En choisissant un thème architectural médiéval, l'hôtel-casino Excalibur cible explicitement les familles et leurs enfants, attirés par les récits de chevaliers et de princesses. Le château proposé ressemble ainsi plus à un jouet qu'à une authentique et austère construction médiévale.
Crédits : P. Nédélec, 2017.

40 Parallèlement, la LVCVA a mené des campagnes de communication conséquentes pour défendre le nouveau positionnement de Las Vegas en tant que « destination familiale ». Consécration de cette stratégie, le *Time Magazine*, l'un des plus célèbres magazines d'information hebdomadaire aux États-Unis, a qualifié Las Vegas de « *all-American city* », que l'on peut traduire par « ville typiquement américaine ». Le long article consacré à Las Vegas affirme qu'il est « désormais acceptable pour toute la famille de visiter Las Vegas » (Andersen et Painton, 1994), sanctionnant ainsi au sein de l'opinion collective états-unienne la respectabilité de Las Vegas et donc sa légitimité en tant que destination touristique familiale.

41 Toutefois, dès le milieu des années 1990, cette stratégie a été remise en cause par les acteurs du secteur touristique végasien. Certes la fréquentation des familles a augmenté, preuve de la réussite de la recomposition des imaginaires touristiques. Toutefois, ce repositionnement n'a pas abouti à une fréquentation soutenable pour les hôtels-casinos, car les familles ont moins dépensé que les autres profils de visiteurs, ce qui en fait un public moins rentable. De plus, l'image de « destination familiale » était

peu compatible avec celle de « terrain de jeu pour adultes », contraignant les acteurs à faire un choix entre un public familial et un public d'adultes sans enfants et les hôtels-casinos à aligner leur communication sur un seul et unique type d'imaginaires touristiques.

42 Face à ces constats, la stratégie de renouvellement des imaginaires touristiques a été abandonnée et les thèmes de la fête et de la licence ont été réinvestis. C'est d'ailleurs dans ce contexte qu'a été conçue et lancée la campagne « *What happens here* », en 2003. La plupart des attractions familiales créées au cours des années 1990 ont été fermées ou démantelées, ne laissant guère de traces visibles aujourd'hui. Un journaliste local résume ainsi la fin définitive de cette période : « Nous indiquons avec fierté aux étrangers que nous sommes débarrassés des parcs à thème depuis une décennie et que nous retrouvons nos sains passe-temps – la picole, les poitrines et le blackjack – sur lesquels nous avons construit notre nom. » (Carter, 2012 cité dans Cohen, 2014, p. 10).

43 Le retour en force des imaginaires touristiques végasiens ciblant des plaisirs adultes témoigne de leur vaste appropriation au sein de l'opinion publique états-unienne et de leur inertie. La période de publicisation d'une destination familiale n'a ainsi pas effacé les représentations collectives d'une ville licencieuse. Ce mouvement de balancier se donne à voir dans la comparaison de deux couvertures du *Time Magazine* consacrées à Las Vegas (*cf.* illustration 2), support de diffusion nationale des imaginaires : dix ans à peine après l'affirmation d'une destination familiale légitime, la ville est présentée comme une « destination plus chaude que jamais » (Stein, 2004).

Illustration 2. Évolution des imaginaires touristiques de Las Vegas au travers des couvertures du *Time Magazine* (1994/2004)

À gauche, couverture du 10 janvier 1994, qualifiant Las Vegas de « nouvelle ville typiquement américaine » ; à droite, couverture du 26 juillet 2004, titrée : « C'est Vegas, bébé ! Pourquoi la ville touristique n° 1 aux États-Unis est plus chaude que jamais. »

Source : *Time Magazine*

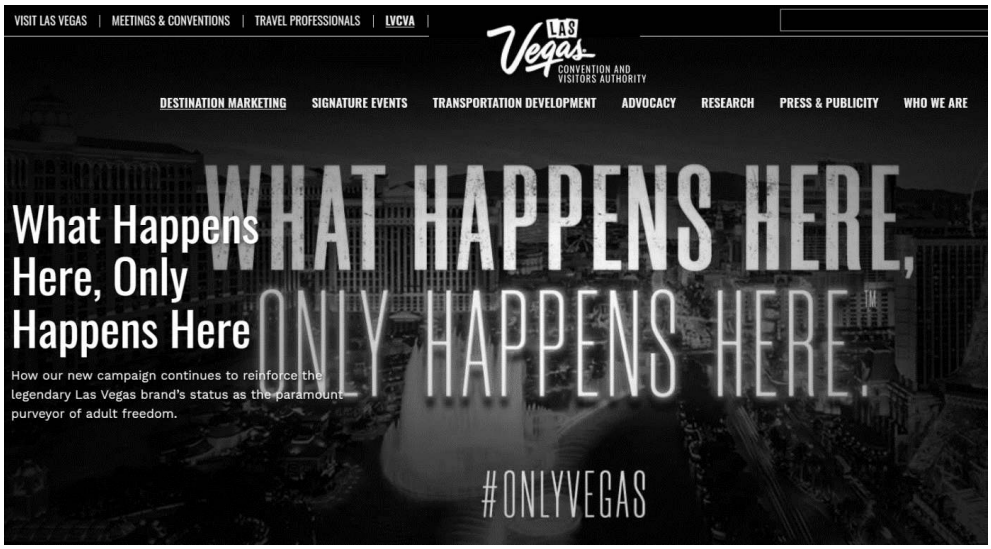
44 Le reportage consacré à Las Vegas dans l'édition de 2004 exprime bien l'inertie des imaginaires touristiques festifs, par opposition à la période de promotion d'une destination familiale :

> Las Vegas a vécu une crise identitaire. Elle a construit des parcs à thème, croyant que si ses vices étaient devenus acceptables, elle pouvait aussi bien être un marchand ambulant d'activités familiales. Et elle a trébuché. Parce que, ce que Vegas n'avait pas compris, c'est que comparés même aux plus éculés des vices, comme le kéno et les danseuses de revues, les grands huit ne faisaient pas le poids. Alors, désormais, Vegas s'est réinventée à nouveau, retournant au vice mais l'aseptisant en créant le plus grand, le plus agréable endroit où pécher que l'on puisse imaginer, une Sodome et Gomorrhe sans la culpabilité. Les gens ne viennent plus à Vegas pour faire ce qu'ils ne peuvent pas faire à la maison, mais pour le faire plus grandement et plus effrontément. (Stein, 2004)

Pérenniser les imaginaires et capitaliser sur une formule gagnante

45 Puisque les imaginaires touristiques végasiens de la fête et de la licence sont si forts et si bien ancrés dans les représentations collectives, les acteurs du secteur touristique ont décidé de les faire fructifier au maximum plutôt que de les changer. C'est ce qu'incarne la nouvelle campagne de marketing de la LVCVA, lancée en janvier 2020, intitulée « *What happens here, ONLY happens here* » (ce qui se passe ici, se passe SEULEMENT ici) (*cf.* illustration 3).

Illustration 3. Visuel de la campagne « *What happens here, only happens here* » sur le site de la LVCVA (2021)



Traduction : « Ce qui se passe ici, se passe seulement ici. Ou comment notre nouvelle campagne continue de renforcer le statut légendaire de la marque Las Vegas en tant que fournisseur suprême de liberté pour les adultes. »

Source : LVCVA, https://www.lvcva.com/destination-marketing/advertising-campaigns/what-happens-here-only-happens-here/

46 Cette nouvelle campagne s'inscrit en réaction aux innombrables déclinaisons du slogan « *What happens here* » dans le monde entier. Entre autres exemples, la campagne publicitaire de La Plagne, station de sports d'hiver française (*cf.* illustration 4), illustre la diffusion mondiale des imaginaires touristiques végasiens : outre la reprise du slogan

« ce qui se passe ici », l'affiche repose sur l'intériorisation des imaginaires de licence sexuelle associés à Las Vegas. La pixellisation de la dameuse au centre de l'image fait référence à la pixellisation des images à caractère sexuel à la télévision pour ne pas choquer le spectateur. On y retrouve le même fonctionnement que celui de la campagne de R&R Partners, qui joue sur les sous-entendus plutôt que sur l'explicitation.

Illustration 4. Réappropriation du slogan « ce qui se passe ici » par la station de sports d'hiver de La Plagne (2018)

La campagne « *Over the moon* » repose sur la promotion d'un hébergement en haut des pistes de ski sur le domaine de la Plagne-Paradiski. Cette affiche exploite les imaginaires touristiques végasiens en reprenant son slogan et ses sous-entendus sexuels via la pixellisation de la dameuse.

Source : Office du tourisme du domaine La Plagne-Paradiski, https://www.skipass-laplagne.com/fr/over-the-moon

47 Cette diffusion mondiale est une preuve de la force des imaginaires touristiques végasiens, mais aussi de la récupération et donc de l'affaiblissement de la spécificité végasienne. Pour les acteurs locaux, il s'agit dès lors de revendiquer l'exceptionnalité de Las Vegas, pour souligner qu'elle n'a pas d'équivalent en termes de terrains de jeu pour adultes et d'affranchissement par rapport aux normes sociales.

48 La vidéo de lancement de la campagne[11] mobilise toutes les recettes identifiées jusqu'ici pour faire la promotion des imaginaires touristiques végasiens : le recours à des célébrités nationales (chanteurs, sportifs), des images de boîtes de nuit et de spectacles à grands moyens (concerts, spectacle du Cirque du Soleil). La réalisation est très rythmée, à l'image de la bande annonce d'un film d'action grand public. Le message sous-jacent de la campagne est résumé par le propos clôturant la vidéo : « Ici, vous n'avez besoin de la permission de personne. Sauf de la vôtre. »

49 Pour dynamiser et prolonger cette nouvelle campagne de communication, les acteurs locaux, privés comme publics, ont agi de concert. Le gouverneur de l'État en personne, Steve Sisolak, a assuré son inauguration officielle dans le centre-ville de Las Vegas, accompagné du directeur de la LVCVA. Pour l'occasion, le gouverneur a annoncé la consécration du 3 février 2020 comme « *Only Vegas Day* » et le lancement du hashtag #OnlyVegas, destiné à renforcer la diffusion des imaginaires touristiques végasiens sur les réseaux sociaux (*cf.* illustration 5).

Illustration 5. Tweet du gouverneur Steve Sisolak pour le lancement du nouveau slogan « *What happens here, ONLY happens here* ! » (2020)

Traduction : « Très excité à l'idée de rejoindre la LVCVA et d'autres pour annoncer le nouveau slogan de Vegas : "Ce qui se passe ici, se passe SEULEMENT ici !". Merci à tous ceux qui ont contribué à en faire une destination d'envergure internationale en matière d'hospitalité, de sports professionnels, de loisirs d'extérieur et PLUS. Continuons comme ça ! #OnlyVegas »

Source : Twitter, compte du Gouverneur Steve Sisolak, 30 janvier 2020, https://twitter.com/GovSisolak/status/1222958211143127040

50 Brian Yost, directeur de la LVCVA, explicite la volonté de capitaliser sur ce qu'il considère comme les fondamentaux végasiens tout en ciblant les nouvelles générations, utilisatrices des réseaux sociaux :

> Las Vegas repose, et a toujours reposé, sur les petits plaisirs pour adultes [*adult indulgence*], et elle va continuer à le faire, comme il se doit. Ce nouveau slogan est simplement une évolution du slogan « *What happens here, stays here* ». Tout ce que nous voulons faire, c'est être sûr de capter, d'attirer et d'être pertinent pour les nouvelles générations qui partagent [sur les réseaux sociaux] les super expériences qu'ils ont [à Las Vegas]. (LVCVA, 2020)

51 L'inscription dans la continuité du slogan « *What happens here* » est soulignée et revendiquée par l'ensemble des acteurs impliqués, ce qui confirme la force et l'inertie des imaginaires touristiques végasiens cristallisés au début des années 2000. De même,

les promoteurs de cette campagne mettent en avant les études préliminaires menées auprès de touristes potentiels qui révèlent l'attachement des États-Uniens à l'idée que ce qui se passe à Las Vegas reste à Las Vegas, témoignant également du profond ancrage des imaginaires touristiques végasiens au sein de l'opinion publique.

Conclusion

52 Las Vegas est une destination touristique mondialement connue, en raison notamment de la précocité et de la force de ses imaginaires touristiques. Même si ces derniers ne sont pas monolithiques et ont évolué au fil du XX^e^ siècle, leurs principaux motifs se sont cristallisés autour des idées de liberté et de licence, voire de débauche. Les campagnes de promotion touristique mises en place par les acteurs locaux, dans une logique de synergie entre acteurs privés du secteur touristique et élus locaux, sont le principal vecteur de la diffusion et de la cristallisation des représentations associées à Las Vegas dans l'opinion publique états-unienne au début du XXI^e^ siècle. La culture populaire a en effet eu un rôle dans l'appropriation des imaginaires façonnés par le secteur touristique, comme en attestent les slogans marketing « *What happens here, stays here* » ou « *Only in Vegas !* », devenus des expressions idiomatiques du langage courant des États-Uniens. Cela démontre la puissance des imaginaires touristiques végasiens, qui ont largement dépassé le seul cadre de la promotion touristique pour venir imprégner l'ensemble des pratiques culturelles aux États-Unis.

53 Dans les années 1990, le succès mitigé des tentatives de renouvellement des imaginaires touristiques vers une acception plus familiale et « bon enfant » témoigne enfin de la force et de la désirabilité sociale de l'idée d'une capitale du vice et du péché. Ainsi, Las Vegas s'est imposée à la fin du XX^e^ siècle comme une île métaphorique, permettant de laisser libre cours à toutes ses envies, voire à ses pulsions, sans avoir à subir de jugements ni à en assumer les conséquences négatives. Cet article démontre ainsi que la volonté, au sein de l'opinion publique états-unienne, de disposer d'un tel lieu échappatoire s'affirme comme la source de l'inertie et de la résistance des imaginaires touristiques végasiens.

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NOTES

1. Cet article ne prend pas en compte la situation du secteur touristique depuis la crise du Covid-19 (qui a débuté aux États-Unis en mars 2020).
2. Chiffres de fréquentation issus des offices du tourisme de chacune de ces villes.
3. En 2020, 43 des 52 États fédérés comptent des casinos selon l'American Gaming Association. À l'inverse, seuls deux États interdisent encore toute forme de jeux d'argent (Utah et Hawaï).
4. Le Strip est le principal quartier touristique de l'aire urbaine de Las Vegas, concentrant les hôtels-casinos les plus grands et les plus connus, ainsi que les principales attractions touristiques. Le Strip se distingue du quartier touristique de Fremont Street, situé plus au nord et rassemblant des établissements de plus petite taille, moins exubérants et plus anciens.
5. Le succès du film *Very Bad Trip* (*The Hangover* dans son titre original), sorti en 2009, en est une parfaite illustration.
6. Le Territoire du Nevada est créé en 1861 et devient le 36e État fédéré de l'Union en 1864.
7. Avec 51,5 millions de passagers en 2019, l'aéroport McCarran se classe au 9e rang des aéroports états-uniens en termes de trafic passager. Las Vegas est aussi desservie par une autoroute majeure à l'échelle nationale (*Interstate 15*), reliant la Californie à la frontière canadienne, en passant par l'Utah.
8. Littéralement « groupe de rats », le *Rat Pack* est un surnom donné à un groupe de comédiens et de chanteurs, organisé autour de la figure centrale de Franck Sinatra. Il rassemble Dean Martin, Sammy Davis Jr., Joey Bishop et Peter Lawford. Leur popularité explique en partie le succès du film de Lewis Milestone *Ocean's Eleven* (*L'Inconnu de Las Vegas* dans son titre français) qui les rassemble à Las Vegas en 1960.
9. Page accessible à l'adresse suivante : https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/What_Happens_Here,_Stays_Here.
10. Voir *Urban Dictionary* [https://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=whhsh] et *The Free Dictionary* [https://idioms.thefreedictionary.com/what+happens+here+stays+here].
11. Vidéo accessible à l'adresse suivante : https://vimeo.com/387535567/62d6c5b737 (consulté le 23 avril 2021).

RÉSUMÉS

Las Vegas (Nevada) est une destination touristique de premier plan aux États-Unis, avec 42,5 millions de visiteurs en 2019, autoproclamée capitale mondiale du jeu et des divertissements. Cet article met en regard la popularité de Las Vegas avec la force de ses imaginaires touristiques. Cette notion, popularisée par le champ des études touristiques, est ici définie dans la lignée des imaginaires spatiaux et de la géographie culturelle. La dimension actorielle des imaginaires touristiques est ici étudiée en détails en articulant producteurs initiaux – acteurs privés du secteur touristique et élus locaux – et récepteurs – touristes et ensemble de l'opinion publique états-unienne. L'étude s'appuie plus précisément sur des analyses diachroniques des campagnes publicitaires, dont l'emblématique et éponyme « *What happens here* », afin de comprendre les origines de la production et la cristallisation des imaginaires touristiques végasiens. Le succès mitigé des récentes tentatives visant à les renouveler est interrogé et conduit à expliciter leur longévité et leur relative inertie au sein de l'opinion états-unienne.

Las Vegas (Nevada, USA) is a world-renowned tourist destination, attracting 42.5 million visitors in 2019, and self-proclaimed “Entertainment Capital of the World”. This paper links Las Vegas popularity with its tourism imaginaries’ strength. Coined within tourism studies, the notion of tourism imaginaries is here defined following works on spatial imaginaries and cultural geography. I focus on the different stakeholders shaping those imaginaries, both producers—local officials and casino operators—and receivers—tourists and the American public in general. More specifically, I study publicity campaigns and their evolution through time—including the famous and eponymous “What happens here”—to understand Las Vegas tourism imaginaries’ genesis and crystallization. The limited success of recent attempts of their renewal is then highlighted and explained by their inertia within the American psyche.

INDEX

Mots-clés : imaginaires touristiques, imaginaires spatiaux, Las Vegas, jeux d’acteurs, campagnes publicitaires, représentations collectives
Keywords : tourism imaginaries, spatial imaginaries, Las Vegas, publicity campaigns, American public opinion

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An Analysis of Southern Advertising from the Jimmy Carter Era: The Origins of the Fragmented Image of the Tourist South

Une analyse de la publicité des États-Unis du Sud de l'ère Carter : les origines de l'image fragmentée du Sud touristique

Giuliano Santangeli Valenzani

Introduction

1 Over the last twenty years, historians and scholars of Southern studies have devoted more and more attention to tourism as a fundamental element for the development of Southern history and culture (Starnes, 2003; Stanonis, 2008; Cox, 2012). Great interest, in particular, has been devoted to tourism promotion, i.e. how certain attractions, cities, counties, lured visitors; with which images, which themes, which rhetorical tools. What emerges from these works is precisely the extreme importance that tourism has had on the perception of the South and its overall image in the last century. In other words, the ideas usually associated with the South for most of the twentieth century were developed also as a tourist bait. In a sense, this appears as a further proof that corroborates James Cobb's suggestion that Southern identity results mainly from "myth and invention" (2005, p. 316). There is no doubt that the classic image of the romantic "moonlight and magnolias" South, with its belles in crinoline skirts and plantation homes that for many years (and for some, perhaps, still today) represented the region in the mind of Americans and foreigners alike, is not something that simply evolved over time in a neutral way. On the contrary, that kind of landscape and image has been pursued with great determination by Southern economic elites in the early 20th century, with the precise aim of satisfying the desires and expectations of

non-Southerners and luring them down South as tourists (McIntyre, 2011; Hillyer, 2014).

2 The true protagonist of this process of construction and transformation of the appearance of the South has undoubtedly been advertising. Far from being just a way to sell a destination to someone, advertising is responsible for building up a consistent and credible destination image and identity, which also have a profound and long-lasting impact in societal and cultural terms and on the perception of a specific destination over time (Morgan and Pritchard, 1998; Mackay, 2005). Although countless pages have been dedicated to the Southern region in the 1970s, very little has been said about its promotional tourism efforts in those years. What images and themes were used? Is it possible that in a period of such great change and modernization, tourists were attracted just by the simple repetition of old themes related to the mythological narration of the Old South? In his fundamental analysis on the New Orleans tourism industry, for example, Mark Souther (2006) suggested that the 1970s was indeed an important transition moment for the image of the city, which opened to new and different promotional themes. However, his analysis is limited to a single city.

3 William Brundage, on the other hand, wrote that "columned mansions, white belles in hoop skirts, Civil War shrines–these were the icons of Southern tourism during the 1970s" (2009, p. 310), thus suggesting that very little had changed since the 1930s or 1940s. Then, another prominent author, Ted Ownby, analyzing the tourist South of the early 2000s found that everything has changed and that the stereotypical image of the South had already disappeared from the core of the promotional narrative. According to Ownby, the South of the early 21st century had no particular identity as a destination anymore but had, instead, several different characteristics gained from the land and climate, some parts of history, modern economic change, cultural creativity and other sources as well (2003, p. 238). He defined the entire promotional image of the South through the concept of "variety trope", that is, the desire to emphasize the existence of an infinite number of different attractions suitable for every taste and all equally important. The classic antebellum South was just a single element in a broader mix. Almost 20 years after Ownby's observations, little seems to have changed (Santangeli Valenzani, 2019).

4 Thus, something must have happened. In this article, I argue that the origins of the current tourist image of the South, so indefinable and almost chaotic, can be traced back precisely to the state-sponsored advertising material designed to attract visitors in the 1970s (and especially in the second half), a period in which the tourist South was in fact already more complex and multifaceted than suggested by Brundage. I argue how the very idea of variety trope was already the norm for Southern tourism advertising in the late 1970s, so that its 21st century version is little more than a refinement of that older form.

5 It is also important to specify that this analysis will cover only four states (Alabama, Mississippi, Georgia and South Carolina) and their official, state-sponsored advertisements, which represented an obviously limited case study, but one extensive enough to attempt to draw some valid data for the South as a region. Furthermore, the so-called Deep South represents the most peculiar aspects of classical Southern culture in a concentrated form (Reed, 2003, p. 276), and even common perception tends, in some way, to consider it as the core of the Southern essence.

6 Thus, in my research I considered only the promotional material produced by the four state tourism offices of Alabama, Mississippi, Georgia and South Carolina. This type of material is the most significant here because it represents the very self-image these states wanted to project to the outside. Tourist offices were, and still are, departments of state governments, thus their promotion reflects what can be identified as the official tourist image of the four states, carefully crafted under the supervision of the tourist offices' directors, who were personally appointed by the state governors and, therefore, also reflected their political agenda. Morgan and Pritchard offered an interesting and clear perspective on the delicate relationship between tourism advertising and political pressures from above, which inevitably tends to have an effect on the final promotional discourse (2000, p. 275).

7 As for the corpus examined here, it includes two sets of items: 1) the ads published in journals and newspapers, and 2) the large-format brochures, or booklets, produced by each of the four states[1]. The latter are more complex pieces than the commonly intended brochure. Larger in format, rich in photos and descriptions, and averaging between 20 and 30 pages in length, they are true frescoes of the states, aimed to lure potential visitors. They usually contain sections devoted to illustrating the state's history, art, landscapes, local culture, facilities, etc. Each state usually had only one official booklet at a time, which remained in circulation and was republished for a few years, before being replaced by a more up-to-date version.

8 At the same time, each state also produced several and different ads to be published in different types of media. As the booklets, they also usually remained in circulation for a couple of years before being replaced. Some states had more ads, and some had less, but the most important difference was their circulation range in the domestic market. Taken as a whole, the four states of the Deep South advertised to other Southern states and to the Mid-West and North-East. Outside of the U.S., their ads almost exclusively reached Canada. In other words, each state was in direct competition with its neighbors to secure a share of the same tourist market. Georgia ads, however, covered a larger area of the United States than Alabama, South Carolina, and Mississippi. Mississippi, in particular, had the narrowest coverage (Santangeli Valenzani, 2020). What is important to note, is that the promotional materials were intended to circulate both outside and inside the South and thus be attractive to both Southerners and non-Southerners alike.

9 Booklets, on the other hand, had a completely different distribution than the ads. They were circulated in two ways: provided to visitors inside the various Welcome Centers along the state highways or mailed to potential tourists who had explicitly requested them through a special coupon attached to the ads. Therefore, the paper ads and the booklets corresponded essentially to two different phases of the promotional process: the ad in the magazine or newspaper attracted the attention of the potential visitor, who would then request the official state booklet to be persuaded of the choice and plan their trip. The booklets were, in fact, also actual guides, which contained the days and opening hours of the various attractions, lists of hotels and other tourist infrastructures.

10 Among the various promotional items produced by the tourism industry, brochures are probably the most studied from an academic point of view (Molina and Esteban, 2006; Getz and Sailor, 1994), as they had historically played an important role in creating a place's image. Some scholars have focused on the visual format of the brochures, cataloguing illustrations and themes (Dilley, 1986; Jenkins, 1999) while others have

studied the textual part (Choi *et al.*, 2007) or both (Francesconi, 2011). Here, however, I chose to renounce the numerical-analytical method in favor of a more discursive and qualitative content analysis, such as that adopted by those authors who have examined advertising within their historical analyses (Stanonis, 2006; King, 2012; Simon, 2004; Cox, 2011), with the specific objective to find fractures with the classic canon of the Southern tourist image and revel the already ubiquitous presence of the variety trope.

Why the 1970s?

11 For a number of contextual causes, the 1970s were a period in which the need to reconsider their tourist image became almost a necessity for several Southern states. Trying to illustrate a complex phenomenon with a convenient schematism, it is possible to highlight two different sets of factors, some related to tourism and advertising, and others to the social and cultural context of the decade. The 1970s, indeed, have been a pivotal moment in the American history and culture as a whole. But particularly in the South, the decade represents a moment of renewal and transformation following the Civil Rights era and the struggle for desegregation. A moment, moreover, of reconciliation between North and South on different levels, including the cultural one. Jimmy Carter (1977-1981), the first president from the Deep South since Zachary Taylor, was indeed the very symbol of this reconciliation.

12 Traveling down South also became more comfortable and pleasant during the 1970s, thanks mostly to the diffusion of new technologies, especially the air conditioner, which made life more acceptable in the torrid heat of the Deep South, or the opening of new air routes and airports, which made the South more accessible (Eckes, 2005).

