FROM THE WORLD'S FAIR TO DISNEYLAND: PAVILIONS AS TEMPLES

Jaimee K. Comstock-Skipp

This paper explores the visual culture of recreated temple structures in the entertainment settings of international exhibitions and Disneyland. It examines the material and conceptual construction of temple mythology in world's fairs and amusement parks through the reproduction – or rather, simulation – of Egyptian, Mayan, Aztec, Cambodian and Hindu structures. Disneyland in southern California has been interpreted as the hybrid descendent of the world's fairs and colonial expositions, the result of continuities and ruptures within the exhibitionary and entertainment traditions of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Some of the architecture in the Adventureland section of the park can be likened to the pavilions of the colonies in French and British expositions, especially those from the late nineteenth century through to 1939. The creators of the Temple of the Forbidden Eye in Disneyland's Indiana Jones Adventure ride from 1995 have claimed they were directly inspired by images of temples published in National Geographic magazines of the 1930s. A skim through these attributed sources of information turns up period photographs from world's fair temple-pavilions. The paper posits that the Disney temple accordingly exists as a simulacrum: a copy for which there is no original. The author nonetheless traces its overlooked formal and conceptual precedents in American, French and British reproductions of Aztec and Mayan temples and palaces, ancient Egyptian temples, and the Cambodian Angkor Wat temple compound. In the colonial villages of expositions, the pavilions of Mexico, Egypt and Indochina were rendered as regional temples with archaeological displays inside them. In response, this paper addresses the question: what is a pavilion when it takes the form of a temple?

Keywords: pavilion, Disney, world's fair, temple, amusement park, colonialism, Orientalism.

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Abstract

This paper explores the visual culture of recreated temple structures in the entertainment settings of international exhibitions and Disneyland. It examines the material and conceptual construction of temple mythology in world's fairs and amusement parks through the reproduction – or rather, simulation – of Egyptian, Mayan, Aztec, Cambodian and Hindu structures. Disneyland in southern California has been interpreted as the hybrid descendent of the world's fairs and colonial expositions, the result of continuities and ruptures within the exhibitionary and entertainment traditions of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Some of the architecture in the Adventureland section of the park can be likened to the pavilions of the colonies in French and British expositions, especially those from the late nineteenth century through to 1939. The creators of the Temple of the Forbidden Eye in Disneyland's Indiana Jones Adventure ride from 1995 have claimed they were directly inspired by images of temples published in National Geographic magazines of the 1930s. A skim through these attributed sources of information turns up period photographs from world's fair temple-pavilions. The paper posits that the Disney temple accordingly exists as a simulacrum: a copy for which there is no original. The author nonetheless traces its overlooked formal and conceptual precedents in American, French and British reproductions of Aztec and Mayan temples and palaces, ancient Egyptian temples, and the Cambodian Angkor Wat temple compound. In the colonial villages of expositions, the pavilions of Mexico, Egypt and Indochina were rendered as regional temples with archaeological displays inside them. In response, this paper addresses the question: what is a pavilion when it takes the form of a temple?

Opened in 1955, Disneyland in southern California has been interpreted as the hybrid descendent of world's fairs. It is the result of continuities and ruptures within the exhibitionary and entertainment traditions of colonial expositions and amusement parks in the nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries (Weinstein, 1992; Çelik and Kinney, 1990; Urry, 2002). In the Disneyland setting, Frontierland, Adventureland and Tomorrowland radiate from the Sleeping Beauty Castle nucleus. It is similar to the segmentation of the early colonial expositions, where sections devoted to technology and progress contrasted with the pavilions

of the empire's colonies in the anthropological sections. Some scholars make the connections between specific expositions and the layout of Disney parks explicit. For Elting Morison, writing on the social, political, and intellectual history of the United States, a Disney theme park is an 'arresting mutation in [a] long sequence...thought of by its creators as a continuing or permanent world's fair' (p.73). Scholar of world's fairs Tony Bennett (2004) points out the function of past international exhibitions as places to see and be seen, allowing visitors to internalise the linear trajectory between savagery and civilisation. But Disney takes this line and gives it another dimension in the name of fantasy. Disneyland architecture in Adventureland echoes the pavilion building at expositions but imbues it with a plot. With an emphasis on narration and fantasy, Disneyland invites visitors to step into stories, so that the guests are made to feel as though they are in a cinematic experience, taking part as 'actors in a film that will only be made in their minds' (Thomas, 1995, p.16).

