Tracing the Edge: Portuense Coastal Tourism Planning and Architecture of the 1960s

Set aside from the second world conflict, the fascist-like regime of Oliveira Salazar would know how to survive after the war, as Franquism in Spain, through a strategic policy of isolation that would keep Portugal apart from the political, economical and social changes that shaped the emergence of a new European welfare state. Only in the late 1960s would the Portuguese external relations be restored. The two main factors that contributed to this rapprochement were the increasing rates of emigration and the development of international mass tourism.

Relying on the trilogy sun, sand & sea, Portugal would benefit from the Spanish tourism “boom” of this period, allowing for the same mistakes made in the urbanisation of Spain’s coastal areas, nonetheless most of the Portuguese territory had been planned for since the 1940s. The entire Iberian coastline would be sold out to national and, in particular, international market interests, in what Mario Gaviria would name “neo-colonialism of quality space”, giving place to a new spatial order.

The impact of mass tourism on territorial organisation would have its inevitable effects on architecture and urban planning, providing the chance to experiment on different forms of dwelling, now oriented for a “leisure society”, as coined by Joffre Dumazedier. In Portugal this would be the opportunity for architects to catch up with the international revision debate of the sixties. It would also mean the emergence of new types of working relations, more according with the needs and demands of the capitalist society and mechanisms of production. The front-figure of this “revolution” would be Francisco Conceição Silva, with works like Hotel do Mar (Sesimbra), Hotel da Balaia (Algarve) and the Urbanization of the Tróia peninsula, which testify to the evolution in tourism urban and architectural concepts: from seaside hotel, to resort mega-structure and city of leisure.


Between 1967 and 1972, the Vélodrome du Parc des Princes, a historic stadium and bicycle racing arena near the Porte d’Auteuil on the southwestern fringes of Paris, was completely reconstructed. Architect Roger Taillibert re-cast the old Parc, famed for its pink concrete cycling track, as an aggressively modern space, from the giant pre-stressed concrete voussoirs that supported the grandstands and the roof to the way that the stadium straddled part of the périphérique, the new express motorway ringing the French capital. My paper will analyze the reconstruction of the Parc des Princes as a revelatory moment in the history of leisure and its spaces in postwar France. On one level, the refashioned Parc reflected a new willingness, on the part of Parisian bureaucrats and national politicians, to finance and endorse spaces for spectator sport, which had long been denigrated by many political actors as a “parasitic” and unworthy form of leisure. On another level, the redesigned and ultra-modern Parc was expressly envisioned by Taillibert and his allies at the French soccer federation as a space for creating a more comfortable, “democratic” and familial culture of sporting spectatorship, in an era when French men and women were increasingly deserting the stadium for other leisure pursuits. But while the new Parc reflected these developments, and functioned as a visible manifestation of the culture of technocratic planning pervasive throughout postwar France, I argue that its construction also triggered pointed critiques of those leisure practices and that same technocratic society, whether articulated by sporting journalists who lamented what they saw as the destruction of a particular kind of Parisian identity tied to the old Parc, or by the local residents angered by their lack of involvement in the planning process and apprehensive about the future of their neighborhood.
Structures for Leisure: Arne Jacobsen Work

The first basis of this paper is to introduce the work of the Danish architect Arne Jacobsen within the framework of a new practice that Modern Architecture and upcoming welfare state and democratization of leisure brought to the fore in Nordic countries.

After the Stockholm exhibition in 1930 and the Swedish exhibition *Fritiden*, Modern Leisure, Ystad in 1936; the increasing social importance of leisure in the construction of the Nordic welfare state reflects itself within the architectural competitions and public commissions. During the pre-war period, the proposals introduce the functionalist discourse and the new conception of architecture was translated artistically into democratic leisure programs. As an example, Bellevue area, north of Copenhagen, was one of the paradigmatic recreation centers close to the beach. Arne Jacobsen’s proposal shows his talent for situating elegant buildings in the Danish horizontal landscape. “Bellavista” housing complex, summer theater, bath establishment, kayak club, restaurant, riding school, petrol station and a also an unbuilt proposal for a tower with a revolving restaurant on top; were part of the general suburban scheme along strandvejen road to create and extend open spaces to the outdoor life.

Postwar Modern Architecture was characterized by an effort to combine new technology, aesthetics and creative leisure programs to enhance a qualified culture of leisure. Against prewar vacation resorts, hotels and restaurants located in suburban areas, new inspired leisure activities were allocated in the city or as integrated part of urban centers to introduce different ways to spend spare time, in parallel to the vacation act. Within the work of Arne Jacobsen leisure projects are seen as opportunities for research into the clear accordance between form and structure, geometry and nature to deep on new *structures for leisure* as new practice of civic freedom. Outstanding case-studies are projects as heaters, libraries, hotels, etc. but are especially relevant the Landskrona sports hall, Lyngby swimming pool, Hannover foyer, restaurant and art museum.

This paper puts forward the contribution of the Arne Jacobsen in the development of a Modern Leisure and welfare state to achieve creative and innovative structures for leisure in accordance with truthful architecture and Nordic Landscape.