13 On a deeper cultural level, moreover, well outside the boundaries of advertising and tourism promotion, the South of the 1970s was looking for new myths in order to explain its new cultural and social realities (Smith, 1985; Reed, 2003). The Lost Cause mythology and the old antebellum charm were no longer entirely suitable to represent the region, but it was not yet clear to anyone what would take its place.

14 In Southern politics, the big news since the early 1970s was a new wave of democratic governors who put an end to race-baiting and carried out agendas aimed at attracting industries and jobs while also trying to improve the tarnished image of their states. Many of these new South governors were indeed among the main proponents of a new focus on tourism, which they identified as an industry capable of generating wealth but also improving the perception of the region. This attitude generally reflected in a competitive budget allocated for the Southern states' tourism offices (Doering, 1979). As Governor Finch of Mississippi said during his electoral campaign in 1975, tourism should be "an industry, not a sideshow"[2].

15 Then, there were a series of developments and changes within the world of American tourism and advertising. Around the early 1970s, the so called "era of family vacation" came to an end (Rugh, 2008); the classic image of the suburban middle-class family travelling by car no longer corresponded to reality. Long family trips by car were already "a thing of the past" in 1974, as stated by the Georgia Tourism Director[3]. More and more people were travelling alone, or with their partner, or they were elderly couples, or mixed groups, or teenagers without parents. Thus, as Susan Rugh argued, the white suburban middle-class family ceased to be the main target of tourism promotion (2008, p. 11). "To go on vacation" was no longer only associated with the

idea of relaxing with the family in some charming place; indeed, the existence of many different niche interests began to be acknowledged by the tourism industry.

16 This lead directly to the second major point: the 1970s saw a profound change in the world of advertising. As legendary Madison Avenue executive Carl Ally said in 1977, "the ads must be fitted to the audience, not the other way around" (Fox, 1984, p. 329). If the target audience of the tourism industry was no longer the generic post-War American family, then advertising also had to address the desires of new travelers interested in niche leisure activities, thus advertising not only the state, the city or the county as a whole, but also focusing on certain themes and peculiarities.

17 Black tourism, of course, was a new great force with which the Southern economic sector had to deal. In the 1970s, African Americans traveled a lot, embracing that ideal of travel as a synonym of freedom. They traveled abroad and within the country, and many traveled down South in search of their families' roots or to visit the landmarks of the Civil Rights that began to appear at that time across the South. It must be said, however, that state-sponsored tourism promotion at the end of the 1970s was still conceived by whites for whites. However, a new timid attempt to add the black society to the overall picture was clearly underway, in conformity with a new trend in American advertising (Sivulka, 1998, p. 270). For many Southern states, this attempt was closely linked to the desire to overcome their bad reputation as backward and racist locations. This emerges very clearly from the documents and reports of the tourist offices. At the 1979 Alabama Governor's Conference on Tourism, a round-table of experts in the field drew up a list of issues that thwarted or slowed down the tourism promotion efforts in the state. They openly complained about Alabama's bad image[4] and the same happened in Mississippi[5]. Even South Carolina had image-related problems. A survey held in 1979 reported that potential visitors had "no image at all" of the state[6]. Outside the area of Atlanta and its surroundings, even the modern and international Georgia suffered some problems regarding the perception of its inhabitants[7].

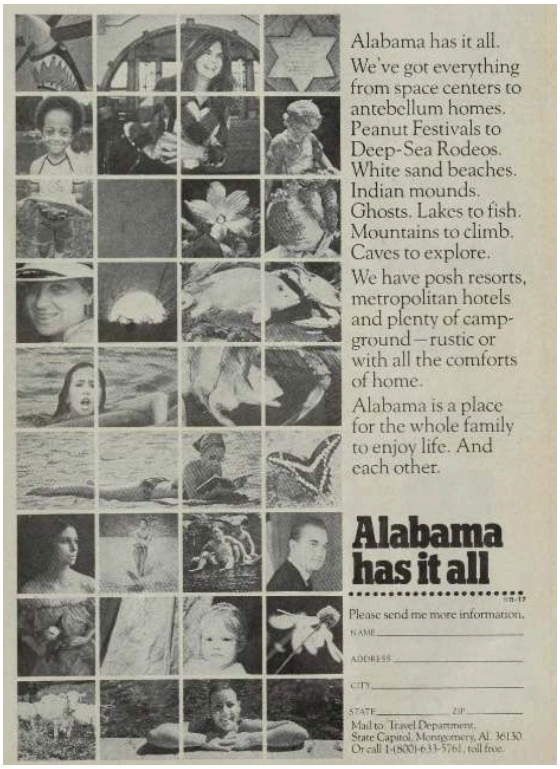
18 In the 1970s, moreover, Southern tourism professionals acknowledged another important limit to their promotional potential: all the states of the former Confederacy seemed to offer very similar attractions, making it difficult to build a unique, original and winning promotional brand. In 1979, for example, the South Carolina's Park, Recreation and Tourism Department (PRTD) considered Carolina in direct competition with all the other Southern states as they all offered "similar products"[8]. A problem very much felt by the admen in the 1970s, when the new gospel in advertising was all about positioning, which meant to fix in the mind of the public a certain idea of the product, choosing some of its features and using them to create a clear image, a memorable brand. Thus, Southern states had to deal with a double challenge. They had to build a more friendly and welcoming image and they had to promote themselves as entire worlds in miniature, suitable for everyone, full of every possible attraction, while at the same thing trying to differentiate from their competitors. This ignited the need for change.

A new fragmented image

19 By the end of the 1970s, the variety trope was clearly visible through advertisements and the official tourist booklets produced by each state. A large number of different

themes were introduced to potential visitors, both through texts and images. A new feature of tourism advertising concerned the graphic: in the 1970s, the tendency to create photo collages for ads and brochure covers appeared, so that the final picture was composed of several smaller images[9] (*cf.* figure 1). Obviously, this was related to the need to evoke the idea of small worlds in miniature, full of many different attractions.

Figure 1



Alabama Has It All, ad on *House Beautiful*, March 1977, p. 51.

20 It is difficult to emphasize enough the importance that pictures and illustrations have both in advertising at large (Leiss *et al.*, 1986) and particularly in tourism advertising (Scarles, 2004; Jenkins, 1999). Tourism images never merely present what is 'out there' (Barnes and Duncan, 1992), but "subliminally guide tourists via mediated discourse and an agglomeration of producer interpretations" (Scarles, 2004, p. 47). A photo collage, for example, is more than a mere list of possible attractions or a way to imprint in the visitor's mind the very idea of abundance and richness of entertainment. The very same idea applied also to language, which in advertising is always emphatic, exaggerated and exciting (Dann, 1996). The idea of an abundance of attractions is a common trope, often used in tourism promotion. It is based on identifying the state with an overwhelming number of attractions, to convey the idea of a whole world, of a world in miniature (Hummon, 1988). This was clearly the idea behind tourist slogans and promotional campaigns from the mid-1970s like *Alabama Has It All*, or *South Carolina…You Couldn't See All of Me*. This is also why each of the four states' brochures opened with some emphatic references to the great variety of things you could do or see. Even Mississippi, objectively the poorest state in terms of tourist resources and attractions, in 1978 opened its official booklet with: "Mississippi awaits you with sights to show, stories to tell, decisions to ponder. Exuberant, growing, vital…a state sure of

its present and future...Mississippi awaits you with places to explores, activities to share, ideas to present"[10]. Interestingly enough in the same time period, namely the second half of the 1970s, , the tourist office director was complaining about a serious shortage of attractions in the state[11].

21 That the words on the booklet were obvious exaggerations and all-too-generous embellishments of reality, however, is not particularly important and should come as no surprise. Quoting Olivia Jenkins, in tourism "whether an image is a true representation of what any given region has to offer, the tourist is less important than the mere existence of the image in the mind of the person" (1999, p. 2). At a time when the entire South was reorganizing its image to be "whatever you want her to be"[12], every state had to keep up with this idea in order not to lose ground or lose any niche markets. The same emphasis on an alleged infinite number of attractions also appeared in the ads. Consider for example catchphrases like "We've got everything from space centers to antebellum homes" (*cf.* figure 1) which also refers to the theme of the coexistence of old and new, or "Whatever kind of vacation you're looking for, you'll find it in South Carolina" (*cf.* figure 2). Despite the fact that this type of message had also been conveyed at times by older forms of Southern advertisement, the insistence and centrality of the theme in the late 1970s appear unprecedented.

Figure 2

Travel Kit ad, 1977, SCDAH, S200039, DPRT, marketing office, advertising proposal 1975-1979, 1976-1977 ads.

22 To further emphasize the abundance of everything, the states also resorted to a new strategy that appears to be another novelty in the tourism promotion of the 1970s, that is, they all created different tourist sub-regions, and each was promoted as full of

everything but at the same time unique in some way. Until 1978 Georgia was divided in 3 regions, then it passed to 7, while Alabama had 3, Mississippi 5 and South Carolina 10.

23 And then of course, to emphasize their immense number of attractions, each state produced a quantity of ads specifically dedicated to a certain type of tourist. Thus, by the end of the 1970s, the states of the Deep South were producing different ads precisely aimed at different market segments. There were ads dedicated exclusively to hiking, golf, historical attractions, fancy accommodation, fishing, tennis, family fun, beach tourism, outdoor and landscape, outdoor activities, state lakes, hunting, camping, the idea of a romantic getaway, the classic antebellum homes and, in Alabama, even to black heritage[13].

24 As the advertising standards of the period dictated, specific targets of potential tourists were identified, and each state tried to present itself as suitable for their needs, sometimes also by producing targeted ads. The target audience is reflected in the types of newspapers and magazines in which the four states placed their ads. We find them on sport magazines (especially golf and tennis), women's magazines, magazines on home furniture, fishing, hunting, camping, honeymoon travels, vacationing, and others (Santangeli Valenzani, 2020). The classic monolithic image of the old plantation South obviously appeared downsized by this hyper-specialization of ads.

25 The advertising agency that worked with South Carolina also found a highly ingenious method to support the idea of an enormous number of attractions which did not really exist. Thus, we find ads with catchphrases such as "South Carolina's great Vacation No. 55: Myrtle Beach", or "South Carolina's Great Vacation No:17 The Sea Islands"[14]. These titles gave the impression that there were more than fifty several advertisements for as many possible attractions. Actually, those numbers were purely promotional: after having captured the attention of the reader, in fact, the texts explain that 55 corresponds to number of miles of beach present in the state and 17 represents the number of islands.

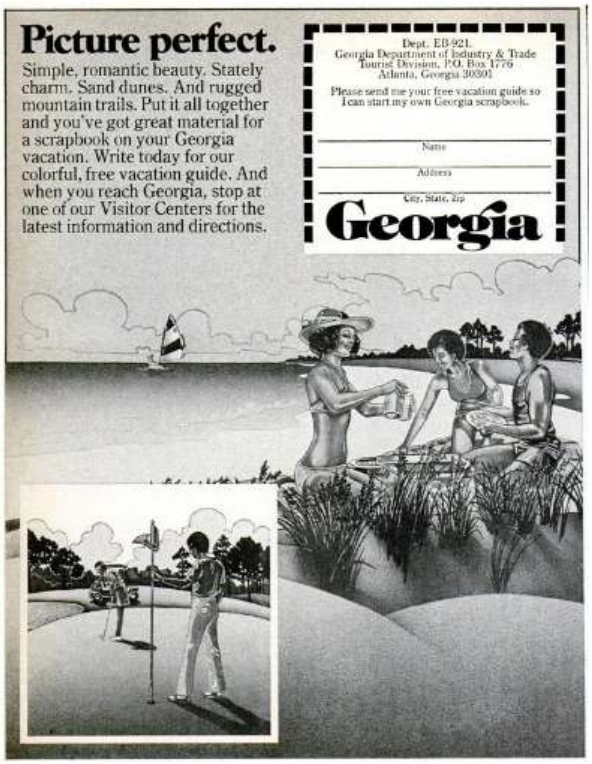
26 South Carolina undoubtedly had the most distinctive tourist image. Despite its unique place in American and Southern history, in fact, South Carolina offered a promotional image almost entirely devoid of any mentions of the antebellum South or the Civil War to its potential visitors, and its overall image focused mostly on ideas such as leisure time, beach vacationing and family fun. The only single big historical destination of the state was identified in the city of Charleston, however, which always presented as just a "colonial destination". The 1977 travel kit ad (*cf.* figure 2) explained very clearly what kind of tourist image the DPRT was trying to evoke: a beach destination, full of all kinds of fun (sport, music, outdoor activities, as represented by the objects inside the bag). The same emerged in its official booklet, *Come See S.C*, published from 1980.

27 South Carolina also pursued a promotional campaign that emphasized the multi-cultural contribution to the history and culture of the state. The 1977 small brochure called *SC. A Lot of it looks a little like a foreign country*[15], underlined for the first time the contributions of the English, Irish, Welsh, French, Scottish, Africans, Jews, Swiss and German immigrants in Charleston. The black Gullah culture, also, became an attraction in the state promotional booklet. There was no Carolina advertisement dedicated exclusively to black culture, but an attempt to make the overall image less monolithic and white already appears evident. The preparatory materials found in the archives of Georgia and South Carolina, moreover, show how the two tourism offices considered the inclusion of minorities, especially blacks, a problem to be taken into account[16].

28 Black heritage was, indeed, the single most important news in Southern promotion. It should be said, however, that it was still an under-exploited part of the market. Black tourism was already well established in the South (and especially in Georgia, as much as the Deep South is concerned) but state tourism offices were only just beginning to perceive the need to open up to this theme. However, the second half of the decade appears to be the very moment in which black culture started to be part of the overall image offered to tourists. Alabama was the first state of the Deep South to officially enter the black heritage tourism market. The starting point was the campaign *Alabama the Beautiful*, launched in 1979. The official booklet produced by the state tourism office clearly gave black society a place in the overall image. Consider, for example, how Alabama's history was introduced to the readers: "Alabama the Beautiful is part of the history of the Civil War. And the history of Civil Rights"[17]. This appears the first case ever in which the Civil Rights struggles became part of the official tourist landscape in a Southern state. Even more explicitly, one of the many ads produced in the campaign *Alabama the Beautiful* was entirely devoted to black history, as it stated that "No other state in the union is as rich in Black history as Alabama the Beautiful"[18]. Between 1976 and 1981, moreover, Alabama, Georgia and Mississippi started publishing some rare advertisements on magazines for African Americans, especially on *Ebony*.

29 Blues tourism, a sector extremely related to black culture, began only in those years to appear in Mississippi (King, 2011), but state advertising never mentioned it. In 1985, however, the new official booklet of the state opened with: "Mississippi is... oldster sitting around the town square. Last home of Jefferson Davis. Greenville home of the Blues"[19]. Reflecting the recent trend in advertising, in 1978 Georgia published an ad in *Ebony* where the image showed black vacationers instead of the usual white ones (*cf.* figure 3) and the state publications at this point always mentioned the Martin Luther King National Historical site of Atlanta, one of the most beloved must-see for many black visitors. The archive of Georgia, moreover, holds a promotional photo of Fort Frederica, dated around 1975/1976. The photo is very interesting, as it shows three reenactors: a white man along with a black and a white woman, gun in their hands, ready to defend the fort from the Spanish attack. The message is clear: the colonial (and American) spirit resides both in the whites and in the blacks[20]. Moreover, some rare photos of African Americans began to appear on official booklets both as evidence of "local people" and as tourists (which is the most interesting aspect) in each of the four states.

Figure 3



Picture perfect, ad in *Ebony*, January 1979, p. 34.

30 Then, just a few years later, in 1983, Alabama became the first state in the country to publish a tour guide dedicated exclusively to the black heritage[21]. It was the first in the country. In Mississippi this process appears to be slightly slower, and the preparatory work for a similar guide began only the following year, in 1984[22]. Other Southern states would follow. Again, it's not by coincidence that Alabama and Mississippi, probably the states with the worst reputation in the entire Union, were the ones who pioneered the way in the publication of guides for African Americans as a way to improve the overall perception.

31 Something different, however, related to the South tarnished image, happened regarding the presence of the Native Indian theme in the advertising. Actually, the Native theme was given much more space and attention than that (very little) generally dedicated to black culture. The Native culture was assimilated by state promotion as an integral part of local history and tradition, mostly avoiding the kitsch and stereotypical representation of the past, but instead showing a concrete attention to the culture of the local tribes. As highlighted by Denise Bates, between the 1970s and the 1980s, an evolving Southern identity expressed a renewed interest in indigenous history and symbols because "Indians and Indian-themed histories offered Southern states an opportunity to redeem their tarnished images as the most racist and violent states in the nation" (2012, p. 143).

32 And so, we find large full-page photographs of local tribes on both the main booklets of Mississippi and Alabama. The *Alabama the Beautiful* booklet guide (1981) opened with a large photo of a local Native dancing in the local pow-wow. That was the first image that a potential reader would have seen looking through the guide. Each of the four states, however, dedicate some attention to this theme. In *Come See S.C.* (1980-1981), for

example, the Indian lore was mentioned very often, and Native language names and words were also used to arouse fascination in the reader. Even more explicitly, one Georgia ad dedicated to the great historical figures of the state showed five actors dressed as historical figures. One of them was Sequoyah, the Native who invented the Cherokee alphabet. The Native polymath thus became one of the "state historical characters"[23].

33 Another important aspect to take into consideration was the idea of modernity proposed by the four states. The concept of modernity is here twofold: on the one hand, there was a promotional speech about the advanced infrastructures the states made available to visitors. On the other hand, state tourism advertising also boasted the ability to offer fashionable and up-to-date attractions. The idea that visiting Alabama, Mississippi, Georgia and South Carolina was to experience both "the Old and the New" seems almost a cliché, which comes back often in the promotional material of that period. It was nothing new, because vague hints to progress and modernity can also be found in Southern advertising from the 1950s and 1960s (Buchanan, 2012)[24]. By the mid-1970s, however, these allusions appeared completely assimilated in the promotional discourse and enriched with a new focus on urban fashion modernity. Departing from the classic image of the rural South, in fact, importance was now also given to city nightlife and fancy accommodation. It was an idea shared with the regional promotion produced by the Travel South organization: "Nowhere is the South more vital than in her cities - they capture a South in the fast lane. Nightlife thrives after daytime's progressive beat..."[25]. An interesting and complete refusal of the classical assumption that South equals rural setting. Atlanta, of course, was promoted by the Georgia tourism office as the great international metropolis full of everything. The booklet *Alabama Has it All* told its readers about the exciting Birmingham nightlife and fancy hotels and restaurants [26], while South Carolina had no problem at all in boasting its trendy hotels and resorts provided with every comfort.

34 Mississippi, on the other hand, had more trouble keeping up on this theme. The booklet *It's Like Coming Home* (1978) clearly shows that Mississippi had fewer arrows to its bow regarding "modernity". Indeed, the booklet presented a number of alleged "modern attractions" that are not really tourist attractions: "Look everywhere for new thinking in agriculture and industry, the arts and sciences", or "Smaller operations like processing plants for locally-grown crops are found throughout the state". But even Mississippi knew it had to present itself as "exuberant, growing, vital...a state sure of its present and future"[27].

35 It should be said that if it is true that the overall image projected by these four states through their advertising already appeared fragmented and multifaceted, it is also true that the classical themes (Old South, the Confederacy halo and the antebellum charm) remained important in Alabama, Mississippi and Georgia (not so in South Carolina). The classic South was no longer the core of the promotional narrative, but was, nonetheless, still a part of the new whole. The way the mythic Old South was described and offered to the potential visitor was often overemphatic and celebrative, just as in the older times.

36 Some breaches in the obsessive presence of the classic South in the promotional discourse, however, could be observed in the late 1970s advertisements. Even Mississippi showed evidence of a new approach. The Civil War itself appears to be in a moment of transition from its traditional role of pivotal, mythical event to be just part

of a new variety. The director of the Mississippi tourism office, for example, complained in 1978 about "too much concentration on the Civil War on the sales pitch". [28] A report by the association Historic Columbus, Inc. of Columbus, Mississippi, stated in 1977 that since the state was nationally recognized primarily for its antebellum homes, those were to be the focal point of state advertising[29]. This shows a lively debate within the tourism industry of Mississippi: on the one hand a local actor, as it was the association of Historic Columbus (a town with several antebellum homes) that would have wanted a state advertising more focused on that theme; on the other hand, the state Tourism Department who evidently wanted to create an image less obsessively dedicated to the antebellum lore. In Alabama, the new promotional campaign *Alabama the Beautiful,* launched in 1979 under Governor Forrest James, removed the name "War Between the States" from all of its ads and brochure, adopting only "Civil War"[30]. Generally speaking, in the states' official booklets, the Civil War was treated with a cautious impartiality, which left little space overall for blatant incursions into the Lost Cause narrative[31]. Behind this choice, it is not hard to imagine a precise will of the state governments, eager to polish the image of their states and, therefore, revitalize their economic opportunities to fit into the Sunbelt South expansion.

Epilogue

37 Today, one of the themes obsessively proposed by the Southern tourist advertising is food. In the official guides readers will find photographs of food and food information on practically every page. In the second half of the 1970s, on the other hand, this theme appears to be absent, except for sporadic references to fish food in the gulf area. And yet, even in this case it seems that everything is to be traced back to that period. In 1981 the Alabama Tourism Director, about to leave for Washington for a meeting in which she would have promoted the South along with other representatives of Travel South, told the press that, "We feel one of the big attractions of the South is its food"[32]. That would have been one of the main themes exploited at the meeting in Washington, and undoubtedly from her words it is easy to understand that it was almost a novelty, a new theme within the advertising strategy. It is, therefore, likely that today's obsession with food in Southern promotions started with that strategy conceived by Southern tourism professionals in the late 1970s and early 1980s. The idea of food as a distinctive feature of the Southerness was also explored in those years from a cultural point of view when John Egerton undertook his journey through the South in search of the link between food and local culture, a journey that ended three years later in the publication of the great classic *Southern Food: At Home, on the Road, in History* (1987). And it's no coincidence that Rick McDaniel notices a flashback of the South for his regional cuisine in the late 1970s (2011).

38 Other ideas emerged in those years that will remain vital for the Southern states. Among all, I would say, the willingness to present themselves as the "real destinations" for civil rights tourism, an idea pioneered by Alabama in the late 1970s, or the subdivision into geographical or thematic tourist regions, or the use of the Native theme. More importantly, however, is the very idea of the variety trope that appears in direct continuity with the processes highlighted in the late 1970s. This process of the fragmentation of the image of the South was undoubtedly caused both by some profound motives, linked to the role of the Southern region in the American culture,

and also by a series of contingent factors, specific to the 1970s and to the tourism industry, which allowed and even accelerated the process. Moreover, the political administrations of the Deep South states were well aware of the need to project a new modern appearance: still seductive but less wild and untamed than before. Alabama, Mississippi, Georgia and South Carolina were to be destinations for tourists of all kinds (with black tourism now a major force in the market), but also for conventions, corporate retreats, possibly new industries. Thus, something modern, even stylish, and maybe with an international and worldly flavor had to be added to the overall destination image of the four states.

39 From that moment on, a path was laid and the face that the South showed the tourists in the following forty years became even more fragmented, with the addition of several new elements. This is also because tourism has continued to change consistently: as travel activities vary and increase in number and tourists become more demanding, advertisements in turn need to become more sophisticated and complex to properly influence readers' choice (Krippendorf, 1987). Hence, the variety trope. Even from a cultural point of view, not strictly related to tourism, the South became increasingly elusive as a distinct entity, increasingly complex to delimit and define.

40 The Old South, however, even if tamed and somehow kinder, remained there, ready to emerge in the American imagination, if necessary. McPherson, for example, noted a resurgence of the American passion for the classic Southern myths in the late 1980s as a form of reaction to the economic pressures of late capitalism, and as a sign of the rollback of the gains of the Civil Rights movement (2003, p. 18). In this sense, we should remember that the wild and romantic antebellum South is an all-American icon, and by no means a mere reactionary gaze of the South over its own past.

41 Therefore, we must also look at the Southern tourist image as a reflection of the wishes and expectations of the United States as a whole. During the 1970s and the 1980s, American culture showed great interest in the South, mostly in its links with the ideas of tradition, sense of community, family values, and as a reaction to the turbulence and disillusions of the present moment (McPherson, 2003; Kirby, 1978). Indeed, the American culture wanted to embrace some peculiar traits of the South. Therefore, a tamed and more amicable version of the classic South perfectly fit into the context of the period. And a tamed version of the classic South was precisely what tourism offices offered to potential visitors, through the image of a region where modernity and a new social status quo intertwined with a simulated nostalgic look at the past, keeping the Old South alive for tourists, albeit perhaps even in a more kitsch version than before.

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NOTES

1. Between 1976 and 1981 Alabama produced two booklets, *Alabama Has it All* and *Alabama the Beautiful*. Mississippi also had two booklets, *Mississippi...America South* and then *Mississippi...It's Like Coming Home*, while *Georgia Days* and *This Way To Fun* were the two main booklets of Georgia. South Carolina started the publication of this type of brochure only in 1980 with *Come See S.C.*

2. "Economy", *The Clarion-Ledger*, November 3, 1975, 12

3. "Driving Vacations 'Out'", *Statesville Record and Landmark*, February 27, 1974, 11-A.

4. Governor's Conference on Tourism 1979, in Alabama Department of Archive and History, Tourism and Travel (ADAH) administrative files 1940-2010, SG 014974.

5. "Promote Tourism", *The Clarksdale Press Register*, January 16, 1981, 4.

6. South Carolina Tourism Advertising - Proposal, Leslie advertising, 1979-1980, South Carolina Department of Archive and History (SCDAH) S200039, DPRT, marketing office, advertising proposal 1975-1998, advertising proposal 1979-1980, Leslie advertising.

7. Suggested Implementation and Promotional Strategies for Plains Country Tourism Master Plant, in Georgia Archive (GAR), Lower Chattachoochee APDC 1977, RCB 24901, Industry and Trade, Director's subject files 1977

8. Come see S.C, South Carolina's Tourism Advertising 1979-1980, Leslie Advertising, SCDAH, S200039.

9. The same happened on the front cover of the major tourist guide of Alabama, South Carolina and Georgia, as well as in several individual advertisements.

10. Mississippi, it's like coming home, 1978, Mississippi Agricultural and Industrial Board, Department of Tourism Development miscellaneous publications, 7:MP, Miscellaneous Publications, Box I, 411TD.