In studies linking world's fairs to Disneyland (Steiner, 1998; Francaviglia, 1999), scholars seldom give an extended analysis of one park's features or specific examples. Taking a different approach, this paper will examine a particular ride at Disneyland, called the *Indiana Jones Adventure: Temple of the Forbidden Eye*, built in 1995 and situated within the Adventureland zone. The ride's site is that of a simulated archaeological dig in the fictional area of Lost Delta, India. The year is 1935, and Indy has arranged for tourists (i.e., visitors to Disneyland) to enter the temple and partake of three gifts offered by the god Mara: a drink from the fountain of youth, glittering gold, or eternal knowledge. However, visitors must not look into the eyes of the 'double-crossing deity lest they take a detour to doom,' as the ride's 1930s-styled news reel cautions along with ride safety information prior to embarkation on Jeep transport vehicles. But of course the visitors do, and an animatronic Indiana Jones must come to their aid to rescue them from fiery pits, snakes, and finally a gigantic rolling boulder.

The queue for the ride is a marvel and entices visitors to inch along patiently as they wait hours just to experience the three minutes and twenty seconds of the ride's duration. The line area includes extraordinary and interactive details of artefact and architecture. But taking one ride in miniature proves to be too big a task to study, particularly one with such strong connections to a movie franchise. Taking this into account, it is hoped the reader will understand the decision here to forgo any mention of the films, and to focus instead on the constructed temple façade that serves as the

ride's entrance and narrative setting (Figure 4.1). This paper will interpret the conspicuously Indic temple (henceforth termed the 'Disney temple') of the *Indiana Jones Adventure* as the inheritance of the vernacular or colonial pavilions – what might be called 'temple-pavilions' – at world's fairs. The pairing of world's fair pavilions and the Disney temple does not suggest an intentionality on the part of the ride's creators. It will uncover the Disney temple's conceptual borrowings from the earlier ephemeral structures of international expositions spanning 1851–1939. The study will move both chronologically and thematically, beginning with an overview of the temple-pavilions according to the nations or regions they are meant to represent, and progressing to a description of the Disney temple and the issues that arise when such structures assume the guise of temples in fairground and entertainment settings. Finally, the question of what a pavilion is when it takes the form of a temple will be addressed. Articulating the commonalities between the Disney temple and the Orientalist pavilion temples of specifically Victorian roots vocalises prevailing British, French, and American stereotypes hovering around the word 'temple.'

From the outset, it must be emphasised that the temples under discussion here are *constructions* in all senses of the word, not functioning centres of spiritual

Figure 4.1: The Disney temple (Temple of the Forbidden Eye). Photograph: Jaimee K. Comstock-Skipp.

devotion. Certainly, they are architectural spaces, but more so they are Orientalist fabrications that are products and producers of mediated information. Explicit here, then, is a critique of the Disney enterprise as extending the carelessness of colonial traditions: neither imperial empire nor Disney corporation heed the politics involved in representing the architecture of different cultures and religions in entertainment settings. With a nod to the pioneering study *Colonising Egypt* (1988), in which Timothy Mitchell examines the way British exhibitions constructed the rift between fantasy and reality, this paper's focus is on the way the Disney temple and the temple-pavilions use interiors and exteriors to play with fact and fiction. Interpreting the Disney temple as a descendent of past fairs' temple-pavilions and exhibitions, in turn modelled on authentic world temples, the separation between original temple and its translation is not easily delineated. But Mitchell declares that it is not useful to distinguish the fake from the real in the context of fairs and exhibitions. Instead, emphasis ought to rest on the *system* itself in which the real and the representational intersect, overlap, and function as constructions.

Temple-pavilions: 1851–1939

Although the temple-pavilion has its provenance in some of the more eclectic structures that appeared in landscaped gardens of the eighteenth century, the kind of structures being discussed here date from the age of universal exhibitions when fairs were conceived as self-confident assertions of colonial expansion and Empire. Selecting 1939 as a cutoff point has been made in deference to the scholar Neil McKenna who notes a change in the fairs of the postwar period (1999). To him, World War Two was the death knell for the early types of exhibitions. No fairs were held as war raged, and those afterward heralded a different era. Thus the temple-pavilions of this study are from an earlier colonial age when the rhetoric of progress and civilisation went largely undisputed and unquestioned.

The Mexican, Egyptian, Indochinese, and Indian temple-pavilions between 1851 and 1939 explored in this study are from the heydays of Empire celebrations, such as the Great Exhibition of 1851 in London; the 1867, 1878, and 1889 Exposition Universelles in Paris; and the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition and 1933 Century of Progress International Exposition in Chicago. The designers of the temple-pavilions were competitive and sought to outdo themselves and others within the same fair and from one fair to the next. More often than not, the temple-pavilions were constructed to speak on behalf of another culture and heightened this culture's exoticism relative to

the location in which the fair was based (typically Paris, London, or Chicago). These temple-pavilions mask the conflicts of national representation beneath their solid --yet ephemeral-- structures. Fair and park architectures possess extraordinary powers of representation when they reference regions and religions. India could be represented as a Hindu temple or a Mughal mosque; Mexico could be rendered as pre-Columbian (Aztec/Maya) or post-Hispanic (Spanish colonial); Egypt could be depicted as ancient and Pharaonic or Islamic. What is common to all is that this diversity gets elided in the selection of one national form to represent, externally in cement and plaster, the entirety of a nation. As Mauricio Tenorio-Trillo points out, 'styles [are] identified as national at certain historical moments' (p.98). But the pavilion-temples in colonial fair settings contain a twofold nationhood: they symbolise not only the wealth of the country of origin but also the might of the particular imperial power laying claim to it. What follows are condensed accounts of the dominant styles of exposition temple-pavilions by geographic location so as to trace a lineage from these to the Disney temple.