11. Survey, Mississippi Tourism Office, 1975-1976. In MDAH, Department of Tourism Subject Correspondence, Box 11534, B2/R170/B5/52.

12. Text of a Travel South ad. Travel South was a regional association dedicated to promoting the entire South as one large tourist destination. It was composed of the tourism directors of the 11 member states. Honeymoon South, Travel South, 1981 in ADAH, Tourism and Travel Administrative files, 1940-2010, SG014977, Alabama the Beautiful campaign 1980-1981.

13. A good collection of ads dedicated to individual market segments are conserved in ADAH, SG 037009, Tourism and Travel Administrative Files, Director's correspondence, Alabama the Beautiful ad campaign 1980-1982; Mississippi Department of Archive and History (MDAH), Box

11532, Row 22, Bay 5, Shelf 2, S 1663; GAR, DOC2-752, Industry and Trade, Public Relations, Publications 1978-1979.

14. These and other ads are in SCDAH, S200039, DPRT, marketing office, advertising proposal 1975-1998, 1977-1978 ads.

15. South Carolina. A lot of it looks a little like a foreign country, brochure/booklet, 1977, SCDAH, S200044, DPRT marketing office, brochures 1940-1998, travel guides 1979-1985.

16. Minutes S.C. Parks, Recreation and Tourism Commission, September 28, 1979, SCDAH, S200025, Annual reports of the DPRT 1970-2000, and Letter from Howard L. Rothchild to Roy Burson, Tourist Division, December 10, 1975, Georgia Archive (GAR), Travel Movie 1976, RCB 5296 Industry and Trade, Director's Subject Files 1977.

17. Alabama the Beautiful, booklet, in ADAH, Tourism and Travel, Communications Division, Program Administrative files, 1961-1979, SG014284, Photo, brochures, pamphlet.

18. Alabama the Beautiful, ad, black history in ADAH, Tourism and Travel administrative files, Director's Correspondence, SG037009, Ads, Circa 1979.

19. Rich in memories, Mississippi, in MDAH, Promotional Materials (1980-2007), Box 19769, Row 27, Bay 22, Shelf 5, Series 303, Rg:76 Tourism, 1980s, 1990s – travel guides 1985-1991.

20. The photo is in GAR, DOC2-752, Industry and Trade, Public Relations, Publications 1978-1979.

21. Alabama's Black Heritage: A Tour of Historic Sites, in ADAH, SG014284, Tourism and Travel, Communications Division, Program Administrative files, 1961-1979.

22. "Information sought for black tour guide", *Jackson Daily News*, May 7, 1984, p. C1

23. A portrait of our historic past. This is Georgia, advertisement, 1975-1976, GAR, RCB 27169, Industry and Trade, Public Relations, State Advertising Files, 1974-1978.

24. Already in 1941, for example, Alabama published ads dedicated to the "Romantic and Progressive Alabama" where
"the old South blends with the new". Cfr: ad on *The Akron Beacon Journal*, December, 14 1941.

25. Honeymoon South, Travel South, 1981 in ADAH, Tourism and Travel Administrative files, 1940-2010, SG014977, Alabama the Beautiful campaign 1980-1981

26. Alabama Has it All, 1975/1976, script, in ADAH, Tourism and Travel, Communications Division, Program Administrative files, 1961-1979, SG014284

27. Mississippi, it's like coming home, 1978, Mississippi Agricultural and Industrial Board, Department of Tourism Development miscellaneous publications, 7:MP, Miscellaneous Publications, Box I, 411TD

28. Letter from George Williams to Carol Ann, 1978, in MDAH, Box 11533, Row 20, Bay 26, shelf 1, S1663, Rg 76, Sg1, Memorandum.

29. Tourism in historic Columbus, 1977 in MDAH, Department of Tourism Correspondence, B2/ R170/B5/S2, S 1663

30. The term "War Between the States" to call the Civil War has historically been used by Southern partisans and Confederate nostalgics.

31. In no case, however, was the War linked to slavery. The Civil War was something that happened at some point in the past, without precise causes.

32. "Rebel Soldiers charge north", *Pensacola News Journal*, September 25, 1981, p. C-1.

ABSTRACTS

This article aims to highlight how the second half of the 1970s was a moment of enormous importance for the tourist image of the South, a pivotal moment when a series of factors converged for reshaping the overall promotional strategy of the southern states. These factors concern both the evolution of the American tourism industry and more complex historical processes related to the South and its relationship with the rest of the country. By analyzing the advertising material of four states (Alabama, Mississippi, Georgia, South Carolina) and the documents produced by their tourism departments, it will be highlighted how the classic image of the antebellum South, which for a long time had represented the core of regional promotional activity, had now become only a part of a larger, complex and multifaceted whole aimed both at promoting the idea of a more friendly, modern South and the idea of a South abundant in all kinds of attractions. A trend that laid the foundations for the current image of the tourist South.

Cet article montre que la seconde moitié des années 1970 a été un moment d'une importance énorme pour l'image touristique du Sud des États Unis, un moment clé où une série de facteurs ont convergé pour remodeler la stratégie promotionnelle globale de la région. Ces facteurs concernent à la fois l'évolution de l'industrie touristique américaine et des processus historiques plus complexes liés au Sud et à ses relations avec le reste du pays. En analysant le matériel publicitaire de quatre États (Alabama, Mississippi, Géorgie, Caroline du Sud) et les documents produits par leurs ministères du tourisme, on soulignera comment l'image classique du Sud d'avant la guerre, qui a longtemps représenté le cœur de l'activité promotionnelle régionale, n'est devenue qu'une partie d'un ensemble plus vaste, complexe et multiforme visant à promouvoir à la fois l'idée d'un Sud plus convivial et moderne et celle d'un Sud foisonnant d'attractions de toutes sortes. Une tendance qui a jeté les bases de l'image actuelle du Sud touristique.

INDEX

Keywords: Deep South, advertising, tourism, 1970s, identity
Mots-clés: Sud profond, années 1970, publicité, tourisme, identité

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Imaginaires de l'abandon et pratiques touristiques à Détroit : des marges urbaines entre stigmatisation et valorisation

Imaginaries of Abandonment and Tourism Practices in Detroit: Urban Margins between Stigmatization and Valorization

Aude Le Gallou

Introduction

1 Chaque week-end de l'hiver 2018, l'église abandonnée St Margaret Mary située dans l'East Side de Détroit voyait se répéter la même scène : une dizaine de personnes, accompagnées d'un guide, sortaient d'un minibus pour explorer les restes du lieu puis y revenaient trois quarts d'heure plus tard pour être acheminées vers une autre ruine urbaine où se répèterait le même manège. Proposées par le photographe Jesse Welter et son entreprise Motor City Photography Workshops dans le cadre de leurs « Detroit Urbex Tours », ces visites guidées présentaient l'originalité d'être exclusivement consacrées aux lieux abandonnés qui ont longtemps dominé les imaginaires collectifs relatifs à Détroit, symbole par excellence de la crise et de la décroissance urbaines.

2 Cet investissement touristique d'une ville associée à de puissants imaginaires répulsifs peut surprendre tant le rôle des imaginaires géographiques est important dans la structuration des mobilités touristiques. Définis par Bernard Debarbieux comme des « ensemble[s] d'"images mentales" en relation qui confèrent [...] une signification et une cohérence à la localisation, à la distribution, à l'interaction de phénomènes dans l'espace » (2003, p. 489) et par Jean-François Staszak comme « [des] système[s] de représentations socialement et culturellement pertinentes pour appréhender un objet géographique » (2012, p. 19), les imaginaires géographiques ne sont pas seulement un mode d'appréhension de l'espace, mais également des « fauteur[s] de géographie »

(Brunet *et al.*, 2005, p. 271). Par leur influence sur les représentations individuelles et collectives des lieux, ils déterminent en partie les pratiques et les formes d'appropriation de l'espace et contribuent ainsi à faire advenir des réalités spatiales. Par leur capacité à présenter tel ou tel lieu comme désirable ou non, les imaginaires géographiques contribuent à produire une géographie du tourisme dynamique au sein de laquelle se distinguent des centralités attractives et des marges ignorées, voire évitées (Amirou, 1995, 2000 ; Gravari-Barbas et Graburn, 2012). On peut ainsi parler de véritables imaginaires touristiques, que Maria Gravari-Barbas et Nelson Graburn définissent comme « des imaginaires spatiaux qui se réfèrent à la virtualité en puissance d'un lieu en tant que destination touristique », correspondant à « une partie spécifique de la vision du Monde d'individus ou de groupes sociaux, concernant des lieux autres que ceux de leur résidence principale ou se référant à des contextes où pourraient se dérouler certains types d'activités de loisir » (*ibid.*, s.p.). Production et circulation des imaginaires représentent alors un enjeu majeur pour les différents acteurs concernés par le tourisme (*ibid.*).

3 Dès lors, l'attractivité touristique des lieux abandonnés de Détroit, associés à des imaginaires négatifs, peut sembler étonnante. Ceux-ci sont pourtant, paradoxalement, à l'origine de mobilités et de pratiques touristiques spécifiques qui valorisent les marqueurs spatiaux de la crise urbaine plus que ceux du renouveau de la ville. Ce constat doit être analysé à la lumière de la popularisation récente du *ruin porn*, genre photographique consacré aux lieux abandonnés. Critiqué pour son parti pris esthétisant (Leary, 2011 ; Mullins, 2012 ; Apel, 2015a, 2015b), il n'en constitue pas moins un facteur de revalorisation symbolique de ces espaces dépréciés. Pour autant, les mobilités et pratiques touristiques qui ont pu s'en inspirer restent peu étudiées. Le présent article en propose une analyse qui s'inscrit dans les réflexions géographiques sur les espaces de l'abandon urbain. La littérature existante explore déjà un certain nombre de questions : production et traitement de l'abandon dans des contextes de déclin urbain (Dewar et Thomas, 2012 ; Akers, 2013, 2017 ; Hackworth, 2014 ; Dewar *et al.*, 2015 ; Nussbaum, 2019), rôle de l'abandon et de ses représentations dans la structuration des identités et des mémoires collectives (High et Lewis, 2007 ; Mah, 2010, 2012 ; Apel, 2015a, 2015b ; Offenstadt, 2018, 2019) ou encore potentiel de subversion et de critique politique des ruines contemporaines (Edensor, 2005, 2007 ; Apel, 2015a, 2015b). Si cette dernière thématique éclaire nombre d'enjeux associés à l'exploitation touristique des lieux abandonnés, il n'en reste pas moins que cette exploitation dans le cadre de prestations commerciales formalisées fait figure d'angle mort des réflexions sur l'abandon urbain. La pratique de l'exploration urbaine (ou urbex), qui consiste en l'exploration souvent illégale de sites abandonnés, fait certes l'objet d'analyses de plus en plus nombreuses (Garrett, 2012, 2014 ; Offenstadt, *op. cit.*, 2022), dont certaines interrogent les rapports qu'elle entretient avec la sphère touristique (Fraser, 2012 ; Robinson, 2015) ; pour autant, les formes de tourisme plus formelles inspirées de l'urbex n'ont pas été traitées en tant que telles.

4 Cet article propose donc une analyse de ces pratiques touristiques, que je qualifie de « tourisme de l'abandon », au prisme de leur articulation avec les imaginaires spatiaux associés à l'abandon à partir du cas des « Detroit Urbex Tours ». J'analyserai d'abord les imaginaires spatiaux ambivalents associés à Détroit, avant d'étudier spécifiquement l'importance du motif de l'abandon dans la construction d'un imaginaire de ville fantôme. Je montrerai ensuite que cet imaginaire suscite des pratiques touristiques originales centrées sur les lieux abandonnés, dont je soulignerai les modalités de

valorisation. Enfin, j'appréhenderai le tourisme de l'abandon comme un phénomène temporaire révélateur d'une phase de transition dans la trajectoire urbaine de Détroit.

5 Les données mobilisées sont issues d'une recherche menée en 2017 et 2018 dans le cadre d'un doctorat. Appuyée sur une méthodologie essentiellement qualitative, elle croise un travail d'observation participante mené au cours de neuf visites guidées organisées dans le cadre des « Detroit Urbex Tours » avec des entretiens réalisés auprès de différents types d'acteurs (visiteurs, organisateurs de visites, acteurs institutionnels du secteur touristique et résidents). Plusieurs supports ont par ailleurs été analysés pour préciser les discours et les imaginaires des différents acteurs (campagnes de marketing institutionnelles, presse nationale et internationale, traces numériques des visiteurs, productions culturelles). Enfin, une enquête par questionnaires réalisée auprès des visiteurs ajoute à ce dispositif un volet quantitatif.

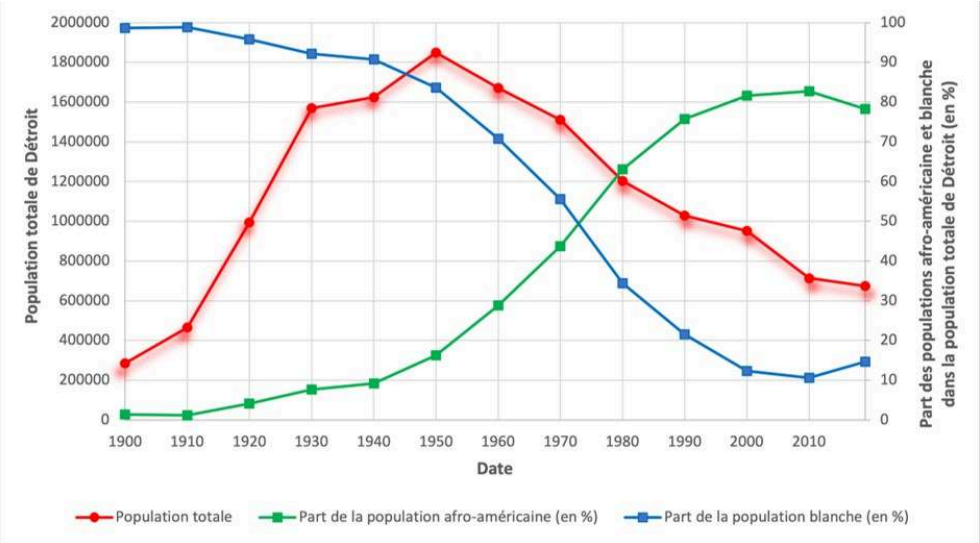
Détroit, ville matrice d'imaginaires spatiaux en tension

Détroit, incarnation emblématique de dynamiques successives de croissance et de déclin

6 Depuis le début du XX^e^ siècle, Détroit occupe une place singulière dans les représentations que la société états-unienne se fait de son territoire et de son identité. Sa trajectoire urbaine est à la fois représentative et exceptionnelle : si croissance industrielle et crise urbaine relèvent de dynamiques géographiques plus larges, ces processus semblent se déployer à Détroit avec une intensité particulière.

7 Colonie française fondée en 1701, Détroit passe sous contrôle britannique en 1760 avant d'être cédée aux États-Unis dans les années 1790. Largement détruite par le grand incendie de 1805, la ville connaît une croissance démographique et économique remarquable au cours du XIX^e^ siècle. Tandis que sa population passe d'environ 2 000 habitants en 1830 à 285 000 en 1900, ses atouts géographiques (un accès facile aux ressources en fer et en bois, une bonne accessibilité par rail et voies d'eau) lui assurent un développement industriel rapide. Le développement de l'industrie automobile, à partir des premières années du XX^e^ siècle, donne une nouvelle dimension à ce dynamisme économique et propulse Détroit au rang de symbole de la modernité industrielle états-unienne, incarnée par les entreprises Ford (1903), General Motors (1908) et Chrysler (1925). Au milieu des années 1910, Détroit fait déjà figure de centre incontesté de la production automobile américaine de masse. La croissance démographique de la ville est à la mesure de celle de l'emploi industriel : de 465 000 en 1910, sa population atteint 1,85 million d'habitants en 1950 (*cf.* graphique 1). Alors que son industrie automobile atteint son apogée au début des années 1940, Détroit devient la *Motor City* emblématique du dynamisme industriel états-unien (Martelle, 2012 ; Sugrue, 2014).

Graphique 1. Évolution démographique de Détroit : population totale et part relative des populations afro-américaine et blanche (1900-2019)



Source : US Census Bureau / Réalisation : Aude Le Gallou, 2021

8 Dès les années 1940 s'amorcent pourtant des dynamiques sociales, économiques et politiques dont les effets font progressivement de Détroit, au cours de la seconde moitié du XX^e siècle, le symbole d'une crise urbaine que connaissent nombre de villes américaines (McDonald, 2008). Les conséquences conjuguées d'un racisme institutionnalisé, de la désindustrialisation et du processus de suburbanisation provoquent un déclin massif de l'emploi et de la population (en baisse constante depuis 1950, elle atteint 670 000 habitants en 2019 ; voir graphique 1) ainsi qu'une concentration des populations les plus vulnérables, très majoritairement afro-américaines, dans l'*inner city* (Sugrue, 2014). Il en résulte une aire métropolitaine particulièrement ségréguée. Par ailleurs, *Motor City* se mue peu à peu en *Murder City*, ainsi que le *Times Magazine* la désigne dès 1973 en raison de l'insécurité qui s'y développe (Draus et Roddy, 2016). Après des décennies de déclin, la faillite de la municipalité en 2013 achève d'en faire l'archétype d'un processus de décroissance urbaine d'ampleur inédite. À peine ce paroxysme atteint, s'affirme pourtant un nouveau récit urbain fondé sur le motif de la renaissance. Présentée en tant qu'« *America's Great Comeback City* » par la campagne promotionnelle lancée en 2013 par le Detroit Metro Convention and Visitors Bureau (DMCVB), l'organisme de promotion touristique de la région métropolitaine, Détroit est désormais célébrée pour une capacité de résilience abondamment vantée par les médias nationaux. Le *Times Magazine* suggère ainsi, dès 2014, que « *the city's nascent downtown renaissance [...] may herald a new era for American cities in which old Rust Belt towns once again become engines of growth*[1] ».

9 Détroit apparaît ainsi comme un cas emblématique des dynamiques de croissance et de crise qui touchent les villes industrielles du Nord-Est états-unien, mais l'intensité de ces phénomènes y est exceptionnelle. Détroit fait alors figure d'occurrence représentative certes, mais aussi de cas extrême, caractérisé par un degré inhabituel d'aboutissement des dynamiques spatiales qui la distingue des autres villes de la *Rust Belt* (McDonald, 2008, 2014). La ville revêt ainsi une dimension métonymique : à la fois représentative et exceptionnelle, Détroit acquiert par sa singularité même la capacité à

signifier d'autres lieux et d'autres espaces (l'Amérique urbaine industrielle, puis en crise) et à en incarner les évolutions. En cela, elle peut être analysée comme un lieu symbolique au sens de Bernard Debarbieux (1995). Les médias nationaux ne manquent d'ailleurs jamais de présenter de la ville comme un baromètre de l'état de l'Amérique tout entière. Pour le *Times Magazine*, « *if ever a city stood as a symbol of the dynamic U.S. economy, it was Detroit* » (1961), mais « *Detroit has become an icon of the failed American city* » (2009)[2].

10 Ces spécificités de la trajectoire urbaine de Détroit expliquent l'intensité de son investissement par des imaginaires géographiques puissants, éminemment spatialisés et incarnés dans des marqueurs paysagers spécifiques. La section qui suit analyse ces imaginaires, leur genèse, leurs contenus et leurs implications, en s'attardant plus particulièrement sur l'imaginaire que suscite la crise urbaine et sur le rôle essentiel qu'y joue le motif de l'abandon.

La persistance d'un imaginaire fondé sur la crise urbaine en dépit d'une revitalisation naissante

11 Ces imaginaires géographiques sont chacun structurés autour d'un motif central, perçu comme résumant l'identité de la ville (l'industrie automobile, la crise urbaine, la renaissance) et renvoyant à une phase donnée de l'évolution urbaine. La décennie 2010 correspond à une période charnière, entre phase de déclin et débuts d'une redynamisation urbaine. Si l'évolution des indicateurs économiques et sociaux témoigne d'une amélioration récente (Detroit Future City, 2017), Détroit n'en reste pas moins en déclin : au-delà du centre-ville et des quartiers ciblés par les politiques de revitalisation subsistent de vastes portions d'espace urbain marquées par le recul démographique, la dégradation du bâti et la pauvreté. Dans l'espace comme dans les représentations coexistent ainsi héritages d'une longue crise urbaine et indices d'une revitalisation activement mise en scène. Cela se manifeste dans les imaginaires qui structurent les représentations de Détroit et qui s'articulent autour de deux polarités opposées. Une première catégorie, fondée sur la crise urbaine et ses conséquences, associe Détroit à la figure de la ville fantôme (Draus et Roddy, *op. cit.*) voire de la ville morte (Eisinger, 2013). La seconde, dominée par le motif de la renaissance urbaine, repose au contraire sur la perception de Détroit comme une ville phénix, caractérisée par sa résilience, et s'affirme depuis la sortie de la procédure de mise en faillite en 2014. On a donc respectivement affaire à des imaginaires hérités, dont je montrerai la permanence malgré un décalage croissant avec les évolutions urbaines actuelles, et à des imaginaires plus récents, alimentés par ces dynamiques contemporaines (Fraser, 2018).

Encadré 1. Travailler sur les imaginaires géographiques : corpus, méthodes d'analyse et limites

Dans le cadre de la thèse de doctorat sur laquelle s'appuie cet article, la question des imaginaires géographiques a été abordée à partir de données récoltées et analysées à l'aide de différentes techniques. Ont été particulièrement mobilisés les entretiens avec différentes catégories d'acteurs (voir annexe 1), les questionnaires auprès des visiteurs (voir annexe 2) et l'analyse de contenu appliquée à un corpus diversifié (voir annexe 3). Pour les données d'entretiens et l'analyse de contenu,

j'ai opté pour un traitement manuel selon la technique de l'analyse thématique transversale. Celle-ci consiste en un découpage du corpus à partir d'un certain nombre de catégories thématiques appliquées à l'ensemble des données ; les différents fragments de discours sont classés dans ces catégories en fonction de leur proximité thématique. De la même manière, le traitement des questionnaires a été réalisé manuellement sur tableur Excel. Après saisie et nettoyage de la base de données obtenue, les réponses correspondant aux questions ouvertes ont été recodées pour faire émerger des catégories d'analyse thématique. Les éléments mobilisés dans cette section de l'article relèvent essentiellement de sources médiatiques, de supports institutionnels et de productions iconographiques relatives à l'abandon, associés à l'analyse de la littérature existante. Les données plus spécifiques aux visiteurs de lieux abandonnés sont quant à elles mobilisées dans les sections suivantes.

La méthodologie utilisée appelle quelques remarques dans la mesure où elle ne prétend ni à l'exhaustivité, ni à la systématicité du corpus de données mobilisé. D'une part, les entretiens avec les participants aux visites se sont révélés très difficiles à obtenir pour deux raisons : peu d'entre eux étaient disposés à prolonger par un entretien des visites déjà très longues et, n'habitant souvent pas sur place, ils disposaient d'un temps limité peu compatible avec la réalisation d'un entretien. Dans l'analyse, cela a conduit à s'appuyer davantage sur les réponses au questionnaire, qui ne permettent pas de saisir aussi finement les imaginaires individuels, mais suggèrent des tendances plus générales. D'autre part, le corpus soumis à l'analyse de contenu n'a pas été constitué de manière systématique (par exemple, par l'intégration de tous les articles concernant Détroit paru dans le *Time* sur une période donnée), mais constitue plutôt la somme des sources et documents divers mobilisés au fur et à mesure de cette recherche. L'analyse d'un corpus plus systématique permettrait sans nul doute de préciser et d'approfondir les propositions présentées ici.

12 Des deux catégories d'imaginaires évoquées plus haut, celle de la ville fantôme et celle de la ville phénix, c'est la première qui est au fondement des pratiques touristiques analysées ici. Cet imaginaire repose sur une appréhension de Détroit comme l'incarnation de la crise urbaine et associe la ville aux effets socio-spatiaux du déclin : pauvreté, ségrégation raciale, marginalité sociale, criminalité, délabrement du bâti. Draus et Roddy (*op. cit.*) soulignent ainsi la mobilisation récurrente du motif de la monstruosité pour décrire Détroit, présentée comme une anomalie tant sociale que spatiale. La ville et ses habitants y sont assimilés à des figures renvoyant à l'idée d'une altérité menaçante (fantôme, vampire, zombie). À cette altérisation des habitants répond par ailleurs leur invisibilisation dans les représentations exogènes de Détroit (Apel, 2015b). Elles reposent en effet sur le fantasme de la ville comme espace vierge à (re)conquérir (Millington, 2013), passant sous silence la présence des 670 000 personnes qui résident toujours dans l'*inner city*. Monstrueux ou absents, les habitants de Détroit se voient dans tous les cas refuser la capacité à déployer des formes d'appropriation de l'espace perçues comme légitimes. Cette dépossession de la population par les imaginaires de la ville fantôme invite à s'intéresser au motif de l'abandon, qui en constitue un élément essentiel.

13 Processus de désinvestissement matériel et symbolique, l'abandon est le produit de l'articulation des différents processus intervenant dans la crise urbaine qui touche Détroit. Il constitue ainsi un indicateur empirique de son ampleur. Deux éléments favorisent sa mobilisation par l'imaginaire géographique de la ville fantôme : l'abandon est (1) un phénomène éminemment spatial, ce qui lui confère (2) une dimension visuelle essentielle à la construction et à la circulation des imaginaires spatiaux. Il se manifeste matériellement par la désaffectation de nombreux espaces, qu'il s'agisse de lieux génériques (la maison abandonnée, la friche industrielle ; voir illustration 1) ou de ruines iconiques précisément identifiées et localisées, comme l'ancienne gare Michigan Central Station et l'usine automobile Packard Plant (voir illustrations 2 et 3). Inscrivant matériellement les conséquences de la crise urbaine dans l'espace, l'abandon devient un élément essentiel du paysage urbain. Pour cette raison, ce motif domine l'iconographie et les discours qui expriment (autant qu'ils le nourrissent) l'imaginaire de la ville fantôme.

Illustration 1. Une maison abandonnée dans l'East Side de Détroit

On dénombrait environ 110 000 logements vacants en 2017, soit un tiers du parc, et 40 000 structures délabrées (*blighted*) en 2014.

Illustration 2. Ancienne gare Michigan Central Station, Détroit

Désaffectée depuis 1988, l'ancienne gare Michigan Central Station a longtemps fait figure de ruine emblématique de Détroit, avant son rachat en 2018 par l'entreprise Ford qui la rénove pour y installer des immeubles de bureaux. On aperçoit sur la photo les fenêtres installées en 2015 par l'ancien propriétaire dans le cadre de premières rénovations.

Illustration 3. Ancienne usine Packard, Détroit

Abandonnée dès 1956, l'ancienne usine Packard s'étend sur 300 ha dans l'East Side. La revitalisation annoncée lors de son rachat en 2013 semble aujourd'hui en échec ; revente et démolition sont actuellement évoquées.

14 Si, pendant plusieurs décennies, la couverture médiatique de Détroit a présenté la ville comme l'archétype du déclin, c'est à partir de la fin des années 2000 que se diffuse un corpus photographique au rôle décisif dans la popularisation d'un imaginaire de la ville fantôme. Centré sur le motif de l'abandon, ce corpus a bénéficié d'une circulation numérique massive tout en étant largement relayé par les médias jusqu'au milieu des années 2010. Le terme *ruin porn* se diffuse alors pour condamner un genre photographique visant « *a purely self-centered satisfaction of voyeuristic viewing*[3] » des ruines de la ville (Mullins, 2012) mais aveugle aux processus sociaux, économiques et politiques qu'elles manifestent. Les analystes du *ruin porn* le définissent par la récurrence de choix esthétiques mettant en scène la matérialité singulière des espaces abandonnés, l'atmosphère qui s'en dégage et surtout l'absence d'êtres humains. *The Ruins of Detroit* (2010) d'Yves Marchand et Romain Meffre, dont les photographies ont été abondamment reprises dans les médias nationaux et internationaux, en est une représentation emblématique. Le *ruin porn* a fait l'objet de nombreuses critiques relatives à son rôle dans la mécompréhension et la dépolitisation des dynamiques de la crise urbaine, de même qu'a été contestée la pertinence du terme pour qualifier le phénomène (voir *infra*). Ce qui nous intéresse dans un premier temps, c'est le rôle de ce corpus iconographique dans la « *aesthetic re-definition of the urban wasteland as picturesque ruinscape*[4] » (Tegtmeyer, 2016, p. 9), qui contribue à un renversement du stigmate décisif pour cet objet d'étude. En effet, malgré des contenus *a priori* répulsifs, cet imaginaire de la ville fantôme devient un facteur d'attractivité et suscite des pratiques touristiques motivées par l'abandon urbain.

La crise urbaine comme attraction touristique : genèse et modalités d'un tourisme de l'abandon

L'esthétisation de l'abandon, facteur de mise en désir touristique de la ville en crise

15 La circulation massive de cette iconographie esthétisant les lieux abandonnés à partir de la fin des années 2000 joue un rôle majeur dans la construction de Détroit comme destination privilégiée de ce tourisme de l'abandon. Expression visuelle de l'imaginaire de la ville fantôme, elle prend le relais de discours médiatiques peu enclins à suggérer une forme de désirabilité des lieux abandonnés et contribue ainsi à une redéfinition du statut de l'espace urbain en crise et de sa valeur symbolique. La crise urbaine passe ainsi du statut de stigmate dissuadant les mobilités touristiques à celui de ressource esthétique et expérientielle (pour un public certes restreint). Notons que ce ressort de l'identification de Détroit comme destination touristique s'appuie sur l'exact inverse de ce que les acteurs institutionnels locaux cherchent à promouvoir pour souligner le dynamisme de la ville (voir *infra*).

16 Cette redéfinition esthétique contribue à l'essor d'un tourisme de l'abandon défini comme un ensemble de pratiques consistant à visiter des lieux abandonnés – motivées précisément par l'abandon de ces sites et non par une quelconque réappropriation – et qui leur prêtent souvent une valeur esthétique et expérientielle. Les formes en sont diverses et vont de l'exploration récréative informelle à l'organisation de visites guidées légales (Slager, 2013). Dans le cadre de cette recherche, je me concentre sur les visites organisées par un prestataire extérieur au groupe de visiteurs. Cette forme de

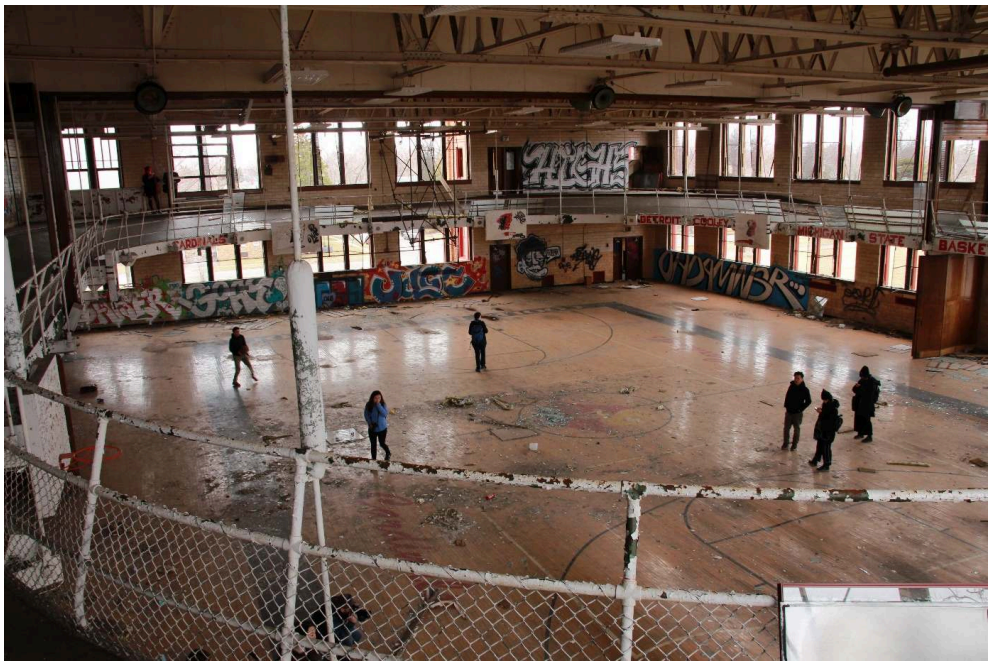
tourisme se développe dans un double contexte. D'une part, le renouvellement des imaginaires et des pratiques associés aux lieux abandonnés favorise leur réinvestissement sous des formes et à des fins variées. L'exploitation touristique en constitue l'une des modalités. D'autre part, l'extension et la diversification des espaces et des pratiques touristiques favorisent un changement de regard sur des espaces autrefois répulsifs, dont les lieux abandonnés ne sont qu'une catégorie parmi d'autres. En ce sens, le tourisme de l'abandon relève d'une forme de tourisme hors des sentiers battus qui investit plus largement des espaces qui constituaient jusqu'alors des marges de l'œcoumène touristique (Maitland et Newman, 2004 ; Gravari-Barbas et Delaplace, 2015).

17 À Détroit, cet intérêt pour l'abandon a suscité la création d'une offre relativement modeste. Si Emma Slager identifie une douzaine d'offres de visite de ruines (*ruin tours*) lors d'une recherche menée en 2012, elle retient une acception large correspondant à toute visite guidée incluant, à un moment ou un autre, la présentation et le commentaire d'un bâtiment abandonné (Slager, 2020). J'adopte ici une définition plus restrictive pour ne retenir que les visites explicitement et exclusivement consacrées à l'exploration guidée de lieux abandonnés. Selon cette approche, seul un prestataire se distingue : le photographe Jesse Welter et son « Detroit Urbex Tour » organisé de 2011 à 2019. Il s'agit donc clairement d'une forme de tourisme de niche, dont la place dans l'économie générale des mobilités touristiques est modeste au regard des 19 millions de visiteurs qu'a accueillis l'aire métropolitaine de Détroit en 2019, en tout cas dans sa forme organisée. Elle me semble néanmoins intéressante pour ce qu'elle révèle des évolutions des appropriations des friches urbaines et des pratiques touristiques. À une demande encouragée par la diffusion d'un imaginaire de la ville fantôme fondé sur le motif de l'abandon répond ainsi une offre valorisant un type d'espaces générique (les lieux abandonnés) et qui constitue un moment de mise à l'épreuve des imaginaires des participants.

La visite touristique comme actualisation : construction, confirmation, recomposition des imaginaires de l'abandon

18 Les « Detroit Urbex Tours » correspondaient à des visites d'environ cinq heures organisées chaque samedi et dimanche. Après avoir retrouvé le guide au point de rendez-vous, les participants embarquaient pour un parcours en minibus reliant les trois à cinq sites explorés (voir illustration 4). Ceux-ci n'étaient pas indiqués à l'avance aux visiteurs, mais sélectionnés chaque semaine par le prestataire en fonction des conditions d'accès et de sécurité. En l'absence d'autorisation des propriétaires et malgré la non-sécurisation des lieux, ces visites relevaient juridiquement de la violation de propriété : elles revêtaient donc une dimension formelle, par leur organisation et leur promotion assumée, mais néanmoins illégale. Au cours d'une recherche menée en 2017 et 2018, j'ai pris part à neuf de ces visites et proposé à tous les participants de répondre à un questionnaire concernant leurs motivations. J'ai récolté 52 réponses, représentant environ trois quarts des participants.

Illustration 4. Des participants à un « Detroit Urbex Tour » dans l'ancien lycée Thomas Cooley



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19 Ces réponses éclairent la place que tient l'abandon dans les imaginaires des visiteurs et dans leur choix de visiter Détroit. L'une des questions invitait les participants à indiquer cinq mots qu'ils utiliseraient pour décrire Détroit. L'analyse des résultats, présentée ci-dessous, fait apparaître une nette domination des registres sémantiques associés à l'imaginaire de la ville fantôme tel qu'il a été défini plus haut (voir tableau 1), dont relèvent 62 % des mots proposés. Parmi ces catégories, ce sont celles qui renvoient à l'abandon, à la dégradation matérielle et au danger qui prédominent. En revanche, celles qui se rapportent aux processus à l'origine de la situation de la ville, notamment la ségrégation, et aux caractéristiques socioéconomiques de la population sont beaucoup moins souvent évoquées. Les représentations des participants semblent donc dominées par un certain nombre de caractéristiques négativement connotées, mais mobilisent peu d'éléments de compréhension de cette situation. Par ailleurs, sur les 43 participants ayant accepté d'évaluer la place des lieux abandonnés dans leurs représentations de Détroit, 21 personnes l'ont jugée « importante » et 19 « très importante », soit 93 % des répondants. En outre, à la question qui leur proposait d'évaluer l'importance des lieux abandonnés dans les raisons de leur choix de se rendre à Détroit, 18 répondants ont déclaré que ces lieux avaient joué un rôle important et 22 d'entre eux un rôle très important. Pour 74 % des répondants, les lieux abandonnés ont donc constitué un facteur significatif de la mobilité à destination de Détroit.

Tableau 1. Représentations de Détroit exprimées par les participants aux « Detroit Urbex Tours »

Thématique	Score (points et pourcentage du score total)	Sous-thématiques	Score (points)
Imaginaire de la ville-fantôme	337 points *soit 62%*	Abandon et dégradation matérielle	113
		Danger	84
		Caractérisations négatives non catégorisées	43
		Pauvreté	37
		Déclin urbain	21
		Dysfonctionnements urbains	14
		Ségrégation et enjeux raciaux	14
		Éloignement et isolement	11
Imaginaire de la ville renaissante	69 points *soit 13%*	Renaissance et transformations	29
		Caractérisations positives non catégorisées	29
		Activité / dynamisme	6
		Esthétique	5
Industrie automobile	57 points *soit 10%*	Industrie	29
		Automobile	28
Culture et patrimoine	39 points *soit 7%*	Histoire / patrimoine / culture	19
		Architecture	13
		Musique	4
		Street art	3
Caractéristiques morphologiques et géographiques	16 points *soit 3%*	Forme urbaine	18
		Identification à un ensemble spatial	12
Non classés	29 points *soit* 5%	N = 43 répondants	
TOTAL	**547 points**		

Réalisation : Aude Le Gallou, 2021

20 Il faut souligner que la méthodologie utilisée n'avait pas pour objectif de sonder un échantillon représentatif de l'ensemble des touristes visitant Détroit. Le but n'est donc pas de déterminer l'importance de l'imaginaire de la ville fantôme dans l'investissement touristique de Détroit *en général*, mais de montrer que, pour un public certes restreint, cet imaginaire et l'élément central que constituent les lieux abandonnés semblent bien constituer le principal facteur d'identification de Détroit comme destination et de motivation à la mobilité touristique. Ce public présente d'ailleurs un profil légèrement différent de celui des visiteurs de l'aire métropolitaine de Détroit : les participants aux « Detroit Urbex Tours » sont globalement plus jeunes, sont plus souvent des primo-visiteurs et résident davantage hors des États-Unis (voir tableau 2).

Tableau 2. Quelques caractéristiques du profil des participants aux « Detroit Urbex Tours » en comparaison de celui des visiteurs de l'aire métropolitaine de Détroit

	Participants aux *Detroit Urbex Tours*[1]	Metro Detroit[2]
Genre		
Femme	46,2%	38%
Homme	53,8%	62%
Âge		
18-34 ans	42,3%	25%
35-54 ans	44,2%	39%
55-64 ans	5,8%	26%
65 ans et plus	7,7%	11%
Part des primo-visiteurs	61,5%	23%
Part des visiteurs résidant aux États-Unis	59,6%	86%

[1] Source : enquête par questionnaires, [auteur.e], mars-mai 2018
[2] Source : *Metro Detroit Visitor Profile – Final Report*, MRSC, LLC. & Opinion Search, novembre 2016

21 La participation à la visite constitue un moment de confrontation de ces imaginaires à la réalité telle qu'elle est mise en scène par le prestataire. Elle peut alors contribuer au renforcement ou au contraire à la recomposition des imaginaires exprimés par les visiteurs. Cette mise en scène se manifeste par le choix des lieux visités et des éléments désignés comme dignes d'intérêt au cours des trajets en minibus, ainsi que par le discours proposé sur chacun d'entre eux et sur la ville en général. Si les lieux visités relèvent exclusivement de la catégorie des lieux abandonnés, le parcours en minibus permet à Jesse Welter d'attirer l'attention sur un certain nombre d'éléments témoignant de la revitalisation urbaine en cours : programme de démolition initié par la municipalité, développement de fermes urbaines ou encore ouverture de nouveaux commerces. Le discours proposé puise néanmoins dans un certain nombre de stéréotypes associés à Détroit sans qu'ils fassent l'objet d'une mise en perspective critique. Les quartiers dégradés y sont ainsi présentés comme des zones de non-droit où infractions, braquages de voitures et règlements de comptes sont monnaies courantes. De même, les populations locales sont essentiellement évoquées à travers les figures du délinquant (voire du criminel) et du collecteur de métal (*scraper*). Lors d'une visite, Jesse Welter précise par exemple :

> *Linwood [Street] is the western border for me, I don't see anything happening west of Linwood. That part of the city is where stop signs and red lights are just suggestions. You better not drive around here at nighttime. Walking in the streets here is really dangerous if it's in the afternoon or nighttime, I wouldn't even drive a car. Everybody carries a gun, there are fights*[5]. (extrait de carnet de terrain, avril 2018)

22 On retrouve ici l'association des habitants à une altérité redoutée caractéristique de l'imaginaire de la ville fantôme. 58 % des visiteurs expriment néanmoins une évolution de leurs représentations à l'issue de la visite : Détroit est alors souvent décrite comme plus dynamique et moins dégradée qu'initialement imaginée. Alors que ses motivations

reposent largement sur l'association de Détroit à la crise urbaine, le tourisme de l'abandon permet *in fine* d'actualiser les imaginaires fondés sur la crise urbaine et de montrer une réalité plus contrastée.

Des imaginaires urbains en tension et en transition : le tourisme de l'abandon, un phénomène en voie de marginalisation

Espaces visités *vs* espaces vécus : un imaginaire touristique sélectif en tension avec les territorialités habitantes

23 Le développement de ce tourisme de l'abandon manifeste pourtant une tension entre une exotisation de l'abandon urbain et l'expérience quotidienne qu'en font les populations locales. Cette forme de tourisme repose en effet sur un imaginaire spatial exogène, construit et imposé par des acteurs extérieurs à la municipalité de Détroit ; en cela, cet imaginaire échoue à rendre compte de la manière dont les habitants se représentent et s'approprient un espace urbain marqué par les stigmates de la crise.

24 À cet égard, les critiques adressées au *ruin porn* sont éclairantes dans la mesure où elles soulignent les limites tant de ce genre photographique que des imaginaires touristiques qu'il alimente. Il lui est reproché de privilégier la seule dimension esthétique des espaces représentés au détriment des enjeux sociaux, politiques, économiques et raciaux dont ils sont les manifestations tangibles (Leary, 2011 ; Apel, 2015a, 2015b). La principale critique porte sur l'absence quasi-systématique d'êtres humains : les photographies mettent en scène des espaces apparemment dépourvus de toute forme d'appropriation et progressivement réinvestis par les éléments naturels (Millington, *op. cit*). Or, comme le souligne Dora Apel (2015b),

> *if the victims of the city's decline disappear, the discourse of ruination becomes one about architecture and landscape and the city's inevitable "reclamation" by nature [...] Photography that focuses only on the beauty of decay in architecture thus distances the viewer from the effects of decay on people and obscures the ongoing crisis of poverty and unemployment*[6].

25 Le *ruin porn* contribue en ce sens à la dépolitisation du déclin urbain dont il naturalise les causes au lieu de l'analyser comme le résultat de stratégies d'acteurs conscientes. La mise en scène de l'abandon matériel de la ville, rendu hypervisible, implique alors un effacement de son abandon politique et économique. Ces éléments alimentent la réduction de Détroit à un front pionnier à (re)conquérir, préalable à la mise en œuvre d'un redéveloppement urbain dont Safransky (2014) et Kinney (2016) ont souligné la parenté avec une forme de colonialisme en termes sociaux et raciaux. Sur le terrain, les interactions avec plusieurs interlocuteurs ont fait écho à ce décalage entre la manière dont les lieux abandonnés sont investis par le tourisme de l'abandon et par les habitants, à l'image de cet épisode dans une librairie du quartier de Midtown consigné dans le carnet de terrain :

> Dans une librairie de Cass Avenue, après que je lui ai demandé le *Beautiful Terribles Ruins* de Dora Apel, la libraire me répond qu'elle refuse de le vendre parce que les ruines ne correspondent pas à ce qu'elle veut montrer de Détroit. Elle se montre très véhémente envers les visiteurs qui viennent contempler les ruines de la ville, leur prêtant un comportement de voyeurs, et précise à propos de l'abandon : "*I have nothing to do with that. We have nothing to do with that, it was done to us. People here have*

> *nothing to do with that. Whatever you're looking at, it's disgusting. That ruin porn, it is really porn. It's not cute, it's not funny, it's people life destroyed.*" Peu désireuse de poursuivre la conversation, elle me conseille de ne pas m'intéresser qu'au tourisme de l'abandon mais de me poser des questions plus générales sur les raisons de la situation actuelle de Détroit. (extrait de carnet de terrain, avril 2018)

26 Les visites organisées par Jesse Welter incarnent cette marginalisation ressentie par les populations résidentes. La représentation de Détroit qui y est proposée repose sur le seul discours du guide, qui n'implique aucune contribution d'habitants et semble clairement situé : il s'agit du discours d'un homme blanc originaire d'une banlieue de Détroit et pour qui la ville constitue une opportunité d'investissement (au cours d'une visite, il précise ainsi y avoir acquis neuf propriétés). Si Jesse Welter évoque à la fois le déclin urbain et la revitalisation de Détroit, la présentation des enjeux sociaux et politiques qui y sont liés fait défaut dans les deux cas, au profit d'une approche descriptive. Plusieurs travaux ont pourtant souligné le potentiel critique des représentations des ruines contemporaines, pour peu qu'elles soient envisagées comme une expression des limites du système capitaliste (Apel, 2015a). Leur mobilisation dans un cadre touristique peut alors favoriser la remise en question d'imaginaires dominants univoques et contribuer à une compréhension critique du paysage urbain mis en scène (Slager, 2020). Ce n'est cependant pas l'approche retenue dans le cadre analysé ici.

27 Imaginaires de la ville fantôme et tourisme de l'abandon laissent ainsi peu de place à l'expression des territorialités habitantes, qui ne se résument pourtant pas à la désappropriation radicale que suggère le *ruin porn*. Les lieux abandonnés y occupent une place plus complexe : ils sont à la fois des sources de nuisances concrètes quotidiennement éprouvées et des espaces individuellement et collectivement signifiants, chargés d'affects et supports de constructions identitaires et mémorielles (Zebracki *et al.*, 2018). Pour autant, les positions exprimées par les habitants vis-à-vis de l'exploitation touristique de l'abandon varient en fonction des profils des personnes rencontrées dans le cadre de cette recherche. Sur la base des entretiens et des conversations informelles menés à Détroit, on peut en distinguer trois types. La condamnation explicite de cette exploitation est essentiellement le fait d'individus originaires de Détroit, dotés d'un certain capital social, économique et culturel et souvent afro-américains. On observe ensuite une approche tout aussi consciente des enjeux symboliques et éthiques propres au tourisme de l'abandon, mais moins véhémente et empreinte d'une certaine prudence dans les prises de position. Celle-ci correspond davantage à des personnes au profil socioéconomique similaire mais ayant récemment emménagé à Détroit et en général blanches. Enfin, les personnes originaires de Détroit mais au profil socioéconomique plus modeste expriment une relative indifférence à l'égard du tourisme de l'abandon, à rebours de mon hypothèse de départ. Cela semble s'expliquer par une hiérarchisation différente des enjeux liés à l'abandon urbain. Les individus dotés d'un capital socioéconomique plus élevé, qui les préserve au moins partiellement d'une expérience récurrente des diverses nuisances liées à l'abandon, sont plus à même de percevoir les lieux abandonnés comme des enjeux d'ordre symbolique. À l'inverse, un capital socioéconomique plus modeste incite souvent à considérer que l'intérêt d'une poignée de touristes pour les ruines de Détroit n'a que peu d'importance au regard des difficultés concrètes et quotidiennes auxquelles font face les personnes concernées. C'est ce que souligne Marty, un Afro-Américain d'une cinquantaine d'années rencontré en 2017 et qui vivait alors depuis deux ans dans une maison inoccupée du quartier d'Islandview dans l'East Side de Détroit :

> Marty me dit voir régulièrement des gens s'arrêter devant la maison qu'il occupe pour la prendre en photo. Il les identifie comme un mélange de personnes intéressées par un achat immobilier et de touristes. Interrogé sur son sentiment vis-à-vis de l'intérêt que ces derniers portent aux lieux abandonnés en général et à la maison où il vit en particulier, Marty répond en ces termes : « Il n'y a pas de problème, ils ne pensent pas à mal. Prenez toutes les photos que vous voulez. Je peux même prendre la pose ! » Il explique ensuite que sa principale inquiétude est que des gens cherchent à s'introduire dans la maison, facilement identifiable comme vacante, bien qu'elle ferme encore à clé. Par rapport à cela, le fait que certains se contentent de prendre des photos ne lui pose aucun problème.
> (extrait de carnet de terrain, juin 2017)

Un tourisme transitoire marginalisé par les stratégies institutionnelles

28 Au-delà de cette tension entre ces imaginaires et les territorialités habitantes, des enjeux d'image et d'attractivité urbaines expliquent que cette forme de tourisme ne soit pas intégrée aux stratégies institutionnelles d'attractivité touristique. Malgré les similitudes entre les codes visuels du *ruin porn* et ceux du marketing touristique (Tegtmeyer, *op. cit.*), le tourisme de l'abandon tel que proposé par les « Detroit Urbex Tours » n'est pas encouragé par les acteurs institutionnels pour qui l'évolution des imaginaires spatiaux constitue au contraire un enjeu majeur. Au-delà de la sphère touristique, l'attractivité résidentielle et économique de la ville passe par la restauration d'une image de marque dont sont évacués les marqueurs spatiaux du déclin urbain (Fraser, 2018). La campagne « America's Great Comeback City » lancée en 2013 par le DMCVB illustre cette volonté de faire à nouveau de Détroit une incarnation urbaine du succès, après qu'elle a été pendant des décennies le symbole par excellence de la crise urbaine américaine. La ville y est présentée comme dynamique et résiliente, incarnée par des marqueurs spatiaux comme les grands projets immobiliers des quartiers centraux de Downtown et Midtown, qui concentrent les efforts de redéveloppement depuis le début des années 2010. Dans ce contexte, le tourisme de l'abandon apparaît marginal au regard des stratégies institutionnelles. Le constat exprimé lors d'un entretien en 2017 par Michael O'Callaghan, alors vice-président exécutif et directeur de l'exploitation du DMCVB, résume la position des acteurs locaux vis-à-vis d'une potentielle valorisation touristique de l'abandon : « *that's not the story we want to sell* ». L'objectif n'est pas d'exploiter l'imaginaire de la ville fantôme, mais de lui en substituer un autre.

29 Le tourisme de l'abandon apparaît dès lors comme un phénomène temporaire caractéristique d'une phase de transition urbaine dont témoignent des « imaginaires urbains en transition » (« *urban imaginaries in transition* ») (Fraser, 2018.). La formation de nouveaux imaginaires axés sur la croissance est activement promue par les acteurs institutionnels et ceux-ci sont relayés par les médias nationaux et internationaux. Le *New York Times* consacrait ainsi Détroit comme la « ville la plus excitante des États-Unis (« *most exciting city in America* ») en 2017, tandis que la version belge de *Paris Match* la décrivait l'année suivante comme la « destination la plus cool des States ». Les présupposés sociaux et raciaux de ces imaginaires sont néanmoins problématiques. Ces nouveaux discours valorisent en effet une croissance démographique et économique portée par des profils de résidents très différents de la population actuelle de Détroit. En cela, ils reprennent à leur compte le motif du front pionnier postindustriel dont le

réinvestissement par le capital constitue un « investissement dans la blanchité » (« *investment in whiteness* ») (Kinney, 2018) au détriment d'une population locale majoritairement pauvre et afro-américaine (Safransky, *op. cit.* ; Kinney, 2016). Le traitement réservé aux lieux abandonnés est révélateur de ces enjeux : alors que l'imaginaire de la ville fantôme en fait des éléments hypervisibles de l'espace urbain, ils sont au contraire effacés des représentations émergentes qui ne les considèrent qu'au prisme de l'éventuelle valeur marchande dégagée par leur destruction ou leur reconversion (Fraser, 2018). Cette invisibilisation exprime la relégation au second plan des difficultés actuelles d'une partie de la population locale au profit de la mise en scène d'un futur fantasmé, mais socialement et racialement sélectif.