Egypt

In the case of Egypt, the decision to frequently use a temple in exhibitionary displays, and not a mosque, is

telling. It illuminates the religious and political concerns debated in the British empire during the nineteenth century. Ultimately, Egypt's importance was deemed to lay in the distant past. Ancient Egyptian temples were thought to be 'dead' architecture in contrast to the Islamic architecture that embodied the living faith of Muslim members of Egyptian society (Çelik, 1992, p.39; Crinson, 1996, p.70). The Egyptian temple-pavilion in the Paris 1867 exposition (Figure 4.2) was designed as 'a living lesson in archaeology' (Tenorio-Trillo, 1996, p.99). The temple was not merely embellishment but reinforced the orientalist notion of Egypt's glory as existing in the past. The French Egyptologist Auguste Mariette created the monument as an idealised synthesis of Egyptian archaeology to combine Philae temple parts and polychrome decorations from the temple exterior of Abydos (Upper Egypt) and within the tombs at Saqqara (Lower Egypt). This Egyptian temple-pavilion caused one fair-goer to report feeling 'surprised and uprooted when I first encountered this temple which seemed to belong to the banks of the Nile' (Çelik, 1992, p.116). In the interior were display cases of artefacts, sculptures, jewels from the latest archaeological expeditions, as well as five-hundred mummy skulls (Aimone and Olmo 1993).

Egyptian temple-pavilions of the early exhibitions appear as pastiches of different elements from all

Figure 4.2: Exterior of the Egyptian pavilion-temple in the Paris 1867 exposition.

over Egypt but later try to heighten authenticity by recreating sections from one temple, as in the 1889 exposition of Paris. This was perhaps due to fair visitors' increasing familiarity with Egypt's real temples in the height of Thomas Cook's 1870s tourism packages. A portion of the Luxor temple complex was reconstructed in Chicago in 1893. The Egypt exhibit for the Paris Exposition of 1900 featured a façade derived from the Temple of Dendur containing reproduced funerary chambers of many different dynasties within. The Egyptian exhibits in the Louisiana Purchase Exposition (1904) were actual objects brought from the Cairo Museum but also included reproductions of artefacts, tableaux, mannequins, and a reconstructed tomb setting to present ancient Egyptian civilisation (Fox and Sneddeker, 1997, p.186). The trend continued in 1933 with Chicago's colourful Egyptian temple-pavilion. At the 1935 Exposition Universelle et Internationale in Brussels, 'traditional' or 'authentic' regionalism in the Egyptian pavilion blended with exoticism, 'turning these pavilions into architectural forms of invented traditions' (Findling and Pelle, 2008, p.278) perhaps due to the influence of art deco. Art deco's reformulation of the architectural motifs derived from these cultures, as opposed to direct replication, reconfigured disparate geographic and temporal traditions of the past to suit the whims of the present. As the appeal of art deco historicism grew, with its particular affinity for Egyptian and ancient Central/South American elements, claims to historical authenticity inversely dwindled. Thus the authenticity and accuracy of temple-pavilion reproductions in fairs after 1939 might have no longer been popular, suggesting that art deco influence was one factor that brought about the temple-pavilions' decline.

Latin America

Even before art deco emerged in the 1920s, the European and American publics in the late-nineteenth century had paired interests in Central and South American and Egyptian history and archaeology. An important distinction separates the Egyptian from the Latin American temple-pavilions. Whereas the Egyptian ones were mainly done by French architectural planners, Mexico was responsible for representing itself to Europeans and Americans hungry for exotic themes, and so Mexican designers seized upon indigenous architectural forms. Tenorio-Trillo confirms that there was 'no way to portray the [Mexican] nation in an Indian-like [indigenous] fashion without causing controversies' (p.99). Catholics for one were against the connections to paganism implied by the erection of pre-Hispanic structures. The 1889

Exposition Universelle's inclusion of an Aztec dwelling alongside a Mexican pavilion in Paris was motivated by the popularity of the Egyptian temple-pavilion of the Exposition Universelle in 1867. The 1889 Aztec architecture was adapted to suit modern architecture, to achieve an 'improved imitation' and 'fruitful appropriation' while still maintaining its accuracy and authenticity to cultural forms (Tenorio-Trillo, 1996, p.103). Visitors did not always approve of the temple-pavilion forms, be they modifications or reproductions, and the 1889 reconstruction of a stone temple that should be back in Mexico left one visitor with a feeling of discontent, dismissing it as false and ugly (Aimone and Olmo, 1993).