30 Ces nouveaux imaginaires marginalisent progressivement celui de la ville fantôme, ce qui explique que les pratiques relevant du tourisme de l'abandon se déploient selon une temporalité relativement courte. Les « Detroit Urbex Tours » de Jesse Welter ont existé de 2011 à 2019, période au cours de laquelle la place de l'abandon a reculé tant dans la matérialité de l'espace urbain que dans les représentations collectives de Détroit.

Conclusion

31 L'analyse du tourisme de l'abandon permet en définitive d'aborder l'abandon urbain caractéristique des villes états-uniennes en déclin sous l'angle peu exploré de l'attractivité touristique des ruines contemporaines. L'article a montré que, malgré le rôle central de l'abandon dans les imaginaires répulsifs associés à la crise urbaine, son esthétisation constituait un facteur de mise en désir touristique. Sur le fondement de cette évolution des représentations se développe alors une offre touristique certes modeste par son ampleur, mais qui témoigne d'un rôle réel de l'abandon dans l'identification de Détroit en tant que destination touristique pour un public relativement jeune, international et largement constitué de primo-visiteurs. À cette attraction de l'abandon répond, dans le cadre des « Detroit Urbex Tours », une mise en récit touristique qui favorise une évolution des représentations des visiteurs en intégrant la question des dynamiques de revitalisation, mais qui échoue néanmoins à exposer les causalités complexes de l'abandon et ses conséquences sur les populations locales.

32 Étudier le tourisme de l'abandon permet également d'aborder la transition urbaine en cours à Détroit au prisme de l'articulation des imaginaires géographiques associés à la ville et des mobilités touristiques qu'ils contribuent à susciter. Alors que la ville cristallise depuis un siècle des représentations collectives qui en font alternativement une métaphore du succès et de l'échec, la décennie 2010 apparaît comme une période charnière au cours de laquelle se développe une appréhension de la ville structurée par le motif de l'abandon, appréhension qui fait écho aux dynamiques enchevêtrées de déclin urbain et de revitalisation. Malgré son caractère *a priori* répulsif, elle favorise le développement de pratiques touristiques certes confidentielles, mais qui révèlent un mode d'appropriation original de marges spatiales symboles des maux associés à Détroit. Ce tourisme de l'abandon constitue alors une forme de valorisation transitoire d'espaces dont le statut et la valeur symbolique évoluent rapidement au gré des recompositions de l'espace urbain et des imaginaires. L'émergence d'une désirabilité d'espaces pourtant emblématiques d'un imaginaire spatial répulsif fonctionne comme

un indice de ce progressif renversement et inaugure une courte phase propice à l'exploitation touristique de ces lieux abandonnés.

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ANNEXES

Annexe 1. Liste des entretiens (2017-2021)

Nom	Fonction et rattachement institutionnel	Catégorie d'enquête	Date de l'entretien	Lieu de l'entretien
Michael O'Callaghan	Vice-président du Detroit Metro Convention and Visitors Bureau	Institutionnel	07.07.2017	Détroit
Eric Dueweke **Bill McGraw**	Universitaire, University of Michigan Journaliste, *Detroit Free Press*	Universitaire / Journaliste	07.07.2017	Détroit
Eric Dehoe	Président de l'ONG *Preservation Detroit* (organisation pour la protection du patrimoine)	Associatif	13.03.2018	Détroit
Michele Oberholtzer	Directrice de la mission *Tax Foreclosure Prevention Project* au sein de l'association *United Community Housing Coalition*	Associatif	15.03.2018	Hamtramck
Jeanette Pierce	Présidente de *Detroit Experience Factory* (l'un des principaux prestataires de visites touristiques à Détroit)	Touristique	16.03.2018	Détroit
Jeoyuh	Participant aux visites de *Motor City Photography Workshops*	Visiteur	24.03.2018	Hamtramck
Lea	Ex-guide pour les visites proposées *via* DetroitUrbex.com	Touristique Urbex	26.03.2018	Détroit
Scott Hocking	Artiste	Artiste	04.04.2018	Détroit
Walter Wasacz	Responsable du collectif *Detroit-Berlin Connection*	Associatif	06.04.2018	Hamtramck
Linda	Habitante	Habitant	08.04.2018	Détroit
Ebonie	Habitante	Habitant	20.04.2018	Détroit

Nom	Fonction et rattachement institutionnel	Catégorie d'enquête	Date de l'entretien	Lieu de l'entretien
Aaron Foley	*Chief storyteller* au sein du gouvernement municipal de Détroit	Institutionnel	18.04.2018	Détroit
Nancy	Visiteur	Visiteur	25.04.2018	Clawson (Michigan)
Medvis	Habitant	Habitant	25.04.2018	Détroit
Jesse Walter	Créateur et gérant de Motor City Photography Workshop	Touristique	25.04.2018	Détroit
Kia	Habitante	Habitant	26.04.2018	Hamtramck
Raimundo	Visiteur	Visiteur	29.04.2018	Par Skype
Shirleen	Habitant	Habitant	01.05.2018	Détroit
Kari Smith	Directrice du Packard Plant Project	Propriétaire / gérant	02.05.2018	Par téléphone
Alana	Habitante	Habitant	02.05.2018	Détroit
Janese Chapman	Responsable du *Detroit's Historic Designation Advisory Board* au sein du gouvernement municipal de Détroit	Institutionnel	03.05.2018	Détroit
Matthew	Habitant	Habitant	04.05.2018	Détroit

Nom	Fonction et rattachement institutionnel	Catégorie d'enquête	Date de l'entretien	Lieu de l'entretien
Valeria	Habitante	Habitant	04.05.2018	Détroit
Andrew Moore	Photographe	Artiste	24.09.2020	Par Skype
Sean Doerr	Photographe / Urbexeur	Urbex	17.10.2020	Par Skype
Marchand et Meffre	Photographes	Artiste	17.06.2021	Paris
Stan Smith	Responsable marketing au sein du Detroit Metro Convention and Visitors Bureau	Institutionnel	28.06.2021	Par Skype

Annexe 2. Questionnaire passé lors des « Detroit Urbex Tours » (version finale)

I am currently conducting **a survey as part of my doctoral dissertation**. The purpose of this survey is to investigate the way people see and use abandoned buildings in Detroit.

The survey is brief and will only take less than 10 minutes to complete. **Your responses will be entirely anonymous**.

Your participation is very valuable to me, and your time will be greatly appreciated!

A. Your visit in Detroit

1. You and Detroit :

You live in the City of Detroit

If yes, since when?

Can you tell me in which neighborhood?

You live in Metro Detroit but not in the City of Detroit

If yes, since when?

Can you tell me in which city?

You used to live in the City of Detroit but you moved out elsewhere since then

If yes, in which neighborhood did you live in Detroit?

When did you move out?

You used to live in Metro Detroit (but not in the City of Detroit) but you moved out elsewhere since then

If yes, where did you live in Metro Detroit?

When did you move out?

You never lived in Detroit or Metro Detroit

2. *[If you don't live in the municipality of Detroit]* Your current visit is:

your first visit in Detroit

your second visit in Detroit

your third or more visit in Detroit

3. *[If you don't live in the municipality of Detroit]* You're visiting Detroit:

alone

with friends

with your partner

with your family

other - please specify:

4. *[If you don't live in the municipality of Detroit]* How long are you staying in Detroit this time?

5. *[If you don't live in the municipality of Detroit]* Detroit is:

the only destination of your trip

the main but not the only destination of your trip

a stop among other destinations

6. *[If you don't live in the municipality of Detroit]* Why did you choose to visit Detroit?

7. Please choose up to five words describing how you imagined Detroit before visiting the city or before moving to Detroit/Metro Detroit:

8. Did your visit or your moving to Detroit change the way you imagined the city?

yes, a lot

yes, a bit

no, not really

no, not at all

8bis) If yes, what did it change? If no, why not?

B. Your tour with Motor City Photography Workshop

9. You're taking the tour:

alone

with friends

with your partner

with your family

other - please specify:

10. What is the term you would use to call the places we visit during the tour?

11. Please choose up to five words you spontaneously associate with that kind of places:

12. Did you experience specific emotions while visiting these places?

yes

no

I don't know

13. If yes, please choose up to five words describing the emotions you experienced while visiting these places:

***14. [only if you don't live in Detroit]* In your decision to visit Detroit this time, seeing abandoned places has been:**

a very important criterium, it's the main reason for your visit

important

not very important

not important at all

15. How important would you say abandoned places are in your personal vision/ image of Detroit?

very important

important

not very important

not important at all

16. Why did you choose to visit that kind of places?

17. Please cross the items that played a role in your decision to visit that kind of places:

you've seen pictures of these places before coming

you wanted to experience something unusual

you're interested in the aesthetics of these places

you wanted to take pictures

you wanted to see these places before they disappear

you thought that that kind of places were important in Detroit's identity

you're interested in the history of these places

you're interested in the future of these places

you think these places are part of Detroit's heritage

other - please specify:

18. Are you used to taking part in guided tours in abandoned places?

yes, more than five times a year

yes, between one and five times a year

yes, less than once a year

no, this is your first guided tour in abandoned places

19. Did you visit or do you plan to visit other abandoned places in Detroit?

yes, as part as another guided tour

yes, but not as part as a guided tour

no

20. If yes, which abandoned places and/or which tours?

21. Would you take part in the tour if you thought there was any risk for your personal safety?

yes

no

I don’t know

C. About urban exploration

22. Have you ever heard about ‘urban exploration’ or ‘urbex’?

yes

no *(please go to question 25)*

I don’t know

23. If yes, do you practice urban exploration?

yes, more than once a month

yes, between once a month and once a year

yes, less than once a year

no, never

24. If you practice urban exploration, what made you want to take part in a guided tour?

25. Would you explore that kind of places on your own, without it being part of a guided tour?

yes

no

I don’t know

26. If no, why wouldn’t you?

D. Your appreciation of the tour

27. Did you like the tour?

yes

no

I don’t know

28. According to you, what are the positive elements in the tour?

29. According to you, what are the negative elements in the tour?

30. How did you like following elements of the tour (1 is the worse and 5 is the best):

• Information provided about visited places (history, etc.): 1 2 3 4 5

• Advices (photography, safety, etc.): 1 2 3 4 5

• Size of the group: 1 2 3 4 5

• Allowed time in visited locations: 1 2 3 4 5

• Freedom during the tour: 1 2 3 4 5

• Safety: 1 2 3 4 5

• Price of the tour: 1 2 3 4 5

31. In your opinion, the tour gives:

a very positive image of Detroit

a rather positive image of Detroit

a balanced image of Detroit

a rather negative image of Detroit

a very negative image of Detroit

32. Do you feel like the tour provided you enough information to understand the reasons of the massive abandonment in Detroit?

33. Some people think that offering tours in Detroit's ruins is not a good thing. How do you feel about it?

34. How do you think people living in the neighborhoods we visit feel about the tour?

E. About you

35. What is your gender?

female

male

other

36. How old are you?

37. What is your nationality?

38. Where do you live? (city and country)

39. What is your professional occupation?

40. What is your ethnicity?

F. Last question!

41) If you accept to be contacted by email to give further comments and/or to receive the results of the study, you are very welcome to leave me your **email address**:

If there is anything else you would like to say on Detroit, the tour, etc. please feel free!

If you have some spare time after the tour and would accept to tell me more about your experience, I would gladly invite you for a coffee nearby - just let me know!

Thank you very much for participating!

Annexe 3. Corpus mobilisé pour saisir les imaginaires urbains de Détroit : sources, objectifs, exemples

Type de source	Objectifs de recherche	Exemples de sources analysées (non exhaustifs)

Matériel promotionnel des prestataires de visites	Caractériser les discours portés sur les lieux abandonnés et les modalités de leur construction en tant qu'attractions touristiques	• Page *MeetUp* de Motor City Photography Workshops • Flyer de Motor City Photography Workshop
Supports de marketing touristique institutionnel	Caractériser les discours portés sur Détroit et identifier les (types d')espaces mis en valeur	• Site internet du Detroit Metro Convention and Visitors Bureau • Campagne marketing « America's Great Comeback City » (Détroit) • Campagne marketing « It's GO time » (Détroit)
Productions iconographiques relatives à l'abandon	Identifier les motifs dominants associés aux lieux abandonnés dans la culture populaire	• Livres photo consacrés aux lieux abandonnés à Berlin et à Détroit (*The Ruins of Detroit*, Marchand et Meffre ; *Detroit Disassembled*, Moore) • Livres photo consacrés aux lieux abandonnés hors terrains (*Abandoned Places*, Van Rensbergen ; *Ask the Dust*, Romain Veillon)
Traces numériques des visiteurs	Caractériser les expériences de visite des participants et identifier leurs motivations	• Commentaires TripAdvisor sur les « Detroit Urbex Tours » de Motor City Photography Workshops
Presse locale, nationale et internationale	• Comprendre les contextes locaux et micro-locaux (évolution des lieux étudiés, jeux d'acteurs, projets en cours) • Saisir les représentations associées à Détroit à une échelle nationale et/ou internationale	• Presse locale de Détroit (*Detroit Free Press*, *The Detroit News*, *Curbed Detroit*, *Crains Detroit*) • Presse nationale et internationale (*Der Spiegel*, *Time Magazine*, *The Guardian*, etc.)

NOTES

1. « les débuts de la renaissance du centre-ville [...] pourraient annoncer une nouvelle ère pour les villes américaines, dans laquelle les anciennes villes de la Rust Belt redeviennent des moteurs de croissance ».

2. « s'il est une ville qui a jamais été le symbole du dynamisme de l'économie américaine, c'est bien Détroit » mais « Détroit est devenue une icône de la ville américaine en échec ».

3. « la satisfaction purement égocentrique d'une observation voyeuriste ».

4. « redéfinition esthétique de la friche urbaine en tant que paysage de ruines pittoresque ».

5. « Linwood [Street] est la limite occidentale pour moi, je ne vois aucun changement à l'ouest de Linwood. Cette partie de la ville est celle où les panneaux stop et les feux rouges ne sont que des suggestions. Il vaut mieux pas faire un tour en voiture ici la nuit. Marcher dans la rue ici est vraiment dangereux l'après-midi ou la nuit, je n'irais même pas en voiture. Tout le monde porte une arme, il y a des bagarres. »

6. « si les victimes du déclin urbain disparaissent, le discours sur le devenir-ruine devient un discours sur l'architecture, le paysage et l'inévitable "reconquête" de la ville par la nature [...] La photographie qui ne se concentre que sur la beauté du délabrement architectural détourne ainsi l'observateur des effets du délabrement sur les gens et occulte la crise continue de la pauvreté et du chômage. »

RÉSUMÉS

Cet article propose une analyse de l'articulation entre imaginaires spatiaux répulsifs et pratiques touristiques à partir du cas de Détroit, Michigan. Espace emblématique de la crise et de la décroissance urbaines, Détroit connaît aujourd'hui un redéveloppement sélectif qui nourrit des récits urbains fondés sur le motif de la résilience et constitue un facteur d'amélioration de son image et de son attractivité touristique. Cependant, la ville reste encore largement associée à un paysage urbain d'abandon massif et à d'importants problèmes sociaux, raciaux et économiques. Cet imaginaire négatif est paradoxalement à l'origine de mobilités et de pratiques touristiques spécifiques, qui valorisent les marqueurs spatiaux de la crise urbaine plus que ceux du renouveau de Détroit. Il donne ainsi naissance à un tourisme de l'abandon dont les modalités et les temporalités illustrent la phase de transition que connaît actuellement Détroit, entre déclin urbain et redéveloppement sélectif.

This article analyses the articulation between repulsive spatial imaginaries and tourist practices based on the case of Detroit, Michigan. An emblematic space of urban crisis and decline, Detroit is now undergoing a selective redevelopment that feeds urban narratives based on the idea of resilience and improves the city's image and tourist attractiveness. However, Detroit is still largely associated with massive abandonment and significant social, racial and economic problems. Specific tourist mobilities and practices paradoxically value these spatial markers of the urban crisis. It thus gives rise to a tourism of abandonment whose modalities and temporalities express the transition phase between urban decline and selective redevelopment that Detroit is currently experiencing.

INDEX

Mots-clés : Détroit, abandon, marges urbaines, imaginaires géographiques, pratiques touristiques
Keywords : Detroit, abandonment, urban margins, spatial imaginaries, tourist practices

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Outdoor Imaginaries: The Emergence of Camping in Modern America

Imaginaires de plein air : l'émergence du camping dans l'Amérique moderne

Terence Young

Introduction

1 According to 2020's *Outdoor Participation Report*, recreational camping is the fifth most popular outdoor activity in the USA, with nearly 42 million Americans participating at least once during the year. Approximately three-quarters of these enthusiasts enjoy automobile and Recreational Vehicle (RV) camping while most of the others backpack; only a handful engage in packhorse camping. Participants are diverse, but the majority of campers remain Whites (Outdoor Foundation, 2020). Despite camping's popularity in the USA, few scholars explored its long history until recently. Initial research, which began in the late 1960s, treated camping as incidental to larger issues, but with the rise of the new millennium, scholars began to focus on camping itself and on a range of social, cultural and technological issues specific to it (Schmitt, 1990 [1969]; Belasco, 1979; Lofgren, 1999; White, 2000; Hailey, 2008; Rugh, 2008; Finney, 2014; Hogue, 2016; White, 2016; Young, 2017; and Young, 2021). This article seeks to better understand why this form of outdoor recreation arose in nineteenth century America and diffused over the next century. It employs an historical-geographic methodology that utilizes texts and imagery, including popular books, magazines and additional periodicals as well as advertisements, government documents and other primary sources. The article links geographic shifts in settlement patterns to social-technological changes and to geographic imaginaries, i.e., "taken-for-granted spatial orderings of the world" (Gregory, 2009, p. 282). It does so by connecting three intersecting trends that shaped American camping as a leisure activity and forged outdoor spaces that, "set apart from the mundane world for the [campers], are in part spaces of the imaginary, of fantasy, and dreaming" (Salazar, 2012, p. 876). Contrasting "urban" with "natural," this bipolar

perception valorized places and practices that derived "not only from the cognitive operations of reason but also from structures of feeling" produced and shared by generations of campers and camping institutions (Gregory, 2009, p. 282).

2 The three trends were, first, campers lived in an everyday world that was undergoing modernization. The cities where they resided grew larger, more complex and polluted, and less green. In response, some urban residents embraced camping, which allowed them to temporarily retreat from their urban lives into imagined "natural" places that allegedly counteracted a world that too often left them tired, tense and alienated. Second, camping restored and refreshed because it was a form of pilgrimage where the pilgrims exited their everyday world into a transformative place to "rough it" and be renewed. Finally, camping was an antimodern reaction to a modernizing world, but it nonetheless remained subject to modernization. Camping "gear" diversified, becoming lighter, more specialized and more easily transported as manufacturers sought to reduce camping's roughness and enhance sales. At the same time, national park and similar destination managers modified campgrounds in order to make them more rational, predictable and domesticated. These three trends—modernization, pilgrimage and technological change—quietly fashioned the emergence and growth of camping and its places.

Modern and Antimodern

3 Camping is neither new nor unique to the United States. Its practice is trans-cultural and ancient, but it emerged as an American form of recreation after the Civil War that ended in 1865. Beginning in the northeast, industrialization, urbanization and a variety of social changes swept through the country, accompanied by a decades-long, mass migration towards America's cities. In 1860, just under 20 percent of the population lived in urban areas, but in 1920, the total urban population exceeded 50 percent for the first time (*The Statistical History of the United States*, 1965, p. 14). In cities Americans found enhanced civil liberties, more employment options, improved leisure amenities and a whole host of other attractive opportunities. However, they were also assaulted by smoke, noise, crowding, shifting social relations, production schedules, pervasive regulation and more. A tension emerged as many found America's cities to be confusing and alienating yet attractive. Yearning for a sense of belonging and connection in the cacophony of modern urban life, some embraced camping, which from its outset, was antimodern.

4 Modernity is "a process by which society constantly renews itself" and generally refers to the historical period when capitalism, industrialization, rationalization and related institutions transformed existing, relatively traditional societies into "modern" ones (Delanty, 2007, p. 3068). Beginning around 1500 C.E., modernization unfolded slowly for several centuries, but the pace accelerated during the nineteenth century, prompting a growing awareness among modernizing peoples that they lived in a time of revolutionary change while remembering more premodern times (Berman, 1982). It was at this moment of rising awareness that recreational camping appeared in America. An expression of modernity and shaped by modern institutions, it is nonetheless premodern in its sentiment and the nature it reveres.

5 The American response to modernity took many antimodern forms during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries with a significant portion aligned with the

contemporary Romantic Movement. While the movement had diverse expressions, it can be broadly recognized by a rejection of rationalism, a regard for history and a focus on perception and beauty, particularly that of nature. Moreover, the movement embraced the belief that a group of people's character or nationality grew organically and emerged over a long period of time. Romanticism, however, was not exclusively antimodern. It contributed to the growth of democracies, to a belief in progress and to the more open societies that are common features of modern life. Nonetheless, antimodernists frequently drew on the conventions of Romanticism in their struggles with modernity's advance (Barzun, 1961).

6 Romantic antimodernism was strongly felt in America during the latter half of the nineteenth century, but one type of place—the city and urban life—attracted a great deal of attention. Cities had been present in America from early colonial days, but even then, they were often viewed skeptically. In 1787's *Notes on the State of Virginia*, Thomas Jefferson had argued that the ideal society would flourish where the economy was agricultural and the settlements small and dispersed. Invoking a geographic contrast, Jefferson promulgated a valorized rural-urban imaginary that regarded the former as healthy and positive while casting the latter as damaging and negative. Farmers, he insisted, were the backbone of America. "Those who labor in the earth are the chosen people of God, if ever he had a chosen people, whose breasts he has made his peculiar deposite (sic) for substantial and genuine virtue." Manufacturing and cities, in contrast, were sources of vice. Drawing a particularly repulsive word picture, Jefferson suggested that "The mobs of great cities add just so much to the support of pure government, as sores do to the strength of the human body" (Jefferson, 1829, p. 171-173). Condemning cities as politically destructive, he encouraged their residents to move back to the land in order to farm. In a rejection of urban life lay the roots of the republican nation, urged Jefferson. After the Civil War, the rapid growth and increasing complexity of modern cities compounded Americans' discomfort with them, but its expression took a new turn. Late nineteenth century Romantic antimodernists only rarely mentioned farming and they were not adamantly opposed to cities. Instead, they tended to be ambivalent because urban life resulted in both benefits and costs. Consequently, even as Romantic antimodernists denounced many aspects of urban life, they praised efforts to get back to nature through art, natural history, gardening, national parks, travel and more because these compensated for and counteracted the trials of urban life (Lears, 1981; Lees, 1985; Bender, 1987; Schmitt, 1990; Jones and Wills, 2005).

7 The nature-loving antimodernism of the nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries was shaped by writers, painters, landscape architects and others, but one of the most influential was John Ruskin. Renowned in England and America as an art critic and moral crusader, his *Modern Painters* of 1846 provided a theoretical framework for Romantic antimodernists' embrace of nature. In particular, Ruskin argued that truth, beauty and the divine were inseparably linked together. If something was beautiful, insisted Ruskin, it must express the divine, which was inherently good. Therefore, travel out of ugly, industrializing cities and into attractive natural places or viewing landscape paintings true to nature were beneficial (Stein, 1967; Lears, 1981).

8 Ruskin's voluminous writings on nature, art and society stirred a range of Romantic antimodernist practices in America, including political movements, historic preservation organizations and the broad field of urban planning. Andrew Jackson Downing, an influential and early proponent of urban parks, suburbanization and

landscape gardening, considered Ruskin a "favorite author" (Schuyler, 1996, p. 136). Downing, in his turn, encouraged a young Frederick Law Olmsted, future designer of New York City's Central Park and numerous other sites, and the author of the Yosemite Park Commission's seminal 1865 report. Olmsted came to regard Ruskin as a "mentor" and one of "the real prophets" (Roper, 1973, p. 40, 72). Ruskin's influence in America can also be detected in such American landscape painters as Frederick Edwin Church and William James Stillman, and the transcendentalist authors Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau (Novak, 1995; Dyson, 2014; Schlett, 2015).

9 Less well known, but equally representative of the period's embrace of Romantic antimodernism was Susan Fenimore Cooper's *Rural Hours* (1850), which was a contemplation of domestic life and the shifting natural landscape about her home. Organized around the seasons, the book embeds the elements of her domestic life into nature's cycles. In many ways she offered a fairly conservative take on women's lives, but she also drew on nature as a source for moral education. Like Church, Downing and Thoreau, Cooper contributed to the slow awakening of middle-class Americans to Romantic antimodernism and to the attractiveness and value of the nation's wilder lands (Norwood, 1993; Sackman, 2003).

10 By the late 1840s, one geographically anchored expression of Romantic antimodernism had begun to stand out for urban Americans—the wild areas of New York state's Adirondack Mountains. One early traveler to the region was Joel T. Headley. A professional writer, his 1849 book, *The Adirondack; Or, Life in the Woods* began to weave an imaginary of this place by word-painting his mountain climbing and boating adventures. For instance, he described his entrance into the region in attractive and evocative language. "At length, just as the heavy drops began to fall, we emerged into a little valley, in which nestled a rude village, the meadows of which seemed to be one mass of phosphorescence. The fire flies hung in countless numbers over the surface, forming almost a solid body of light. The effect was indescribable; all around was Egyptian darkness, except that single level spot on which the incessant flashes made a constant, yet ever tremulous light" (p. 17). Headley had taken to the wilds because he feared urban life was destroying him and, in line with Ruskin, that nature could redeem. "I believe," declared Headley, "that every man degenerates without frequent communion with nature... A single tree standing alone, and waving all day long... is to me fuller of meaning and instruction than the crowded mart or gorgeously built town" (p. 168). Headley's book was followed by several similar accounts by other authors and by a widely reported Adirondack event, "The Philosophers' Camp" of 1858. Described by the *New York Times* as a "congregation of philosophers, *savans*, authors, artists, and ordinary human beings," this camping trip by some of America's most famous (and urban dwelling) individuals into the frontier-like wilds of the Adirondacks made national news (Robinson, 1859; Richards, 1859a, 1859b; Schlett, 2015). Importantly, sketches in *Frank Leslie's New Family Magazine* and other publications enriched the outdoor imaginary by illustrating the group's campsite (Stallknecht and Whitehead, 1858) (see figure 1). Nevertheless, only a handful of Americans took to camping.

Figure 1

A reporter's sketch of the "Philosopher's Camp" of 1858.
Stallknecht and Whitehead, 1858, p. 336.

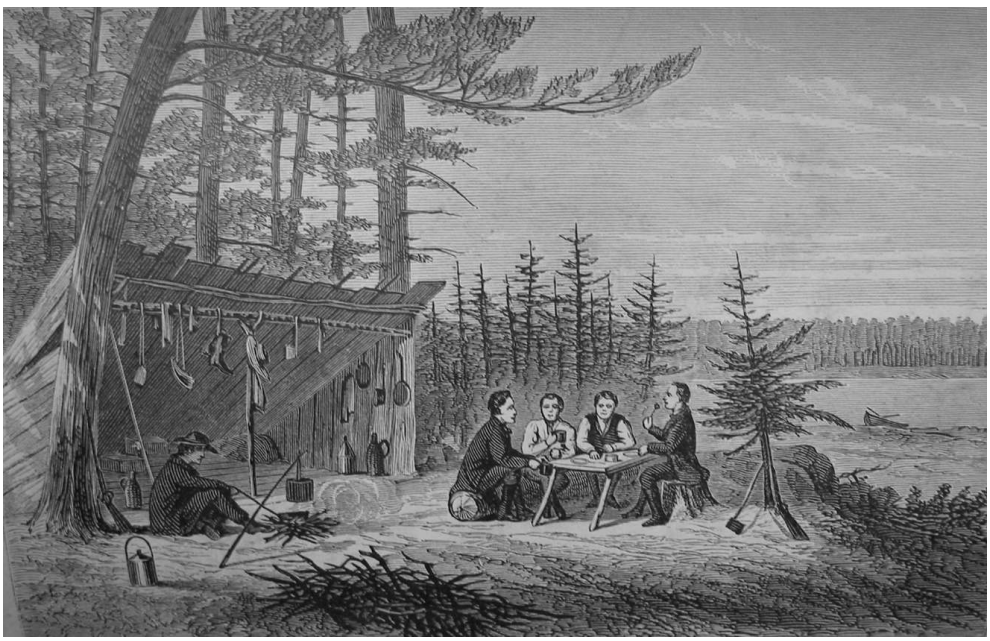
11 American camping was finally born in spring 1869 when the Reverend William H.H. Murray produced America's first how-to-camp manual, *Adventures in the Wilderness; Or, Camp Life in the Adirondacks*. Publications like Headley's had suggested why one would want to camp and the pleasures of the experience, but they had provided little guidance on how or where. In contrast, *Adventures in the Wilderness* was a blend of practical advice (one's "kit" should include "a pair of warm woollen blankets, *uncut*, and a few articles of luxury, such as towel, soap, etc." [p. 27]), Romantic antimodernism ("Ah, me, the nights I have passed in the woods! How they haunt me with their sweet, suggestive memories of silence and repose! How harshly the steel-shod hoofs smite against the flinty pavement beneath my window, and clash with rude interruptions upon my ear as I sit recalling the tranquil hours I have spent beneath the trees!" [p. 23]), and witty, lengthy tales about the region. Highly successful, the book launched what came to be known as the "Murray Rush," which was an unprecedented horde of campers from New York, Boston, Hartford and other northeastern cities charging into the Adirondack Mountains during the summers of 1869 and 1870 (see figure 2). Within a decade, other authors were producing similar books with language and images that enhanced and guided the Adirondack camping imaginary begun in earlier decades and furthered by Murray (see figure 3). In a short time, the popularity of a leisure activity that had been widely unknown exploded and a region that had previously attracted fewer than 100 campers per year was embraced by more than 10,000 annually. Those numbers continued to grow for over a century even as camping spatially diffused across the country. Although Romantic painting and park making faded as antimodern responses, camping endured because it continued to bring regeneration to these urban Americans who unquestioningly assumed that travel to and a temporary stay in a "natural" place would restore them before returning to everyday life. That is, campers felt that a pilgrimage into nature would actuate camping's antimodern power.

Figure 2

"The Rush for the Wilderness" portrayed a crowd of new campers boarding a lake boat headed for the Adirondack Mountains' entry point. Note: the leading individual is reading W.H.H. Murray's *Adventures in the Wilderness*.

Hallock, 1870, p. 325.

Figure 3



This 1880 illustration, "A Lodge in the Wilderness," enhanced and developed early campers' imaginaries about Adirondack camping techniques, technologies, campsites, and scenery.

Wallace, 1880, opposite title page.

Pilgrimage

12 From its outset, campers enjoyed three principal modes—on foot; on horseback; or, with a wheeled vehicle—but no matter which was employed, most campers were antimodernists visiting nature where they consciously or unconsciously recapitulated the "frontier experience." A foundational environment and era in the American imagination, the western frontier was said to have autonomously progressed across "wild" lands and peoples leaving America in its wake. Long perceived as a crucial element in the formation of the national identity, the frontier was famously declared "closed" by Frederick Jackson Turner in 1893 (Turner, 1986). One consequence was an accelerated effort to preserve and protect America's vanishing wilderness lands (Mitchell, 1981; Klein, 1993; Lewis, 2007; Nash, 2014). Even though the frontier was geographically distant for Adirondack and similarly early campers, and unavailable to all after 1890, when "pioneer life" was recapitulated in national parks and related settings by campers, it was imagined as a re-binding of alienated urbanites to the nation. Pioneer and frontier imagery, and language emphasizing mythic places (especially "the West"), people and events became a staple in camping guidebooks, brochures and equipment advertisements, contributing to the geographic and outdoor imaginaries of camping (see figure 4). In addition, Gregory (2009, p. 282) has noted that geographical imaginaries "involve bordering as well as ordering; the hierarchical division of the globe [into, for example, "the tropics"] ...and the oppositions between." Consequently, campers in all eras were able to find "nature" in ocean beaches, forests, lake shores, mountains, grasslands, and beyond because these places stood in opposition to modern cities. The diversity of camping destinations prompts us to look beyond their differences to see that all shared an essential oppositional element–these places were not a part of everyday life; each was not-city. Instead, they were the half of the urban-nature opposition that produced relief. Campers did not travel into the nature, but many "natures" as they headed out of cities.

Figure 4

"Hand Sign of the Camp-Fire Girls" is an example of the "frontier" imagery frequently found in camping books, brochures, and advertisements.

Bryan, 1913, opposite p. 128.

13 Understanding the motivations behind camping is illuminating because a satisfying trip began with departure, was followed by an immersion into a geographic imaginary of nature/not-city and then concluded with a return to home transformed. In other words, camping was a form of pilgrimage.[1] According to Graburn (1989, p. 24), camping, backpacking and the like are "not tourism in the modal sense... [but they] function as kinds of tourism." In agreement with Gregory, Graburn argued that camping "can be examined against its complement: ordinary, workaday life." Reduced to essentials, a pilgrim is someone who leaves home, journeys to a sacred place as an act of devotion and returns home changed. Many pilgrims, of course, are religiously motivated, but in the United States they have not tended to be because America's initial colonists were Protestants who overtly rejected pilgrimage. Setting a pattern in the culture, they spurned the idea of salvation through good works and vows fulfilled rather than by faith and God's grace (Neville, 1987; Sears, 1989). Pilgrimage, however, is not easily repulsed. As Victor and Edith Turner (1978, p. 241) argued, "Both for individuals and for groups, some form of deliberate travel to a far place intimately associated with the deepest, most cherished, axiomatic values of the traveler seems to be a 'cultural universal.' If it is not religiously sanctioned, counseled, or encouraged, it will take other forms." In America, pilgrimage wore many secular guises. Since the mid-nineteenth century, Americans have performed pilgrimages to such historic destinations as Mount Vernon, the home of George and Martha Washington, and to naturalistic ones like Niagara Falls and "Old Faithful" at Yellowstone National Park (Zelinsky, 1990; McGreevy, 1985; Sears, 1989). Moreover, Americans were unlike earlier pilgrims who had traveled from rural homes to urbanized sacred sites where churches and shrines had developed. Instead, they headed out of the cities, where they pursued material fortunes, to enter the rural and wild land areas that contained few if any structures and

that they perceived as their true spiritual "homes" (Neville, 1987; Sears, 1989). This practice is an element in what Cronon (1995) termed "the trouble with wilderness."

14 While pilgrimage is ancient and transcultural, three fundamental beliefs generally account for why any pilgrim launches her or himself onto the path. First, they are convinced that powerful forces exist and that they influence people's lives. Second, pilgrims believe it possible to have meaningful relationships with these forces. They are not beyond reach. And, finally, they trust that there are unique and special places where the unmatched power of these forces feels close enough to touch. Such places are what Turner termed "the center out there" (1973).

15 No single type of pilgrimage exists, but they frequently involve a number of recurrent elements, including the destination (and why it is sacred), the route traveled, a pilgrim's motivations, the physical, mental or other challenges faced, the outcome once a pilgrimage is complete, and the relationship between pilgrimage and a pilgrim's sense of personal and group identity. When we apply these common elements to American campers, we find that they generally seek to visit "nature," which varies in its locations and forms. It can be at the end of the journey or, as in backpacking, it can suffuse the journey itself. Campers can take many routes, with some being more demanding than others, but always they must journey from their everyday homes. Most modes of camping are relatively inexpensive, but camping can be mentally taxing, physically punishing or some combination. As a consequence, camping has long been colloquially known in America as "roughing it." The end result sought by campers also varies, but a common refrain is release from modern life's everyday tensions and the opportunity to relax. Likewise, campers seek to reinforce a variety of identities, but a frequently shared pursuit is the reinforcement of a camper's sense of belonging, especially of being an American (Stoddard, 1997).

16 Camping fits into the larger pilgrimage pattern, but the latter is rarely a pure practice. Pilgrimage and tourism often are interwoven, making the commonalties and differences difficult to discern. To address the blurred overlap, institutions have sometimes formalized and regularized the internal conditions that a proper pilgrim is supposed to achieve and/or the physical actions one should complete. Such efforts, however, are of limited effect because what sets someone apart as a true pilgrim is contested in both meaning and practice (Eade and Sallnow, 1991; Di Giovine and Choe, 2019). According to Frey (1998), pilgrims to Santiago de Compostela generally had little regard for individual motivations. Instead, they considered those who walked or rode a horse long-distance and along one of the traditional paths as true pilgrims. Their collective embrace of these non-motorized and challenging forms of travel generated authenticity because it linked them to the community of Santiago's pilgrims whose paths stretch across Europe and back deep in time. Travelers who chose to ride in automobiles, buses and airplanes to the city and its shrine were cut off from the past, judged ersatz, and dismissed by the non-motorized pilgrims as "tourists."

17 Campers similarly contest what is authentically camping. Like the pilgrims to Santiago, campers rarely question individual motivations but instead hitch their judgments to differences in mode and equipment. Today's backpackers routinely reject car and recreational-vehicle camping as too easy and inauthentic. They are, to borrow a phrase from Cohen (1973), "Nomads from comfort." For their part, motorized campers may respect the physical challenge of backpacking, but they fail to see it as transformative because in their view it demands too much exertion. "Are you kidding me?" snorted

one RV camper when asked if he would consider camping in a tent (Egan 1995). "I've got a whole house with me. My wife likes to shower every day. Why would I ever go camping in a tent?"

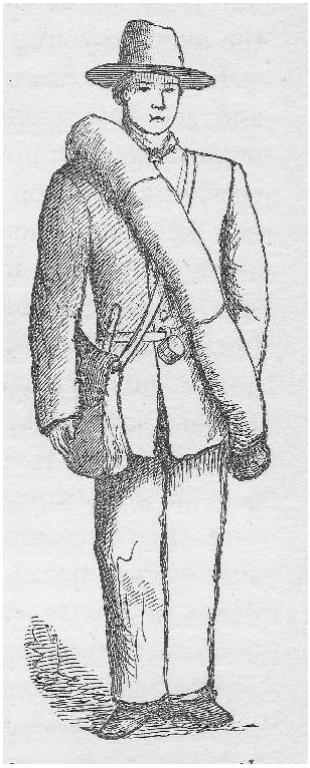
18 Just as few campers would consciously describe camping as an antidote for modernity, so few of them would frame it as pilgrimage. Nonetheless, camping fits comfortably within this cultural form. When camping is unpacked from its popular descriptions, manuals and advertisements, what remains is a leisure-time activity that moved people from their everyday homes and out into nature in order for them to return home transformed. As a consequence of being pilgrimage, camping was a "rough" activity, but campers disagreed about the appropriate degree of challenge in the same way that they disagreed about what qualified as a "natural" destination.

Technology and Modernization

19 Campers' concerns about authenticity and their attitudes toward the other camping modes and equipment point to a third issue—the interaction between camping, modernization and technology. As noted, modernity has been a vibrant force for change, but ironically, antimodern practices and antimodernists themselves have not been beyond its reach. The Arts and Crafts movement, which took inspiration from John Ruskin, may have encompassed a critique of modern life, but many participants were ambivalent in their antimodernism, so modernity continued to shape and alter their lives. For them, the movement led to a rise in personal crafting as a way to engage in what Gelber termed "productive leisure," which in turn spawned a love of collecting, personal gadgets, "tinkering," hobby shops and much more (1999, p. 196).

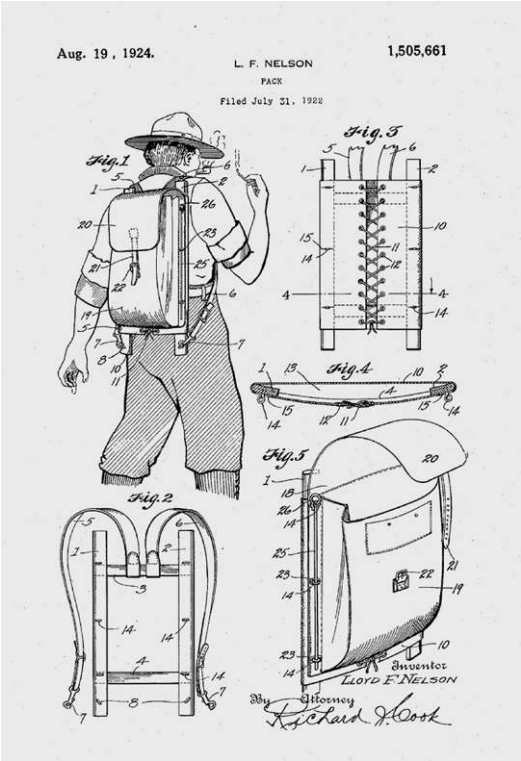
20 Camping followed a similar trajectory. No matter which mode of camping was chosen, its enthusiasts sought restoration from the everyday world. Backpackers, for instance, sought to counteract the worst aspects of modern life by embracing the most physically challenging and historically rich mode. Like earlier backpackers and the pedestrian pioneers before them, they continued the tradition of walking while carrying one's equipment and supplies. However, backpackers shifted from blanket rolls to backpacks during the 1920s, which then gradually became lighter, more comfortable and more effective (see figures 5 and 6). This modernization allowed backpackers to escape the crowding that increased in the most popular national parks after World War II. In 1951, the Sierra Club's David Brower recounted that he and his fellow backpackers "knew for sure that no matter what the valley-floor crowd, it was possible to travel all day on almost any of the trails in the Yosemite High Sierra without meeting more than a few people" (p. x). Graburn (1989, p. 31) explained why Brower thrilled at the absence of people. "If nature is curative, performs magical re-creations and other miracles otherwise assigned to Lourdes, God, or *gurus*, the medicine is weakened by the presence of other humans. To share is to lose power" (italics in original). As the number of RV and automobile campers increased in one area, backpacking allowed these campers to travel into less populated nature. Nevertheless, the majority of campers were never willing to rough it as much as backpackers.

Figure 5



The earliest backpackers often carried a blanket roll (across the figure's right shoulder) and haversack.
Gould, 1877, p. 17.

Figure 6

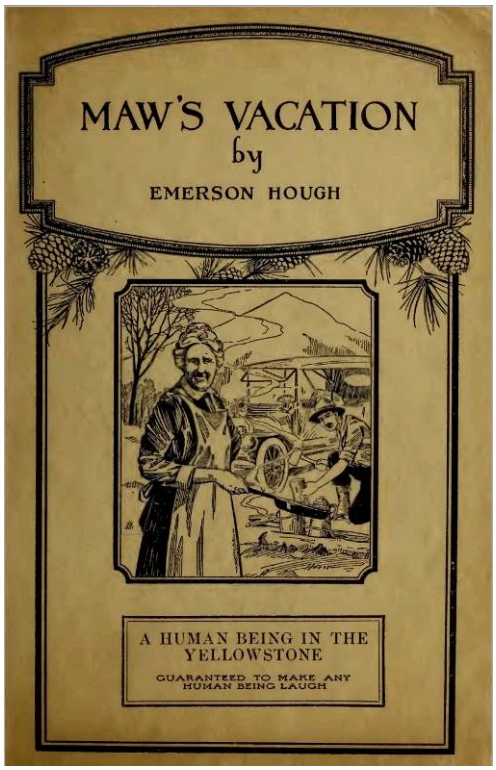


The "Trapper Nelson" was one of backpacking's first external frames for carrying a pack and gear. From the U.S. patent application of August 19, 1924.

21 While camping was an antimodern practice for wheeled campers too, elements of modern domestic life held more appeal. As with backpackers, their equipment and supplies modernized, but unlike the backpackers, they embraced a new and highly transformative technology—the automobile—which shifted the social makeup of this form of camping. Before inexpensive automobiles and financing appeared around 1910, horse and wagon camping had primarily been the purview of middle-class to upper-middle-class white men. As autos became ubiquitous[2], however, middle-class to working-class families, women, and non-White campers embraced it too. One period author, Emerson Hough (1921, p. 5-6), neatly captured the class and family shift while re-envisioning the imaginary in *Maw's Vacation*. Having borrowed a tent from "The Hickory Bend Outing Club," 60-year-old Maw, husband Paw, and daughters Cynthy, Hattie and Roweny packed their car and departed the farm for their first ever vacation– a camping trip to distant Yellowstone National Park (see figure 7). They were not financially well off, but what Hough called "the new people of America, who never have been out like this before." For the past forty years they had been at home cooking, plowing and paying taxes, but now Paw and Maw had decided that "they can at last read their title clear to a rest, and a car, and a vacation." Relatedly, in 1926, author Frederic Van de Water (p. 187-188) recounted how he and his family came upon numerous women who were automobile camping in the West. "Frequently we camped besides parties of young women, touring the country alone, with only the most elementary knowledge of Campcraft or motor lore" (see figure 8). At Yellowstone National Park, park superintendent Horace Albright told Van de Water that shortly before the latter had arrived, "a party of eight women in two motor cars had been

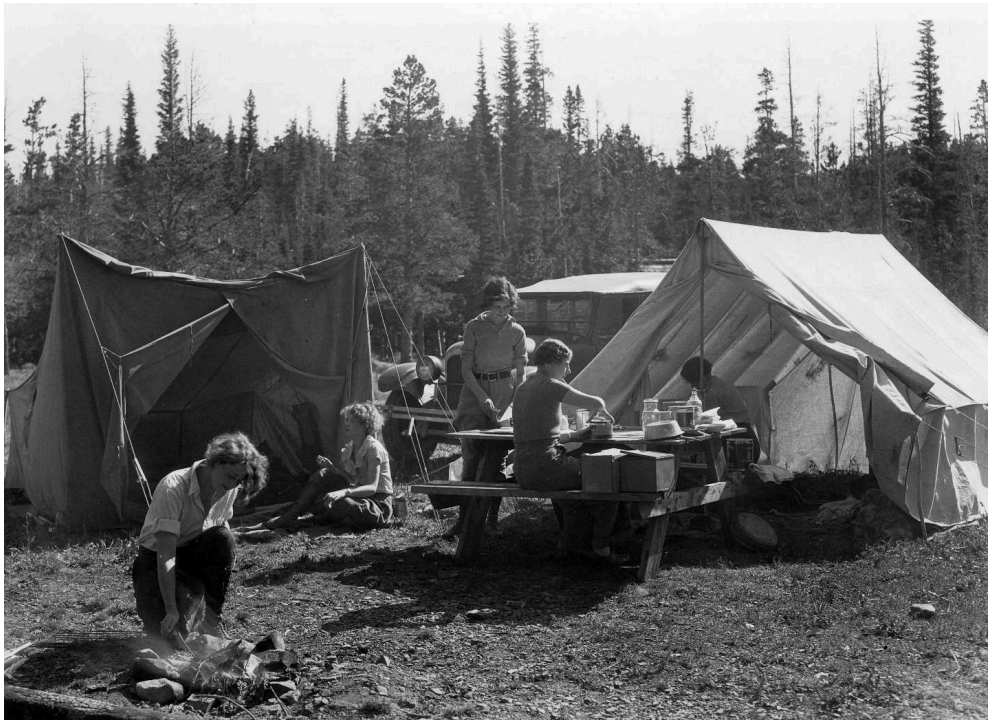
welcomed... None of them was young. The eldest was seventy-four. They had traveled several thousand miles without mishap already and were going on to Glacier Park and Banff after leaving Yellowstone."

Figure 7



Cover of Emerson Hough's *Maw's Vacation* of 1921

Figure 8



A group of young women autocamping at the Two Medicine Campground in Glacier National Park in July 1932.

US National Park Service Historic Photograph Collection, photographer George A. Grant.

22 It was not, however, just auto camping's growing class, family and gender diversity that generated responses; race was also an issue, especially where African Americans were involved. During the 1920s, some African Americans, like their White counterparts, had grown wealthier and embraced a variety of short and extended recreations, including such nature-based activities as relaxing at the beach, swimming, picnicking, fishing, hiking, participating in the Boy Scouts and Camp Fire Girls, enrolling at summer camps, and family camping (Foster, 1999; Holland, 2002; Alnutt, 2005; Finney, 2014). Most of these recreations, however, had prompted few disputes because they occurred on private land. When the first US national parks were opened in the early 1930s in the Jim Crow South, Great Smoky Mountains and Shenandoah, and African American automobile campers sought to enjoy them, park policy debates began. Before 1934, most national parks were in the West and national park racism had generally consisted of the ejection of indigenous peoples from such places as Yellowstone (Spence, 1999) and a conscious, but unpublicized policy of discouraging visits by African Americans. Black visitors and campers severely disrupted the imaginaries of White campers so were, in the opinion of administration, "conspicuous... objected to by other [i.e., White] visitors... [and] impossible to serve." As a consequence, National Park Service (NPS) superintendents had decided at their 1922 conference that "we cannot openly discriminate against them, [but] they should be told that the parks have no facilities for taking care of them" (Shaffer, 2001, p. 126). In the southern national parks, however, discouragement was replaced by racial segregation and by the consciously slow provision of facilities in the places designated for African Americans (see figure 9). For nearly a decade the NPS struggled with this issue both inside itself and with Black and White Americans, only reaching a resolution—no segregated campgrounds in any

national parks—with the onset of World War II (Young, 2009). Unsurprisingly, of the four largest ethnic/racial groupings, African Americans least enjoy camping today (Outdoor Foundation, 2020, p. 14).

Figure 9

Shenandoah National Park's Lewis Mountain included the only automobile campground available to African Americans before 1942.

Shenandoah National Park, 2021.

23 The automobile also allowed for a massive flowering in the size, range and types of camping equipment used (see figure 10). In concert, modernization slowly altered automobile camping's imaginary in terms of practice, material culture and destination features relating to comfort and convenience. "Yes," the manufacturers and retailers who sold camping equipment and the administrators who managed camping areas promised, camping would renew those who "roughed it," but a camper need not be completely without modern devices and techniques to attain restoration. Should a camper choose to use a particular appliance, such as a grate-broiler (see figure 11), he could count on a more efficient, calculable, predictable, and controlled experience that eliminated "unnecessary" roughness (Ritzer, 2008). Other businesses likewise promised products that would reduce bulk, prolong food freshness, keep campers drier, warmer, cooler, bite-free and more. The authors of new camping manuals similarly informed their readers how to avoid discomforts by purchasing particular products, by using special techniques, and by selecting the best locations. And beginning in the 1920s, managers modernized private and public campgrounds by installing such infrastructure as drinking water, tables and fire grills while instituting such regulations as designated campsites within designated campgrounds (McClelland, 1998) (see figure 12). In each instance, these efforts included an appeal to reducing camping's challenges. By the 1920s, modernization had so impacted camping that one of the era's

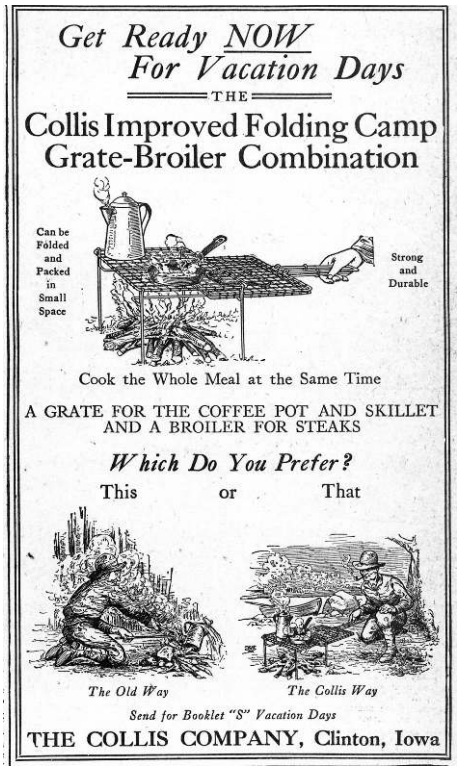
best-known authors, Elon Jessup (1923), avoided any ambiguity by simply titling his how-to-camp manual, *Roughing It Smoothly*.