At the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago, the Mexican temple-pavilion incorporated replicas of Yucatan ruins out of papier-mâché, with the prerequisite research for their design being done by the archaeologist and Mayan specialist E.H. Thompson. 'Cast into staff in Jackson Park and garnished with tropical plants,' the reproductions of Uxmal offered the people of North America 'their first opportunity to study the artefacts' (The Columbian Exposition, Digital Library database:). Within the structures, pieces of sculpture and Quiragua stone idols from Copán were reproduced. Within the adjacent Peruvian exhibit, there was a miniature Ancón graveyard with mummies and funerary objects as well as 'strange dried human heads prepared by the Jivaros Indians' (Bancroft, 1893, p.550).

At the 1929 Ibero-American Exposition in Seville, the 'Art-Deco-Mayan' Mexican pavilion-temple was hailed as the best example of a national pavilion (Findling and Pelle, 2008, Seville 1929–30 entry). Designed by the Mexican architect Manuel Amabilis, it was a Maya-styled building that could not be claimed to be an accurate copy of an existing ancient source due to its art deco elements. Within, sculptures and copies of Toltec and Maya stelae made no pretense to being originals. There was a 'conscious effort [on the architect's part] to synthesise the pre-Hispanic styles with modern construction techniques and uses of space' (Tenorio-Trillo, 1996, p.199). Pre-Hispanic architecture was adapted to suit modern comfort and construction, culminating in the 1939 San Francisco International Exhibition where fantasy overtook the factual, resulting in a pavilion-temple of Maya-moderne influence. In it, 'twin Mayan-cum-Cambodian Elephant Towers that seemed to derive from both Oriental precedent and early skyscraper zoning studies flanked the entrance' (Rydell, 1984, p.86).

Prior to the 1939 temple-pavilion incorporating art deco elements, Chicago's Maya Temple of 1933 returned to its 1893 predecessor derived from Uxmal.

In *The Official Guide: Book of the Fair*, it lauds the ‘exact reproduction of one section’ from a Mayan Temple in the Yucatan (Century of Progress International Exposition, 1933). This temple-pavilion was a romantic and exotic retreat from the Great Depression (Ganz, 2008). This time the anthropologist Franz Blum of Tulane University led an expedition to Uxmal in Mexico to make casts of a nunnery there to aid the construction and design of the temple-pavilion. Inside, visitors could again view artefacts and shrunken heads as in the Peruvian exhibit of 1893, also continuing the appeal of the macabre initiated by the mummy skulls of the 1867 Egyptian pavilion-temple in Paris. This morbid fascination extended to the Indiana Jones ride’s temple of 1995 wherein skeletons leer at visitors from shadowy corners; however, their placement here in the Disney temple serves no didactic purpose, whereas the shrunken heads and mummy skulls purportedly did.

Temple-pavilions recreated from molds and casts and that are of a single recognizable structure have equally valid claims to authenticity and veracity as the Disney temple, whose form has been said to be derived from period 1930s photographic and journalistic records (more on this later). Both invoke citationary and circuitous traditions: the temple-pavilions’ forms and contents get passed down in a process of replication and duplication. But a paradox arises: as the chain of transfer gets longer, as in the Uxmal Mayan temple model reproduced at the 1893 and 1933 fairs, the temple form could be interpreted as losing and gaining authenticity. It loses it when the temple-pavilion gets too removed from its inspirational source, but gains it when placed in the span of recreated temples such as those of the temple-pavilions. As Edward Said posited, second-order knowledges can become unquestioned facts as they get passed down: ‘truth...becomes a function of learned judgment, not of the material itself’ (Said, 1979, p.67).

The historian of world’s fairs Robert Rydell interprets the 1933 Mexican temple-pavilion in Chicago as the ‘Century of Progress Exposition’s answer to the Angkor Wat reproduction at the Paris colonial fair’ (Rydell, 1984, p.83), reflecting the tendency to amalgamate anything non-European. The Indochinese temple-pavilion becomes interchangeable with the Latin American temple-pavilions. The nations hosting the fairs, as well as those nations participating within them, competed with each other to include and outdo previous temple-pavilions in their layouts, irrespective of their cultural origins. The Mexican temple-pavilion was not only in dialogue with the Egyptian temple-pavilions, but also the Indochinese.

Indochina

France extended its colonial empire in Southeast Asia in the 1860s. The appeal of Angkor Wat, the ancient imperial capital in what is Cambodia today, was described as early as 1858 by the French explorer-adventurer Henri Mouhot. The temple precinct would be emulated in world’s-fair pavilions, and came to symbolise the broader geographic region of French Indochina. The earliest instances of Indochinese temple-pavilions are at Paris’s Exposition Universelle of 1878. Cambodia was present in reproductions of the Phnom Penh temples and models of Khmer sculpture. This 1878 exposition provided a preview of what would turn into the Musée Guimet with objects from India, China, Japan, and Indochina. It was created to ‘protect and highlight an aesthetic patrimony’ (Aimone and Olmo, 1993, p.229). Just as these objects from a vast region were lumped together based on their shared ‘orientalness,’ artistic details in the Indiana Jones ride similarly combine archaeological elements from various regions. Within the Disney temple there are reproductions of Mesopotamian water goddesses from Mari in Syria, copies of Buddhist and Hindu sculptures derived from Indic sources, and a mural of the demonic deity Mara painted in the Calendar Room rotunda inspired by Ajanta cave paintings. But unlike the nascent Musée Guimet that sought visitors’ attention for didactic purposes, the reason for the excessive detail in the interior sections of the Disney temple is to entertain and entice otherwise impatient visitors to walk a quarter mile to the loading dock to start the ride. Thus, ‘because the journey takes place indoors [...] architecture is the attraction [...]’. The building is both the story and the means of telling it’ (Marling, 1997, p.114). So too did Angkor Wat reproductions at world’s fairs have a twofold formal and functional purpose, with the building’s regionalist architecture on the outside serving as a display venue for the objects inside.

Paris’s 1889 exposition included a Phnom Penh pavilion inspired by Khmer art, and included the famous monumental ensemble of Angkor Wat. ‘The Pagoda of Angkor’ was part of the Pavillon de Cambodge in the Invalides section and contained sculptures from casts taken on site (*1889: la Tour Eiffel* 1989). The 1900 Paris exposition was dominated by a towering model of Angkor Wat that would appear again in the 1906 and 1922 Marseilles expositions and in the 1931 International Colonial Exposition in Paris. This 1931 Angkor Wat temple-pavilion (Figure 4.3) spatially dominated the fair, taking up a tenth of the Vincennes site. Lauded for its accuracy and stature, the replica was ‘probably the most impressive colonial pavilion’ (Findling and Pelle, 2008, Paris 1931 entry). For all its

Figure 4.3: Exterior of the Indochinese pavilion-temple at the 1931 exposition. 'The copy of the Temple of Angkor Vat at the International Colonial Exposition in 1931, Paris'.

authenticity, however, the historian of American popular culture, taste, and architecture Pat Morton has studied this structure, and reminds us that 'the very process of translating non-Western cultures into representations that were legible to Western audiences produced hybrid, impure images' regardless of the professed maintenance of accuracy (Morton, 1998, p.84).

Despite differences in source material and geography, the temple-pavilions and the Disney temple combine fact with fiction. Outside of the fantastical realm of the ride's narrative and seemingly grounded in reality, the art director of the Indiana Jones ride Skip Lange has stated that the influence for the Disney temple came from *National Geographic* magazines of the 1930s. In a televised interview from 1995, Lange has said that the designers of the project would 'look at things and see, oh! That's what the temples looked like in India and Cambodia and things like that so that we are really seeing this as accurate[ly] as possible' ('The Making of Disneyland's Indiana Jones Adventure'). Early concept art and drawings for the ride used Cambodian architectural forms, and ostensibly substantiate this claim.

Amusingly, though, a skim through *National Geographic* magazines – the attributed sources of information – turns up period photographs from world's fair temple-pavilions, along with images of real temples amidst jungle encroachment in locations ranging from Chichen Itzá ('Unearthing America's Ancient History,' July 1931), Uxmal ('Yucatán, Home of the Gifted Maya,' November 1936), and Angkor Wat ('Along the Old Mandarin Road of Indo-China,' August 1931). Some Indic temples appear in the pages of the feature article 'Temples of India' from November 1909 (Figure 4.4). A closer examination of the Disney

temple architecture reveals, though, that the Disney temple is most like the Tamil Nadu Hindu temples of Mahabalipuram (the Shore Temple) and Vardaraja at Kanchipuram, neither of which appear in *National Geographic* publications between 1898 and 1948. Given

Figure 4.4: Photograph of 'The Palace of Seven Stories, or Sat-Mahal-Prasada, at Polonnaruwa.'

that National Geographic magazines include reportage on things historical and contemporary, publications contain photographs of both temple-pavilions as well as real temples rooted in their original settings. The Disney temple derives its accuracy from a tautology. It is interpreted as being accurate because its source material defines itself as accurate. But as Marling reminds us, because the Disney temple setting:

‘ doesn’t exist, [it] cannot be faulted for inaccuracy. But it seems real, anyway: an evocative composite of Mayan and Cambodian details, lost in an impenetrable jungle of Disney foliage, swathed in Indy’s jerry-rigged scaffolding, and brought into temporal alignment with the rest of Adventureland (and *The African Queen*) by repeated references to the 1930s and the ragged end of empire. ... It is the most architectural of all the Disney attractions, telling its story and achieving its dramatic impact through a carefully orchestrated sequence of interior and exterior spaces. ’

(Marling, 1997, p.113)

As the conscious or unconscious inheritor of traditions laid down by the pavilion-temples, Marling is correct to mention the ‘Mayan and Cambodian details’ influencing the Disney temple, as were discussed earlier. Outwardly, though, the Disney temple bears the strongest affinity to Hindu temples in Tamil Nadu. As such, the architectural representation of India in colonial displays will now be discussed.