Figure 10

Automobiles allowed working-class and middle-class campers to carry an abundance of "gear" to places like Yellowstone National Park in 1924.

US National Park Service Historic Photograph Collection.

Figure 11



An instance of gear modernization. An advertisement for the “Collis Improved Folding Camp Grate-Broiler Combination” promises to make camp cooking more efficient and reliable.

The Collis Company, 1917, p. 179.

Figure 12

An instance of campground modernization. This new fireplace at the Chimneys Campground in Great Smoky Mountains National Park in 1935 provided a version of domestic convenience for automobile campers.

"Fireplace", 2021.

24 Despite its antimodern roots, camping increasingly modernized and imaginaries shifted, but it did so unevenly, causing a tension to develop between the adherents of the different camping modes. When camping first appeared, the imagined, technical and technological differences between campers who walked, rode on horseback or employed a wheeled vehicle had been minimal so little tension had existed. However, as camping modernized, some modes became a lot less challenging, safer and relatively comfortable. Consequently, a contradiction developed as modernization proceeded. As noted, this contradiction was rejected by some campers as inauthenticity and was largely expressed as disrespect or anxiety between the practitioners of camping's several modes. Backpackers, pack-horse campers, car campers and recreational-vehicle campers often felt antipathy towards campers enjoying the other camping modes and would overtly dismiss them as somehow pointless or worse. Even though an RV camper and a backpacker could enjoy similarly transformative journeys, they also could view the other's camping mode as a threat and expend energy to see that their mode of choice was secure and, where possible, enhanced in America's parks, forests and other protected areas (Sharpe *et al.*, 1983).

Conclusion

25 Camping was not beyond the reach of modernity. Despite its antimodern origins and its pursuit of renewal through pilgrimage, many campers increasingly embraced and

accepted elements of everyday life on their journeys and at their destinations. There may, however, be a limit to this process. The percentage of the American population that camps has been decreasing since the 1980s with an increase in computer games and increasingly sedentary lifestyles being proffered as the explanation (Pergams and Zaradic, 2006; Kareiva, 2008). However, an historical-geographic analysis provides an alternative account for the decrease. Camping arose as a response to the unsettling aspects of modern urban life, so an increasingly modernized camping undermines its original value. Why go camping when it is so much like being home? And, as evidence, we need only look to the one major mode of camping that has not experienced the post-1980s decrease in participants–backpacking. Its appeal remains steady, even enhanced, with participation increasing from 6.6 million in 2007 to 10.7 million in 2019 (Outdoor Foundation, 2020, p. 19-20) or as illustrated by Jon Krakauer's bestselling *Into the Wild* (1996), Cheryl Strayed's popular *Wild: From Lost to Found on the Pacific Crest Trail* (2012) and the movies based on them. This is not a coincidence. Backpacking began as and remains the most Romantically antimodern of the modes because it most closely resembles pioneering in mode and outdoor setting, and how camping was practiced 150 years ago. In the future the overall number of campers may continue to decrease, but backpacking will likely endure because in both the imaginary and in practice, it remains truest to its origins and best continues to provide campers relief from their unsettling everyday lives.

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NOTES

1. In addition to camping, pilgrimage and sacredness have been used to explain a variety of leisure activities, including theme park visits, summer vacations, mountaineering, and more. See Moore, 1980; Badone and Roseman, 2004; Timothy and Olsen, 2006; Rugh, 2008; Taylor, 2010; and Di Giovine and Choe, 2019.
2. Automobile registrations soared nationally from 77,000 (1 vehicle per 1,089 Americans) in 1905 to 17,481,000 (1 per 6.6) in 1925 (Kurian, 2004, p. 19-20).

ABSTRACTS

Camping is the USA's fifth most popular outdoor activity. Employing an historical-geographic methodology, this article connects shifting settlement patterns to socio-technological changes

and to geographic imaginaries. In particular, three trends shaped camping's development. First, campers lived in an urban world undergoing modernization so they chose to retreat into nature as a counteractant. Second, camping was pilgrimage, taking campers into a transformative place where they could "rough it." Finally, antimodern camping was ironically subject to technological modernization. Camping gear steadily became lighter, more specialized and more easily transported. Motorized forms of camping are in decline today, but backpacking's appeal remains strong.

Le camping est la cinquième activité de plein air la plus populaire aux États-Unis. Se fondant sur une méthodologie historico-géographique, cet article relie les modèles de peuplement en mutation aux changements socio-technologiques et aux imaginaires géographiques. Trois tendances en particulier ont façonné le développement du camping. Tout d'abord, vivant dans un monde urbain en cours de modernisation, les campeurs ont choisi de se replier sur la nature pour en contrebalancer les effets. En second lieu, le camping faisait figure de pèlerinage, emmenant les campeurs dans des lieux transformateurs, où ils pouvaient vivre « à la dure ». Enfin, le camping antimoderne était ironiquement soumis à la modernisation technologique. Le matériel de camping est progressivement devenu plus léger, plus spécialisé et plus facile à transporter. Si les formes motorisées de camping sont aujourd'hui en déclin, l'attrait du *backpacking* reste fort.

INDEX

Mots-clés: camping, modernité, antimoderne, modernisation, pèlerinage, technologie, États-Unis
Keywords: camping, modernity, antimodern, modernization, pilgrimage, technology, USA

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Florian EGGLI, *Living With Tourism in Lucerne. How People Inhabit a Tourist Place*

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Vivre avec le tourisme à Lucerne. Comment les gens habitent un lieu touristique

Florian Eggli

Introduction: Lucerne, a contested tourism place

1 Lucerne has been a sought-after tourist place for over two hundred years. Since the wake of the 19th century, guests have visited the picturesque town in Central Switzerland. Over time, the tourism industry did not only shape the physical appearance of the cityscape, but also influenced the self-awareness, capabilities, knowledge, and know-how of its residents, as well as the overall identity, quality, and ability of the place, which hence formed its "touristic capital" (Stock *et al.*, 2014, p. 13).

2 Whereas in the beginning mainly tourists from Europe and USA were visiting the destination, tourism source markets have become even more diverse due to globalization. This change of tourism segments came along with a constant growth of visitor numbers, which increasingly fostered the debate about what kind of tourism Lucerne wants, how many visitors are enough and where the tourism industry generally intends to develop. Under the umbrella of the catch phrase *overtourism,* an encompassing, vivid, and engaged controversy about the adequate dealing with tourism dominated the public discourse in the years before the outbreak of SARS-CoV-2.

3 As a tourist city, Lucerne thus is contested: Many different actors are inhabiting the place by their manifold practices, which are sometimes mutually enhancing, and sometimes conflicting. This article aims to better understand the touristic situation in

Lucerne and, therefore, opts for a qualitative examination of the field of research. It seeks to comprehend where the problem of *overtourism* comes from, where conflicts, misunderstandings and friendly encounters are rooted, and finally, what learnings can be derived of this analysis to better deal with the current situation and adapt future developments.

4 The thesis approaches this endeavor threefold: First, it investigates on the *people* dwelling in Lucerne (Ingold, 2011; Lussault and Stock, 2010; Sheller and Urry, 2004). By enlarging the focus on the manifold actors inhabiting the city on temporal, periodical or even lasting duration, the outdated duality of the traditional host/guest relationship will be overcome. The research integrates commuters, international students, part-time residents as equally important actors as natives, long-term residents, newcomers, as well as day-trippers, weekly-holidaymakers, and regular guests.

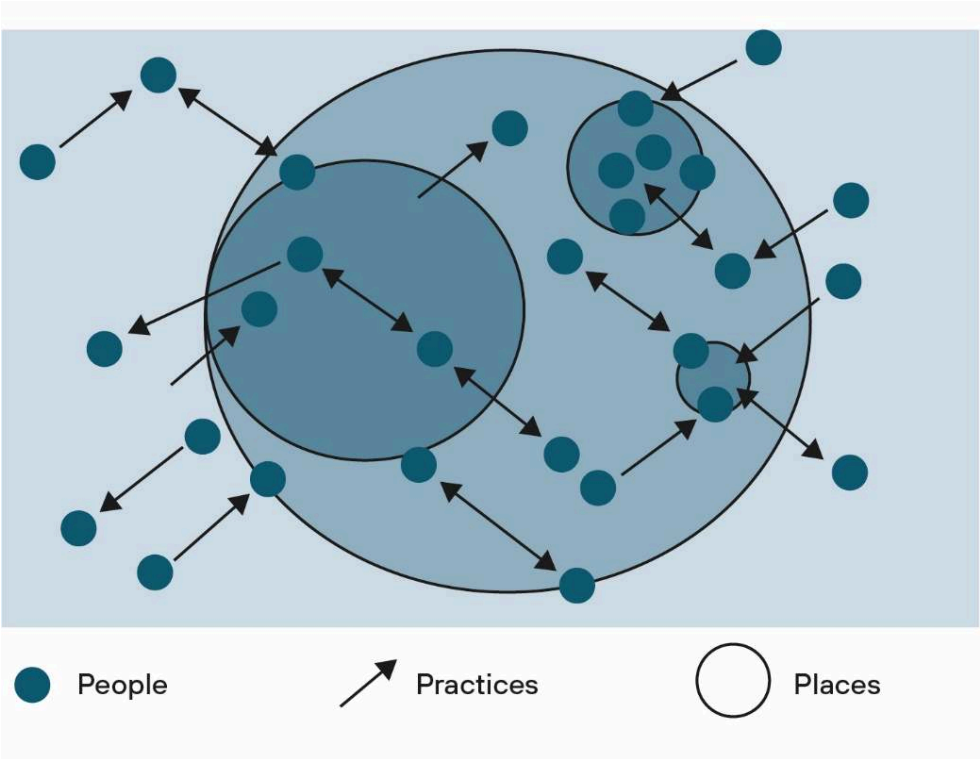
5 Second, it will be argued that not only the number of visitors is decisive in assessing the tourism situation of Lucerne. In contrast, the paper postulates that it is rather about social, cultural, and material *practices* (Schatzki, 2019; Reckwitz, 2016). It is about how actors are inhabiting a place, instead of merely the amount of people. Tourism tensions arise out of different background knowledge, cultural norms, learned understandings, and personal motivations when dwelling in a place. By investigating the practices of actual people, the predominant numeric orientated concepts of carrying capacity will be expanded with more qualitative considerations.

6 Third, the thesis shows how a *place* unfolds out of the practices of these people (Bærenholdt *et al.*, 2017; Sheller and Urry, 2004). A tourist city, such as Lucerne, is not a fixed and determined container, which is later filled with purpose and meaning, but a fluid, dynamic and ever-changing place which is constantly negotiated, shaped, and produced by the people dwelling in it.

State-of-the-art: Reconceptualizing overtourism

7 Even though the term *overtourism* has only entered the debate in 2016, the concept has longstanding roots in tourism studies. It relates to Doxey's (1975) Irritation Index (the so-called Irridex) or Butler's (1980) Tourism Area Live Cycle Model (TALC), which both are based on a dichotomy and static conceptional thinking. To overcome this approach of tourism, a more flexible, fluid, and dynamic approach is urged for, which respects the liquid nature of tourist flows and its various interdependencies. This research thus draws on the *new mobilities paradigm* (Sheller and Urry, 2006), which proposes that tourist places are co-produced, co-constituted and actively shaped by different actors and mobilities. In this research, a tourist place is conceptualized as produced by practices, understood as "a routinized type of behaviour which consists of several elements, interconnected to one another: forms of bodily activities, forms of mental activities, 'things' and their use, a background knowledge in the form of understanding, know-how, states of emotion and motivational knowledge" (Reckwitz, 2002, p. 249). These practices might bundle in so-called *practice plenums* (Schatzki, 2019, p. 80), which are overall complexes constituting out of various constellations of all sorts of practices, all interwoven and related to each other as equal but distinct parts.

Figure 1



Conceptualisation of a place, as produced by the practices of its people.

Methods: Following the information on the move

8 Following this theoretical conceptualization of the research design by *people*, *practice*, and *places* (*cf.* figure 1 above), respective consequences in regard of the research methods must be drawn. Urban tourism situations cannot be observed satisfactorily in closed laboratories, but rather in a vivid, open, and dynamic living space, such as a city is. This research, therefore, opts for *mobile research methods* (Büscher and Urry, 2009; Fincham *et al.*, 2010; Urry, 2007) which are succeeding the information and the informants on the move.

9 The research project applied three methodological avenues to investigate on the terrain: First, by *walking interviews* as suggested by Kusenbach (2003), Thibaud (2001) or Burckhardt *et al.* (2015), in which the researchers conduct interviews on joint walks within the field of scrutiny. Second, by strolling solely through the streets and *passively observing*. A method which has been inspired by Debord's concept of the "derive" (1958) and Benjamin's concept of the "flâneur" (1997[1973]). And third, by an *active participation* in the discourse, while dealing with media and engaging in the public debate.

10 Vast material has been gathered out of the 38 walking interviews (with more than 80 interview partners), abundant city strolls and encompassing participant observations, which has all been documented in text and picture. The analysis brought forth insights and findings to explain how the 'living with tourism' is organized, practiced, and made sense of. The empirical findings are thereafter presented in an

urban ethnography which is structured in the three already introduced trajectories (1) people, (2) practice and (3) place.

Discussion: How people are practicing place

11 **(1) People:** Lucerne is inhabited by a range of people with different relations to place. The research is putting forth 15 exemplary actors (some of them couples or families) inhabiting the place, as shown in the boxes in the figure below (*cf.* figure 2). By introducing these protagonists, it becomes apparent that the classical host/guest dichotomy has been outperformed: People have rather closer or loser relations to place, informed by short time visits to longer periods of stay. In addition, the research unfolds that people are not simply pro or contra tourism but have a nuanced stance which varies according to social life situations, economic dependencies, political framework conditions, and others. The stance towards tourism does not hence depend directly on the relation to place, as positions are varying and relate to many different attributes.

Figure 2

Overview of 15 selected interview partners indicating (1) their relation to place and (2) their stance towards tourism.

12 **(2) Practices:** In a second step, the practices of the people are juxtaposed to each other; their mutual interaction and interdependencies are revealed and expose sometimes fruitful, sometimes conflicting potential. The research looks at *mundane everyday practices*, such as strolling with a baby buggy on the littorals, running daily errands at the supermarket, driving around or simply using public transport. Equally it examines rather *extraordinary practices*, which are not happening every day and are exceptional for the people involved (such as sightseeing, feeding animals, or souvenir shopping), and are worth remembering and highlighting (i.e., by photographing and sharing on the internet). Further it is shown how *economic practices* are capitalizing on the global

tourism flows and how the resulting costs and benefits are distributed. Tourism is also controversially discussed by *reflective practices*, such as in writing editorial letters, performing theatre pieces and art exhibitions which unveil different states of emotions, such as anxiety, nostalgia, or irony. Lastly, the research reveals how certain actors are opposing tourism by *practices of protest and resistance* with banners, graffities, and concerts openly or covertly manifesting their conflicting stance and thus applying tactics of the weak in de Certeau's sense, where subversive power and creative forms of resistance to the everyday come to the fore (2005, p. 219).

13 **(3) Place:** Finally, the research project brings together the practices gathered in the field on three distinct hotspots. It is analyzed how a historic site (the Lion Monument), a supermarket (Migros) and a borough of Lucerne (Hirschmatt-Neustadt) are inhabited, produced, and brought forward by its people. These three examples illustrate where practices are bundled into plenums, mutually resonating in space and co-constructing meaning, quality, and image of the place. The three cases illustratively show how disputed a city is by shedding light on different aspects of the *overtourism* debate, such as touristification, residents' alienation, and gentrification.

Conclusions: New dealing with tourism

14 This in-depth understanding allows us to move further with the issue of tourism in Lucerne. We can now clear up some persistent prejudices, some overtaken patterns of argumentation which hinder a solution-orientated approach to the possibility of living at ease with tourism. To conclude, the five most common misconceptions will be addressed, which usually dominate the discourse on tourism in Lucerne. Fresh insights gathered by means of this research are also proposed as ways of overcoming them.

15 *1) It's not only about tourism.* Tourism is part of urban life. It is an interdisciplinary, cross-sectional, and encompassing phenomenon. It is interwoven with housing policies, traffic issues, retail development, questions on the use of public space and much more. Addressing tourism issues detached from their contexts encourages oversimplified perspectives.

16 *2) It is not only about the numbers.* Tourism is not only a question of visitor numbers, country of origin and length of stay, as the common tourism statistics suggest. Tourism is more than that: it is how people interact, what kinds of background knowledge they bring with them, their language skills, personal openness, motivations, and cultural understanding. In short, it is how they relate to place. This requires an integrated approach, a holistic concept that champions the practices of the people, and not only their demographic attributes.

17 *3) It is not only about the money.* Tourism creates jobs, generates significant tax revenues, and pays many public bills, but it also uses the city as a resource, capitalizing on its features. It is therefore an economic trade in goods, whose value is, however, not easy to measure objectively. But tourism is not limited to its economic dimensions, it also encompasses many other aspects. These are often neglected by the dominance of the monetary discourse. It is also about the appreciation and esteem of a local identity, intercultural encounters, and the development of new competences. This broadens horizons and develops many important skills on the part of the inhabitants, which are needed in a globally interconnected world.

18 *4) It is not only about oneself.* Tourism is embedded in a social realm, relating to manifold people with different needs and understandings. This calls for tolerance from all the actors involved. One must accept the sometimes lack of mutual understanding due to different cultural backgrounds, motivational knowledge, and spatial competences. However, by putting oneself in the shoes of others, the perspectives of strangers can be adopted, as many people "who are tourists one week, may well be the toured the next", as Coleman (2008, p. 9) states (and vice versa).

19 *5) It is not about simple solutions.* Tourism in urban spaces poses complex issues. There is no quick fix, but rather a constant balancing of different needs and interests. It involves political negotiation and dealing with controversies and ambiguities. In the end, this is what a city is all about. We must learn to live with contradictions and to arrange our lives in relation to the lives of others. This is all a constitutive part of urban dwelling and, if performed successfully, informs the "touristic capital" of a place and its inhabitants.

20 These concluding insights show that the term *overtourism* falls short in addressing the tourism issues Lucerne is dealing with. This is not because of the pandemic crisis, which for certain people is causing a sort of *undertourism*. The shortcoming is rather related to the notions of over- and undertourism themselves, terms that treat tourism as detached and isolated from urban issues, something of which there can be too much or too little. The concept of *overtourism* does not embed tourism issues in an entangled urban life, but rather sees the city as a container in which tourism is added in doses, whether in quantity above or below its carrying capacity. This paper therefore suggests a term such as *with-tourism* rather than the misleading terms over- or undertourism. Or in some cases it might rather be a *not-possible-without-tourism*.

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Yan WANG, *Tourism, Heritage, and the Transformation of the World Heritage Site of Honghe Hani Rice Terraces*

Doctoral thesis in Tourism Studies, Institute of Geography and Sustainability, University of Lausanne, under the supervision of Mathis Stock, defended on October 4, 2021

Tourisme, patrimoine et transformation du site du patrimoine mondial des rizières en terrasses de Honghe Hani

Yan Wang

1 The remote rural region in China's Honghe County has been increasingly transformed by tourism and Unesco's World Heritage program. Already an emerging destination since the early 1990s, the site's inscription as a World Heritage Site of Honghe Hani Rice Terraces (HHRTs) in the year 2013 further accelerated its tourism development. Tourism and heritage are often seen as two intertwined systems that reconstruct local places (Ashworth, 2000; Gravari-Barbas et al., 2016; Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 1998). They enmesh the site into broader social networks and introduce new social groups who consequently reshape the site. As a result, the built environment and the landscape have been appropriated for divergent purposes, and the place has been endowed with new meanings. The transformation of HHRTs in such contexts was examined in this thesis through four interrelated themes: 1) the transformation of the place into a WHS through meaning construction during and after the World Heritage listing; 2) the visible changes of the rice terrace landscape and the settlement-scape under the "tourist" and "professional" gazes; 3) the tourism-triggered urbanization and changing place qualities; and 4) the power relations and negotiations involved in destination place making.

2 Such a multi-facet transformation process is addressed under the central concept of "place making". Built on the concept of place, which is understood as both material and meaningful (Entrikin, 1991; Relph, 1976), and in an incessant state of "becoming" (Cresswell, 1996; Massey, 1994; Pred, 1984), this thesis suggests that "place making" can

be defined as a process in which the meaningful and material aspects of places are constantly re-shaped by various individuals and social groups who interpret and practice the place. To approach each theme with more analytical specificity, it further proposes analytical frameworks by drawing on theorizations of the heritage-scape and World Heritage making (Di Giovine, 2008), landscape and -scape (Jackson, 1986), planetary urbanization (Brenner and Schmid, 2017), tourism-triggered urbanities (Coëffé and Stock, 2021; Stock et al., 2017), and the entanglements of power (Sharp *et al.*, 2000).

3 Methodologically, this study dwells on mixed methods. For data collection, participant observation was conducted on-site to understand how different stakeholders engage themselves in the nomination process and post-listing site management. Direct observation and survey were used to track the change of the built environment. Interviews were conducted to collect information of ideas, opinions, events, and stories from various stakeholders (e.g., authorities, experts, investors, and local villagers). Other supplementary data including the site's historical photos, satellite images, working archives, planning documents, regulations, and nomination files were collected from the Terrace Administration, architects, tourism experts, and Unesco's website. For data analysis, this study analyzed the texts and narratives by using content and discourse analysis. The aim is to understand the construction of the heritage discourse, the change of the landscape, and the power issues in place making. It also used visual analysis and mapping to describe the change of the settlement and the built environment.

4 The first empirical chapter presents a process of three phases through which the official heritage narratives of HHRTs were constructed. The first phase involves locating the idea of World Heritage within selected geographical boundaries and material elements. Three terrace blocks were selected from Honghe County and tourism proved to be a primary concern. The selected blocks were the most touristic, and they can be developed into national scenic areas[1] due to their geographical proximity. Other components of forest, villages and irrigation systems were selected following the conceptualization of a local expert, who interpreted the landscape as part of a four-element ecosystem of "forest-water-terraces-villages". The property zone was then drawn based on the administrative boundaries of all villages that farmed the rice terraces. Further, considering the touristic potential and preservational cost, five villages out of all 82 villages were nominated as representatives. In the second phase, an idealized narrative that fits Unesco's pre-determined criteria was created as a result of the dialectal conversations between the member state and the international heritage authorities. To render the site ideal in the nomination file, the member state framed facts positively, used stylized facts, referred to scientific data and traditional philosophies. To respond to the feedback from ICOMOS', the member state, on the one hand, showed compliances by submitting the required documents, and on the other, defended the criticism by providing more information beneficial to its justification. After the inscription, the official heritage narrative continues to construct in the last phase. It was promoted among the local population in the form of workshops, public gatherings, and school classes. It was also reintegrated into the institutions, regulations, and plans that guided the various activities within the heritage site.

5 The second empirical chapter examines the transformation of the landscape and settlement-scape respectively under the "tourist gaze" (Urry, 2002) and "professional

gaze". By adding the suffix "-scape", the aesthetic, visual character in the transformation of landscape and settlement was highlighted. In terms of the landscape, the results show that influenced by the touristic gaze, the locals rediscovered the beauty of their everyday common landscape and actively used landscape images to promote their touristic services and products. Moreover, under the touristic gaze, more fine-grained, nuanced landscape images were constructed through an organic, bottom-up process by photograph-seeking tourists, local guides, and travel agencies. Tourist imaginaries concretized and differentiated the landscape based on attributes of colors, landforms, locations, and time of viewing. In terms of settlement-scape, the results indicate that the vernacular settlement-scape has evolved into four types under the "professional gaze", i.e., the modern, semi-vernacular, neo-vernacular, and hybrid settlement-scape. Those typologies represent varied visual characters measured by their continuity to the vernacular type, and they were produced under different conditions of preservation and touristification.

6 The third empirical chapter studies the tourism-triggered urbanization process at Pugaolaozhai Village. Empirical evidence indicates that tourism-triggered urban qualities can be observed from the following indicators. Firstly, due to the expanding accommodation services, the built space and population have densified while the land-use types, economic activities, population types have diversified. Secondly, Pugaolaozhai has developed a certain level of touristic centrality, meaning that its large number of lodges has made it tourists' most chosen place for overnight stays. Thirdly, traditional common space (such as village gate, sacred woods) for locals has deteriorated while public space (such as parking lot, tourist center) for anonymous individuals has emerged. Finally, the architectural style has gained urban features. New houses used modern building techniques and materials, were notably larger, and used building elements that reflect modern aesthetics. However, Pugaolaozhai is far from completely urban but is rather characterized by a hybridity of rural and urban characters. The density of the built environment has increased but is not significantly higher than other non-touristic villages in the region; the economic activities have been diversified, but farming remains the primary economic activity; it is central for tourists and non-local investors but remains peripheral for the locals; traditional common space still exists, and traditional building elements can still be found. The hybrid rural-urban qualities provide evidence of planetary urbanization (Brenner and Schmid, 2017), but also reveal that planetary urbanization occurs in different degrees in less developed economies.

7 The final empirical chapter investigates the entanglements of power in Azheke Village. Both the tangible and intangible aspects of the place have been shaped by activities and negotiations among authorities, experts, investors, and local villagers. Those stakeholders were driven by both shared (i.e., improving the living conditions of the villagers) and divergent objectives (i.e., political performance, professional interest, profit). The competing interests gave rise to a series of negotiations around issues of road construction, housing construction, land acquisition, commercial activities, benefit-sharing. The investigation of the issues proved that authorities and experts turned out to be the dominating power while the villagers and investors were the resisting power. Both sides of power actively drew on a wide variety of resources (legal resources, expertise, social status, etc.) and tactics (such as persuasion, manipulation, etc.) in negotiations. But the resisting power was not passive all the time. For example, the villagers sometimes forced the dominating power to make compromises and

influenced the built-scape at a micro-level. Hence, this chapter suggests the place making is interwoven in domination/resistance in everyday mundane politics.

8 This thesis, therefore, argues for a more central role for the concept of place making in tourism studies, as it opens various possibilities to explore destination development, i.e., from aspects of representations, materialities, as well as human activities. The empirical evidence provides food for thought on the issues of heritage, landscape, settlement, urbanization, and power at destination places. It substantiates the idea of tourism as an essential factor in heritage nomination; it presents the diversified landscape and settlement-scape as a result of heritage and tourism development; it captures the evidence of planetary urbanization with the case study in remote, rural mountain regions; and finally, it sheds light on the resisting power in the destination making process.