India

Within Indian pavilions, displays of goods were housed in reproductions of Mughal architectural forms rather than pavilion-temples derived from the Hindu, Buddhist, or Jain traditions. Theories of Indian architecture were put forward in the nineteenth century, with classifications aligning architecture to ethnography and religious affiliation (Metcalf, 1989). The categories of ‘Hindu’ and ‘Muslim’ became affixed to structures as well as peoples. The Mughals were thought to have inherited Hindu greatness so that their architecture subsumes the developments of earlier and contemporary Hindu building styles. These studies interpreted India’s Mughal period as the architectural pinnacle of the region, in part because of the British tendency to hold Islam in higher regard than other faiths due to its being closer to Christianity and therefore more comprehensible and acceptable to British architectural scholars (Prakesh, 2007, p.121).

Although there was no Indian temple-pavilion in the London Colonial and Indian Exhibition of 1886, the

photographic representation of India in displays there resonates with the Disney temple. In the photographs, India is represented as timeless, unchanging, dotted with jungles, natives, village bazaars and removed from the hectic life outside (Mathur, 2007, p.11). Two-dimensional image and three-dimensional mock temple are constructed to allow the beholder to adopt the perspective of an early explorer encountering the temple for the first time. The monument arises overgrown with jungle vegetation that conceals and reveals the structure beneath the vines. In 1886 the term ‘pictorial and picturesque India’ was created to meet the demand for scenes of temples, mosques, tombs, and palaces using techniques of the romantic sublime. The picturesque becomes a ‘residual aesthetic’ of imperial visual regimes that gets adopted by the Disney temple (Mathur, 2007, p.13).

Disney and Empire

Through its insertion into the pavilion-temple chronology, the Disney temple appears outdated and not a little politically incorrect with its references to Empire and co-option of colonial ‘residual aesthetics.’ In his treatise ‘The Precession of Simulacra’ (1981), Jean Baudrillard defines a simulacrum as a copy that depicts things that either had no reality to begin with, or that no longer have an original. The Disney temple exists as a simulacrum: a reproduction from which there is no ancient original, but a re-imagined temple-pavilion evoking those of the world’s fairs. It is a copy of a copy, and as Astrid Nordin’s study of the Shanghai Expo (2010) points out, the temple-pavilion within ‘the world/fair works through recycling, revival, and reuse that, as a rem(a)inder, is not new’ (Nordin, 2012, p.116).

The Disney temple’s formal and conceptual precedents are in the colonial reproductions of Aztec and Mayan temples and palaces, ancient Egyptian temples, the Cambodian Angkor Wat temple compound, and photographs of India delineated above. It is not a copy of anything in particular, but evokes elements found within all of the above temple-pavilions. Emphasizing appearances and exteriors, both temple-pavilion and Disney temple secularise the sacred in cross-cultural appropriations of architecture at world’s fairs and in the amusement park. But the Disney temple also stands outside the didactic Enlightenment drive of temple-pavilions from the modern period because it is of the postmodern (here implying the cinematic) period.

Whereas temple-pavilions claimed to be representations, the Disney temple is a simulation. Applying Nordin’s thinking, it ‘is not a question of imitation, duplication, or even parody, but of

substitution. As a consequence, the real will never again have a chance to produce itself, but is replaced by a 'hyperreal' where there is no distinction between the real and the imaginary' (Nordin, 2012, p.108). Disneyland's 'Riders of the Lost Ark' experience this confusion of reality and fantasy when they buckle their seat-belts on a thrill ride 'in which guests ...participate, not watch' (Thomas, 1995, p.15). Within the attraction's story, the constructed façade of the Disney temple serves as the ride's entryway and mood setter; it is quite falsely but entertainingly presented as having been rebuilt by Disney Imagineers, who have brought the temple piece-by-piece from India to Disneyland. In recreating 'the entire temple complex down to its last, deadly detail [...] they have reconstructed it so exactly that they have imported the original curse!' ('The Making of Disneyland's Indiana Jones Adventure' 1995). One begins to detect the layers of purported authenticity that make it difficult to distinguish the concepts of original from copy in the Disney temple. The Indiana Jones ride creates an immersive environment where 'fiction becomes fact,' as stated in the 'Eye on the Globe' flicker within the ride. Its cinematic appeal seeks to 'put *you* in one of [George Lucas's] films [...]. You are not watching a movie being made [...] you are living the movie' ('The Making of Disneyland's Indiana Jones Adventure' 1995).

Roland Barthes's essay 'Myth Today' (1972) helps articulate the temple-pavilions as the formal and conceptual precedents of the Disney temple. It suggests, for example, how temples can function to make myths and fictions while simultaneously operating in discourses of truthfulness and authenticity. An inverse relationship appears: the temple-pavilions are thought to be created with a certain objectivity and scientific accuracy, as opposed to the Disney temple that promotes fantasy and personal experience. In this respect the present may be a privileged moment, permitting comparisons and connections between these two types of temples. Because they share similar form and content, the Disney temple's emphasis on fantasy debunks the legitimacy and accuracy of the temple-pavilions, just as the Disney temple also gains legitimacy and authenticity through its association with the temple-pavilions.

The temple-pavilions and the Disney temple can be analyzed as operating in Barthes's system of myth-making to combine the factual and the fictional. Barthes defines myth as a type of speech that need not be confined to oral presentation (Barthes, 1972, p.109). This ambiguity allows one to articulate the Disney temple and temple-pavilions as signifying myth itself, whether it be through a fantastical plot (as in the

Disney temple) or a nation's reading of world history (a temple-pavilion). The temples are composed of multiple signifiers (forms), but they have a fixed amount of signifieds (concepts) to convey. When Barthes states 'a signified can have several signifiers' (p.120), this can elucidate how concepts linking the temple-pavilions are recycled through multiple exterior forms. This indeed appears to be the case with the Disney temple and the temple-pavilions: although they take various forms, such as the reproduction of Egyptian, Mayan, Aztec, Cambodian, and Hindu structures, the finite concepts evoked by them remain constant. What temple-pavilions and the Disney temple share is a sense of the ancient and the timeless; an age manifest in worn exteriors; interiors housing archaeological displays to emphasise the distance from yet proximity to the past; and the inclusion of macabre features such as mummies and shrunken heads. All recur as details in the construction of such spaces.

The Decline of Temple-Pavilions and the Dawn of the 1995 Disney Temple

Enumerated by Neil McKenna, the ostensible decrease of international exhibitions (and ensuing decline in temple-pavilions) took place for a variety of reasons. The thrill of encountering the Other lost its appeal due to technological innovations in the newsreel, cinema, news media, photography, and wireless services which made the 'thirst for visual knowledge and novelty [quenchable] by means other than a visit to an exhibition' (McKenna, 1999, p.25). As early as 1924, celebrations of empire were beginning to appear forced and artificial given socialist revolutions and rumblings of colonial resentment (McKenna, 1999). Notions of what exactly constituted 'French' or 'British' society, for example, were getting increasingly fragmentary and complex. By the Paris 1937 exhibition, an 'unpleasant feeling of tension, suspicious hostility' permeated the fair and the older exhibitionary messages of 'peace and progress [were] over' (Findling and Pelle, 2008, p.294). It also might be ventured that the art deco adoption and appropriation of temple architecture in quotidian architecture outside the fairgrounds made its inclusion inside redundant, its meanings hollow.

Postwar decolonisation also played a role in the decline of temple-pavilions. India received its independence in 1947, and when other countries followed suit British and French colonial exhibits could not be displayed. In the postwar period the social and military failures of the imperial past were felt; no longer could the grandiloquent claims of progress, the brotherhood of nations, and international cooperation be made. During the Cold War, the largest pavilions

of the Montreal Expo '67 were allotted to the Soviets and the United States; not the colonies (Findling and Pelle, 2008, p.320). Lastly, and of particular interest, with its creation in 1955, 'Disneyland would undermine the appeal of world's fairs in the United States by performing on a permanent basis many of the roles previously played by the international expositions of one or two years' duration. But in 1962 [...] Disneyland was less a threat to world's fairs than a model to be emulated' (Findling and Pelle, 2008, p.327).

By way of conclusion, it might be asked what kind of pavilion has been discussed in this study. Three defining features can be delineated, all of which take into account the material forms and abstract concepts on which the temple-pavilion is predicated. First, in world's fairs ancient temples were interpreted as 'dead' structures of 'lost civilisations' that ignored the contemporary populations of the regions in which they were found. The *Guidebook to the Chicago World's Fair: A Century of Progress*, regarding the Mexican pavilion copying a Mayan temple, stated that 'descendants of the Mayas yet live, in Central America, but the civilisation of their ancestors has vanished' (Century of Progress International Exposition, 1933, p.64). The pavilion architects promoted the ancient over the contemporary in form as in concept, just as Imperialism effectively constructed the colonised culture as decaying and dying in order to cast itself as a salvaging force for that culture's heritage.