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NOTES

1. Chinese national scenic areas are officially recognized bounded controlled touristic zones because of their scenic beauty or historical significance.

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Actualités de la recherche

Lectures critiques

Christophe GUIBERT et Benjamin TAUNAY, *Les Chinois à la plage en Chine*

Paris, L'Harmattan, coll. « Recherches asiatiques », 2021, 174 p.

Léopold Lucas

RÉFÉRENCE

Christophe GUIBERT et Benjamin TAUNAY, *Les Chinois à la plage en Chine,* Paris, L'Harmattan, coll. « Recherches asiatiques », 2021, 174 p., ISBN : 978-2-343-24659-8.

Une photographie de la culture chinoise de la plage

1 Questionner « ce que les Chinois font, et comment ils le font, en tant que touristes ou usagers de la plage, en explorant la dimension corporelle de leurs pratiques » (p. 13), tel est l'objectif de l'« ouvrage de photographies commentées » écrit par Christophe Guibert et Benjamin Taunay (2021) et intitulé *Les chinois à la plage en Chine*.

2 Tout l'intérêt de ce livre de 172 pages tient à son originalité, à la fois dans sa thématique et dans la perspective adoptée. Les auteurs souhaitent en effet rendre visible, à travers 90 photographies, comment ces pratiques balnéaires révèlent d'une part des logiques sociétales chinoises et d'autre part le développement d'une culture touristique mondiale, avec la diffusion et l'hybridation de modèles et de pratiques. Pour cela, l'ouvrage est structuré en six chapitres, abordant chacun une thématique : postures corporelles, mise en scène, jeu, normes, techniques et pratiques du surf. Sont ainsi esquissés des enjeux politiques – la plage étant décrite moins comme un espace de libertés et de « relâchement contrôlé de l'auto-contrôle » (pour reprendre l'expression de Norbert Elias) que comme un domaine d'extension des logiques de surveillance et de contrôle par les autorités – et sociétaux – avec les valorisations sociales des pratiques touristiques.

3 Mais c'est bien la description de techniques du corps – qu'il s'agisse d'être capable de faire du surf, de savoir nager, ou simplement de s'allonger sur la plage – et de leurs apprentissages – l'usage important des bouées par les adultes (p. 117) étant significatif de ce processus – qui est au cœur de l'ouvrage. L'utilisation du « facekini », une cagoule de bain en tissu, est la manifestation la plus emblématique de ce thème rapportée par l'enquête (lui consacrant une place importante : dix photographies, un extrait d'entretien et la page de couverture). Envisagé par les auteurs comme l'expression de normes sociales – ce masque est essentiellement porté par des femmes âgées – et culturelles – la blancheur de la peau est un canon esthétique puissant en Chine –, ce phénomène, apparu à Qingdao au milieu des années 2000, est pourtant encore « assez largement circonscrit » (p. 82), « les porteuses de facekini, très visibles, n'en sont pas moins relativement minoritaires » (p. 85). Le caractère marginal de ce vêtement semble être confirmé par l'extrait d'entretien avec la première surfeuse professionnelle chinoise qui dit le trouver « vraiment horrible et terrifiant » (p. 137). Il est, au final, compliqué pour le lecteur de savoir de quoi le facekini est alors le masque.

4 La difficulté, la singularité et l'originalité de l'exercice scientifique de cet ouvrage peuvent aussi en partie expliquer les trois principaux regrets que l'on peut formuler sur le fond et la forme.

5 Le premier concerne la dimension méthodologique. Si elle fait bien l'objet d'un encart (p. 18), ce dernier mériterait d'être plus développé. L'usage de la photographie comme medium central d'une enquête de sciences sociales n'est pas sans poser problèmes[1]. Quels enjeux, pour des chercheurs occidentaux, de prendre en photographies des touristes chinois se prenant en photographies (qui est la pratique centrale de la plage pour cette société) ? Alors que quelques clichés sont pris « de près » (p. 82) et que certains commentaires indiquent que les touristes « prennent la pose » (p. 90) ou que « la posture n'est pas complètement assumée face à la photo » (p. 91), une explicitation des conditions d'enquête et de production de ces photographies serait non seulement intéressante mais plus encore importante. De même, le choix de restituer certaines photographies en couleurs et d'autres en noir et blanc a des conséquences et demanderait également à être justifié. Plus largement, ces photographies étant réalisées sur deux terrains, Hainan et Qingdao, le lecteur aimerait savoir plus explicitement ce qui a présidé au choix de ces lieux plutôt qu'à d'autres, et *in fine* leurs différences et enjeux spécifiques. Ce manque est d'autant plus regrettable que la partie réflexive proposée en conclusion, riche d'enseignements quant à la positionnalité des chercheurs par rapport aux terrains, y apporte un trop bref élément de réponse : « les pratiques de plage [à Qingdao] y sont très différentes de ce que j'avais observé à Hainan [...] les corps "reposés" et "allongés" existent à Qingdao alors qu'ils sont quasiment absents d'Hainan ; le facekini est largement utilisé par les femmes de Qingdao alors qu'il est peu mobilisé par les touristes visitant Hainan, etc. » (p. 160).

6 Cela est en lien étroit avec la deuxième critique. Les photographies étant au cœur du dispositif, la place des textes se limite, logiquement, et au-delà de l'introduction et de la conclusion, à des légendes commentées. On peut toutefois déplorer que les paragraphes présentant chacun des chapitres ne soient pas plus conséquents et ne permettent pas de mieux conduire, encadrer théoriquement ou comparer les observations des différentes thématiques (comme l'y autoriserait la citation précédente). Le fait que les références bibliographiques soient mentionnées à titre indicatif, et non pas citées, accentue cet aspect. De même, le lecteur peut se demander pourquoi les extraits

d'entretiens proposés en encarts – et qui permettent de saisir certaines des raisons des manières de faire ainsi exposées – ne sont pas utilisés systématiquement pour chaque chapitre. Un accompagnement textuel renforcé aurait permis d'apporter des clés de compréhension plus substantielles aux logiques culturelles rapportées, d'indiquer leur caractère représentatif ou exemplaire et de formuler des hypothèses interprétatives – les auteurs remarquant eux-mêmes que « les pratiques de la plage et les usages sociaux du corps ne peuvent être généralisés à l'échelle de la Chine » (p. 100). Les deux auteurs ayant beaucoup publié sur cette thématique, cela aurait pu s'effectuer par la mobilisation de précédents travaux (stratégie d'ailleurs utilisée une fois en fin d'ouvrage).

7 Le troisième regret relève des logiques éditoriales et tient aux petites dimensions du livre. Il est dommage que son format ne soit pas plus conséquent afin de mettre en valeur les photographies, leur donner l'espace qu'elles méritent, en tout cas plus en adéquation avec le projet. À ce titre, ce livre doit aussi être apprécié comme une incitation à créer une collection, papier et/ou numérique, d'ouvrages scientifiques spécialisés dans les enquêtes photographiques.

NOTES

1. Pour une exploration de quelques-uns de ces enjeux, abordés à partir d'une thématique différente, voir par exemple : Irène SARTORETTI et Roberto MANUELLI, « L'espace domestique comme fait social total. Penser avec la photographie », *EspacesTemps.net*, 2020 [https://www.espacestemps.net/articles/lespace-domestique-comme-fait-social-total-penser-avec-la-photographie/].

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Jean CORNELOUP, *La transition récréative. Une utopie transmoderne*

Préface de Bernard Kalaora, Mont-Saint-Aignan, Presses universitaires de Rouen et du Havre, coll. « Écologies corporelles et environnements sportifs », 2022, 496 p.

Hassen Slimani

RÉFÉRENCE

Jean CORNELOUP, *La transition récréative. Une utopie transmoderne,* Préface de Bernard Kalaora, Mont-Saint-Aignan, Presses universitaires de Rouen et du Havre, coll. « Écologies corporelles et environnements sportifs », 2022, 496 p., ISBN : 979-10-240-1474-6.

1 Le livre de Jean Corneloup se veut une synthèse théorique de ses travaux réalisés sur ses trente dernières années de recherche. On le constate à une bibliographie relativement conséquente (579 références). La table des matières, qui est en réalité un sommaire, décline l'ouvrage en quatre parties : les deux premières se penchent sur l'histoire de « la forme culturelle » (partie 1 de 59 pages et partie 2 de 110 pages) et les deux suivantes sur la question de « la transition récréative » (partie 3 de 155 pages et partie 4 de 105 pages), le tout exprimé au singulier. De prime abord, il s'est agi pour l'auteur de mobiliser, au service de l'idée de « transition récréative », un maximum de références bibliographiques tous azimuts pour articuler en « survol » des tendances sociétales en matière de pratiques culturelles, prises dans un sens pour le moins très large (des sports de nature au e-sport en passant par les séries TV). De ce point de vue, le livre est une réussite, les théories et les exemples désincarnés s'enchaînent, s'additionnent les uns aux autres, se justifiant par eux-mêmes et justifiant par là-même les propos de l'auteur, jusqu'à ne plus savoir sociologiquement de quoi ni de qui ce dernier parle. Or, à trop se focaliser sur le « quoi » (« la forme culturelle » et « la transition »), parfois sur le « comment », le « qui », synchronique et diachronique, en termes de dispositions et de positions sociales, n'est jamais explicité. Quant au

« pourquoi », il est résolu par le sens unique donné à l'Histoire, offrant une place centrale à un « capitalisme ravageur », voire à un « hyper-capitalisme » individualisateur ; la solution à cette fuite en avant étant le retour à la terre, à la campagne par la constitution de « communs » sociaux. Enfin, autant l'effort, même succinct, de définir dans l'introduction l'expression « forme culturelle » est louable, autant le flou persiste sur ce qu'est, doit ou devrait être le « récréatif ». Tout semble être « récréalisable » : les pratiques, les communautés, les mondes, les laboratoires et, bien entendu, la transition.

2 Le chapitre 1, intitulé « la forme culturelle traditionnelle », est une revue de littérature, à la limite d'un cours de première année en STAPS (*cf.* p. 50), guidée par la thèse des liens entre humains et non-humains du préfacier. L'auteur y tente de dépasser la question des ruptures et continuités entre « jeux anciens » et « sports modernes », mais rappelle en même temps qu'« avec la modernité, la forme culturelle traditionnelle a été disqualifiée et remplacée par la forme culturelle moderne en lien avec les enjeux économiques et politiques de la société du XX^e^ siècle autour de l'État républicain et du capitalisme » (p. 53) ; ce que réfute, en grande partie, Norbert Elias, qu'il convoque pourtant dans sa démonstration. Elias écrit en effet, à la page 207 de *Sport et civilisation. La violence maîtrisée* :

> [i]l faut se méfier de la tendance répandue qui consiste à lire les événements du XIX^e^ siècle à la lumière de la révolution industrielle. Sans aucun doute, l'industrialisation et l'urbanisation ont participé à l'évolution et à la diffusion des loisirs de type sportif, mais il est aussi possible que toutes deux soient symptomatiques d'une transformation plus profonde des sociétés européennes, dont les membres ont dû observer une plus grande régularité et une plus grande différenciation de conduite. [...] On peut penser que les sociétés européennes ont connu, à partir du XV^e^ siècle environ, une transformation qui a lentement imposé à leurs membres une régularité croissante de conduite et de sentiments[1].

3 Du point de vue de Norbert Elias, les « transitions » sont des « transformations » et semblent un peu plus subtiles et beaucoup plus lentes qu'on veut bien nous le faire croire ici. Au terme de ce premier chapitre, on ne sait curieusement pas par qui, sociologiquement parlant, ni comment se substitue l'« ancienne » forme culturelle à la « nouvelle » alors que le recours à d'autres références plus historiques l'aurait sans doute permis. Le tic d'écriture consistant à donner des intentions aux choses, en dehors des individus, en est ainsi pour le moins perturbant, entre autres exemples : « des notions et des principes circulent et se diffusent pour infléchir et orienter les pratiques professionnelles et sociales » (p. 22) ; « Les formes culturelles existantes [...] ont eu à se positionner et à adapter leur pratique pour répondre aux injonctions transitionnelles » (p. 22). Écrire en mettant les agents sociaux « en vacances » semble, sans nul doute ici, plus simple !

4 Toujours sur le mode essentialiste, le chapitre 2 aborde la question de « la forme culturelle moderne », comme si son avènement allait de soi, à travers diverses expressions telles que : « Une dominante institutionnelle, normative et républicaine s'impose... » (p. 55) ; « une forte sociabilité masculine, urbaine et élitiste s'est développée... » (p. 55) ; « la modernité invente l'individualisme... » (note de bas de page 7 p. 64) ; « les stations de montagne modernes apprécient la présence de pratiques traditionnelles... » (p. 83). À aucun moment, ne serait-ce qu'en exemples, ne sont évoqués les rapports de force et/ou de sens qui sont au principe mêmes des transformations et/ou des recompositions sociales évoquées. On peut ici

raisonnablement faire l'hypothèse que des formes de compétition existaient dans « la forme culturelle traditionnelle », mais justement sous d'autres formes, moins explicites, liées à d'autres significations. À ce titre, l'essai d'appropriation de la sociologie de Pierre Bourdieu et de sa théorie des champs ne semble pas transformé tant il est parcellaire et parsemé d'approximations : on y apprend, par exemple, que « la sociologie bourdieusienne en lien avec celle de Christian Pociello a permis de montrer la présence de variables qui participent à comprendre la distribution inégale des pratiques sportives dans l'espace des sports » (p. 59). Or Pociello, adoubé par Bourdieu, n'a fait ensuite que reprendre et appliquer à un autre espace social ce que Bourdieu avait d'abord construit comme grille d'intelligibilité sociologique pour, en partie, décoder les pratiques répondant à une forme d'« homologie structurale » relative et non « structurelle » comme l'écrit l'auteur (p. 60) ! Pour le maniement de ce concept, comme pour celui de « violence symbolique » (*cf.* note de bas de page 4, p. 60), l'absence d'enquêtes de terrain, et donc d'enquêtés interviewés par l'auteur lui-même (contrairement à l'exemple de Pierre-Ambroise Bosse p. 59 et aux propos d'un alpiniste tirés du livre de Jean-Paul Bozonnet mobilisés p. 65), fragilise la maîtrise précise de ce cadre théorique. Il semble donc, fort logiquement, que l'on ne sache toujours pas qui est à l'origine de ces mécanismes de transformation, ni comment ils s'y prennent pour les imposer...

5 Sont évoquées dans le chapitre 3 deux formes culturelles, l'une « dissidente », l'autre « alternative ». Or, la question de savoir « qui crée le créateur » de nouvelles règles dans un champ social n'est pas nouvelle. On le sait, l'édiction de règles produit des « contre-règles ». En son temps, Pierre Bourdieu avait fait le tour de cette question en 1992 dans *Les règles de l'art* en montrant comment Flaubert avait mis à mal l'orthodoxie du champ littéraire par son œuvre. L'hétérodoxie est un mode classique de bouleversement du *nomos* d'un champ, quel qu'il soit. Une autre forme de lecture du « normal » et du « pathologique » aurait sans doute permis de remettre les individus et leurs corps au centre de la réflexion. Une fois encore, on ne sait jamais qui sont les « dissidents » et les « alternateurs », ni ce qu'ils font. Tout est écrit et pensé comme si les positions et les dispositions sociales et corporelles des individus étaient niées et ne pouvaient être en mesure d'expliquer, ne serait-ce que partiellement, leurs pratiques (p. ex. « innovateurs », « créateurs », « alternatifs ») et leurs ressentis (p. ex. « insatisfaits », « marginaux », originaux », « clochards célestes »). Ils n'ont pas d'âge, pas de sexe, pas de travail, etc. Ce type de sociologie « hors sol » n'aide vraiment pas à comprendre comment se dessinent les cadres des expériences sociales les plus récentes et les plus inédites pour autopsier la « transition » à l'œuvre. Il laisse la part belle au rouleau compresseur d'une histoire en marche où tout passe à la moulinette du « traditionnel », du « moderne », « post-moderne » et « trans-moderne ».

6 Dans la continuité du style littéraire des trois chapitres précédents et dans une illusion qui ne semble attribuer qu'un seul sens commun à l'Histoire, le chapitre 4 porte logiquement sur « la culture post-moderne » avant de se pencher, dans le chapitre 5, sur sa forme « hypermoderne ». La question qui se pose ici, d'un autre point de vue sociologique que celui de l'auteur, est celle des ruptures de forme et des continuités de fond. En 1987, l'article de Jean-Claude Passeron « Attention aux excès de vitesse » mettait déjà en garde contre les vices de pensée et d'analyse consistant à utiliser le vocabulaire du « nouveau » et de l'« innovation », qui fige l'avant et l'après d'un moment dit « historique » où une catégorie d'individus décide de l'avènement ou non d'une « mutation », d'une « évolution ». Comme l'écrit plus loin J.-C. Passeron : « Les

cultures ne changent pas de structure comme de chemise » (p. 130). Alors que l'une des idées phares du livre est de redonner la parole et une force de proposition aux acteurs, comme si les autres sociologues en faisait fi, ce sont ici indistinctement « des jeunes, des couches moyennes, des femmes, des familles, des personnes en situation de handicap et différents segments de clients émergents (homosexuels, célibataires, groupes de motivations, etc.) [...] de jeunes étudiants et entrepreneurs [...] des marketeurs » qui seraient les principaux acteurs de la transition. D'ailleurs, on ne voit pas comment il pourrait en être autrement... Mais il est, ici comme dans le reste du texte, fort dommageable de ne pas donner du corps social à la « post-modernité ». Tout le monde est dans le même bateau, dans le même sac, ce qui est pour le moins déconcertant, voire suspect. Aucune (re)mise en perspective des catégories d'analyse des auteurs cités, dits « théoriciens du loisir ou du social », ne permet de rendre compte de ce qui est mobilisé comme preuves d'assertions çà et là assenées. Au final, ce qui caractérise le plus le « post-modernisme » et l'« hyper-modernisme », c'est l'usage de préfixes, d'anglicismes et de mots-valises trop fréquemment usités. L'usage du vocabulaire de « la démesure » (de « l'ego-démesure » dans le chapitre 5) et de « la débauche » laisse tout autant perplexe...

7 L'entame du chapitre 5 regorge de questions existentielles : « Et si les nouvelles frontières du monde n'étaient pas la lune, mais l'individu ? » (p. 148) ou « Comment trouver un sens à sa vie face à la crise existentielle du monde contemporain ? » (p. 167). A-t-on ici affaire à des questions de types sociologique et scientifique ? La réponse est non. On « quitte bien », comme l'évoque plus loin l'auteur, « la sphère des facteurs sociologiques en lien avec les paradigmes structurels et structuralistes pour accorder de la place à la capacité de chacun à devenir maître de son destin ». Il nous avait pourtant semblé avoir déjà quitté cette sphère scientifique dès le début de l'ouvrage. À ce titre, à côté de l'individualisme méthodologique à la Raymond Boudon (évoqué sans le citer) et la théorie des jeux, on ne voit pas très bien ce que vient faire dans cette galère Charles Suaud dont l'enquête locale sur le squash est citée pour apporter la preuve d'une « individualisation » des comportements contemporains. Ou alors, nous n'avons pas lu le même article ! « La culture hypermoderne » serait alors en mesure de faire une place de choix à l'individu, à l'individualisme et à l'individuation sur le dos du « nouvel esprit du capitalisme » transformé en « nouvel esprit du récréatif » ! Le « capitalisme » finirait donc par avoir raison de tout... Ce paralogisme a tout de même pour vertu d'objectiver un énorme biais méthodologique : à vouloir, coûte que coûte, tordre l'unité paradigmatique de courants théoriques aussi éloignés les uns des autres pour les faire entrer dans la théorie de « la modernité » et du « transhumanisme » – on passe, sans transition, d'Andrieu (8 références en bibliographie), Maffesoli (7), Vigarello (7), Le Breton (6), Touraine (5), Falaix (5), Parlebas (4), Duret (4) et Kalaora (3) à Elias (3), Gasparini (3), Bourdieu (2), Bromberger (2) Defrance (2), Weber (1), Becker (1), Guibert (1) et Suaud (1) –, l'auteur en vient à en détourner les thèses ainsi que le raisonnement sociologique des auteurs, en particulier les moins référencés dans tout le livre. La preuve en est faite à la page 192 de ce chapitre, notamment dans la note de bas de page 30 : consentant les critiques à propos du verbiage théorique et hors sol autour de la « modernité », il ne peut, en même temps, que se justifier de pratiquer « l'œcuménisme scientifique » sans, prétend-il, « valoriser une forme [théorique] plus qu'une autre » ni « prôner un relativisme scientifique total » ; et c'est bien le problème de cet ouvrage. Le patchwork des références bibliographiques mobilisées a tendance à complexifier le propos plutôt qu'à

l'éclairer. On en conclut que l'ambition théorique de l'ouvrage était bel et bien morte dans l'œuf.

8 Les chapitres 6 et 7 sont précédés de l'introduction générale de la troisième partie, et le chapitre 8 de l'introduction de la dernière partie. Si les cinq chapitres précédents abordaient le passé et le présent des différentes formes de « mondes culturels », les trois derniers chapitres se projettent dans un à venir/avenir présupposé de différentes sphères (« naturosphère », « hybri-sphère », « urbani-sphère », « *virtual* sphère », « technosphère », « métavers ») dont l'auteur anticipe les dérives. Ce qu'il appelle « la société transitive » (p. 360), en allusion abusive et décalée aux verres de lunettes Transition®, serait une réalité en « perpétuel mouvement », en « turbulence », en « équilibre instable » nécessitant une « modularité », une « adaptabilité » de tous les instants – tout bonnement un univers invivable. L'exemple des « laboratoires éco-récréatifs », notamment à travers celui du « récréa-entrepreneurial » de Saint-Camille (Québec), semble montrer le contraire. Y sont décrites des relations conviviales ainsi que la co-construction du « bien-vivre » autour d'un centre culturel bien nommé « Le P'tit bonheur ». À s'en tenir là, il faut bien dire que l'expérience de ce « *living lab* rural » fait envie. Mais qu'en est-il réellement de la nature des relations sociales pour produire à coup sûr « du bonheur » en continu ? Un bémol tout de même vient briser cette harmonie sociale à Saint-Elie-de-Caxton (Québec), où deux camps s'opposent sur la suite donnée au projet touristique et/ou résidentiel. Ces cinq petites pages (418 à 422), où finalement il se passe quelque chose entre de vrais gens, permettent de mieux comprendre en quoi « une forme culturelle » est une condition, loin d'être la seule, à la production d'un sentiment d'appartenance à une même communauté, de partager des représentations sociales, de contribuer à une autre économie, (*i.e.* les « éco-communs récréatifs » selon les mots de l'auteur), etc. ; bref, à plusieurs possibilités d'identification locale. Même si l'exemple du surf à Guéthary montre également des discordes sur le sens attribué à la pratique et au lieu de pratique, il manque là encore des données biographiques pour aller plus loin dans l'analyse de la constitution de ces « communs ». L'auteur glisse lentement vers des injonctions normatives pour accéder à ces modèles et à ces idéaux sociaux en faisant la promotion des « laboratoires éco-récréatifs » et des formations qui vont avec.

9 Pour conclure, cet essai de sociologie, fiction partiale est la preuve que l'on peut écrire un texte qui se voudrait sociologique sans jamais apporter les preuves empiriques de ce que l'on avance d'un point de vue théorique. Comment pourrait-on, en effet, se laisser berner à ce point par une démonstration s'autorisant à citer ci et là des émissions de téléréalité ? Pris comme des exemples paradigmatiques d'une forme de culture, quelle qu'elle soit, l'auteur ne se soucie guère des modes de recrutement des candidats, de la scénarisation des épisodes qui sont censés se regarder comme des séries, des stratégies de spectacularisation des situations et des images, des enjeux économiques engagés par leurs producteurs, de l'internationalisation des mêmes concepts télévisuels et de leurs différentes formes d'appropriation nationale, etc. Ce livre est une reformulation complexifiée de ce qui se sait déjà dans l'univers académique de la sociologie française, en particulier sur les pratiques sportives et culturelles. L'auteur tente d'y dépasser les thèses de la continuité ou des ruptures entre pratiques « traditionnelles » et « modernes » sans nous en convaincre tellement on s'y perd dans les concepts « andrieusiens ». Tout peut alors passer à la moulinette de la « pré », « post », « après », « seconde », « avancée », « tardive », « sur », « ultra », « trans-modernité », le tout dans un savant mélange des genres disciplinaires et théoriques. L'exercice a surtout consisté

à se citer soi-même (25 autoréférences bibliographiques) parmi une foule d'auteurs pour se bricoler une place, plus qu'une posture scientifique, dans l'univers d'une théorie d'un autre genre « sociologique » transdisciplinaire. Comprendre ce qu'écrit l'auteur nécessite un *background* théorique que tout le monde ne possède pas. Entre « l'utopie trans-moderne », « une transition médiane », « le transhumanisme », « l'éco-modernité », « la trans-modernité », etc., les analyses proposées demeurent, par conséquent, inaccessibles à toute une partie des sociologues et, encore plus, des non-sociologues. Une autre bizarrerie qui vient complexifier la lecture du livre réside dans la présentation de tableaux à double entrée (p. 30-31, 193-194, 220-222, 242, 246, 247, 249-250, 251, 254, 351, 374) et de schémas (p. 201, 215) qui n'en disent pas plus que les commentaires qui en sont faits. Quelle valeur accorder à ces tableaux synthétiques de pensée et à l'abstraction conceptuelle qu'ils proposent ? Comment les utiliser ? L'absence de données statistiques est aussi une étrangeté qui empêche l'auteur de se lancer dans une quantification des phénomènes sociaux qu'il entend objectiver. Bref, l'idée d'une « société transitive » aurait pourtant pu être féconde à partir du moment où l'auteur se serait donné la peine de la quantifier et de la personnifier sociologiquement dans des processus et des rapports de force et de sens qui en sont à la fois les produits et les producteurs. Ce n'est pas la « transition récréative » qui fait ici figure d'utopie, mais plutôt l'analyse sociologique qui en est proposée.

NOTES

1. Souligné par nos soins.

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