Second, the age of the 'real' temples in overseas locations, which had inspired the temple-pavilions, is greater than 600 years. Fair and park architects did not give precise dates. In sum, temple-pavilions and the Disney temple are atemporal. As an example of this, the narrative of the Disney temple shares the phrasing of earlier guidebooks by proclaiming that 'after 2000 years the lost Temple of the Forbidden Eye has been unearthed' ('The Making of Disneyland's Indiana Jones Adventure' 1995), even though its architecture is clearly derived from Chola dynastic forms dating to the eleventh century. Such imprecise chronologies reinforced the temples as timeless and disconnected from the progression of history, objects existing in what Anne McClintock (1995) calls anachronistic space: forward movement is possible in geographical space but it is a backward movement in historical time.

Third, there was an emphasis on romantic discovery by European and American anthropologists and archaeologists. In the same 1933 guidebook to the Chicago fair mentioned above, the Mayan temple has been 'torn from a thousand years' jungle growth [...] it is an exact copy of a building in Yucatan ten centuries old' (*Official Guide: Book of the Fair* 1933). Although

written decades later in 1995, the official Disneyland website picks up on this 1930s style of speech to trigger similar concepts. Visitors to the *Indiana Jones Adventure* are invited to 'journey back to 1935, discover ominous ruins deep in the dense jungles of India's Lost Delta, [...] and uncover evidence that the overgrown temple is not entirely benign' (*Indiana Jones Adventure*, Disneyland website). It continues: Adventureland is a place where:

“ you can experience the thrill of exploring exotic lands, where every step of the journey is a foot further into the unknown. To that end, the outposts are reminiscent of the Victorian expeditions embarked upon by famous travelers such as Sir Richard Francis Burton, David Livingston [sic] and Isabella Bird Bishop ... not to mention everyone's favorite archaeologist [Indiana Jones] ”

(Indiana Jones Adventure, Disneyland website).

Disney's insertion of the fictional hero Indiana Jones into a list of historical explorers is telling. Temple reconstructions in entertainment settings confuse verisimilitude in reality and fantasy. This confusion has prompted some scholars to denigrate the Walt Disney Company's ideological underpinnings, and to identify the seemingly innocent veneer of the Adventureland section that houses the Indiana Jones ride 'as the location of Disney's most surreally colonial attractions [...] [and] colonial fantasy of Disney's making' (Warren, 1999, p.116). Deborah Philips has analyzed it using the terms of literary genres, equating it with travel and exploration narratives. For Philips, 'the pith-helmeted explorer is a colonial figure who constantly reappears in various guises, most familiarly as Indy. The narrative of colonisation of unknown landscapes is perhaps the most recurrent at the theme park' (1999, p.101). Takayuki Tatsumi charges Disneyland with privileging and embracing Adventureland in its centre, therefore also embracing a 'racist discourse of hardcore orientalism' (Tatsumi, 2009, p.317). But there is a symbiosis between culture and ideology. Disney feeds off of popular culture, and so shapes society as much as society assists in shaping it. Similarly, as was stated earlier, the temple-pavilions are products and producers of cultural knowledge, and connected to imperial projects in their representations of cultures and regions. Since the Disney temple seems to thematically pick up where those temple-pavilions praising empire left off in 1939, might Disney be complicit in some degree with colonialism? How might such a colonisation be defined? How is it enforced? These larger issues, alas, are beyond the scope of this

present paper, but it is hoped that a conversation can emerge to address these issues.

Exotic architecture at world's fairs and exhibitions in the late-nineteenth and early- twentieth centuries served to create and maintain an appreciation for a physical empire on foreign shores (Armstrong, 1992–93, p.207). Peripheral colonies directly fuelled the economy of the metropole. Compared to earlier temple-pavilions extolling the economic benefits of the colonies through pavilion displays, the Disney temple's evocation of empire is also connected to the American economy. Quoting a phrase from the scholar of cultural production and consumption Sharon Zukin, Disney architecture in general proves that 'architecture is important, not because it is a symbol of capitalism, but because it is the capital of symbolism' (Zukin, 1991, p.231). Temple-pavilion architecture is abstract at the same time as it is concrete. With regards to the Disney temple, Marling refers to the Indiana Jones ride as a confused inversion of the everyday and the extraordinary: 'in Adventureland in 1997, the urban experience became a metaphor for the jungle. Or vice versa' (Marling, 1997, p.114). At present there is another reciprocal transfer occurring between extant ruins of historical civilisations and Disney's crafted ruins. Archaeological sites have influenced rides in theme parks just as these very sites have become like theme parks, given the draw of tourism to the regions. Despite some fundamental differences in purpose and context, the temple-pavilions and the Disney temple enable visitors to question the zones of fact and fake, to look at the similarities and the differences between the two worlds of fantasy and reality so that they realise how each one is embedded in the other.

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