Tourist Spaces in the Postwar Socialist City: East Berlin’s T.V. Tower and Information Center

In this paper I focus on the 1,198-foot tall T.V. Tower, or Fernsehturm and its Information Center inaugurated by the Communist party leader Walter Ulbricht on October 7, 1969 in the center of the former capital of the German Democratic Republic (GDR), East Berlin. Relying on the records left by GDR authorities, including T.V. Tower and Information Center planners, I argue that in the postwar era a transnational discourse of tourism architecture, interior design, and display technology emerged. Such a discourse was partly a result of the 1958 Brussels World’s Fair and to a lesser extent the 1967 Montreal World’s Fair. GDR tourist authorities, my paper suggests, adopted what they describe as “world standards” in leisure space architecture primarily to appeal to foreign visitors from capitalist countries.

This case study has at least two important implications for the main themes of this conference. First, it challenges the normative view of disintegrating public spaces and individuating leisure practices, as the common experience of postwar cities in Europe. Car ownership and leisure centered in the home, for instance, emerged a full decade and a half later than in capitalist countries, leaving city planners in socialist countries to pursue a different course and to focus on other issues. Second, by turning to tourism, this study also shifts attention away from viewing leisure spaces, East or West, as constructed merely with a fragmenting domestic citizenry in mind. Foreign tourists presented a new type of temporary, albeit roving, collectivity, with attendant challenges and opportunities for civic and business leaders and planners. Looking to attract visitors, on the one hand, and to persuade them of a particular propagandistic message about the tourist destination, on the other, authorities on both sides of the Iron Curtain looked to structures such as towers and well-designed urban spaces and leisure center interiors to address this powerful new actor in the postwar world: the tourist.
Stefan Hebenstreit
Friday, 17 February 2012 / 14.00 - 14.30 — respondent: Cor Wagenaar

State Building Programs
as Instruments for Social and Cultural Development in Rural Areas.
The Establishment of Village Community Halls in Postwar Germany

Nowadays in the rural and suburban area of the German Federal State of Hesse most villages or rural characterized districts of small towns have a so called “Dorfgemeinschaftshaus” (village community hall). These multipurpose halls run by the municipality function as a social and cultural homestead for the local population. The buildings are especially used by cultural associations (music ensembles, choral societies, folklore groups) and sport clubs (gymnastics clubs, ping-pong clubs, school sports) for regular events and festivals but also by resident private persons for family celebrations.

The idea of these facilities traces back previous to the World War II. But first during the post-war period the establishment of the village community halls was encouraged by policymakers – with the objective to counteract the social and cultural antagonism between urban and rural areas. Moreover the buildings should provide progress and modernity for the rural population by equipping sanitation, TV-rooms or shared fridge-freezers. In West German history a paramount example of this policy was the building program in the course of the so called “Hessenplan”, a socio-political reform project of the social democratic Hessian federal state government in the 1950s and 1960s. At that time the press labeled the village community halls as “socio-political showpieces” of the “social democratic model country” Hesse.

My planned presentation deals with the political intentions and achievements of this building program along the historical development of the village community halls. With a view to local examples it describes the specific architectural realization and the social and cultural impacts in the communal context. A view to the present sums up the sustainable impact of the post-war building project for current rural areas.

Michael Klein
Friday, 17 February 2012 / 14.30 - 15.00 — respondent: Cor Wagenaar

Gemeinschaftseinrichtung and Gemeindebau
Employ Communal Spaces to Stem Scarcity

My presentation illustrates the role of communal spaces erected in the course of housing projects in Vienna and its changing relationship to political, economic and social life.

What has gained fame as Red Vienna in an architectural debate, has primarily been elaborated on the provision of social housing. With several transformations, this practice has been continued and to date, Vienna is known for its far-reaching system of social housing. Less thematized have been communal spaces accompanying housing structures in order to implement the welfare programme. Already the decision in 1923 to erect 25,000 flats provides the realization of communal spaces alongside, for leisure, education and health.

At each point in history, these shared, communal spaces followed particular purposes and aimed to compensate and foreclose deficits and scarcities. Thus, their role has undergone major changes: For the time of Red Vienna, worker’s clubs, assembly rooms, as well as libraries and workshops can be assigned to a political agenda, gyms, laundries, and ambulatories to medical-hygienic provision. After WWII, they gave way to Volksheime and cinemas - centres of culture, education and entertainment. Their development is accompanied by proceeding individualization in housing and the progressive relevance of entertainment. Entertainment, in itself, has been gradually commodified and integrated into general economy, as it is characteristic of today’s postfordist society.

Likewise, the development of social democracy and its techniques of governing can be followed: from Labour Movement in the early days to Volksheim (following Sweden’s Folkhemmet) in the 50ies to Third-Way-Politics more recently.

Spatially, these developments of an individualizing, entertaining and commercializing society can only be fully comprehended in the relation between communal space and housing. In several stages, I will retrace these social changes by the development of communal spaces in Red Vienna, focussing the Years of Reconstruction and Urban Extension, up to this date.
Centrum on the Periphery: Sweden’s Welfare State, Public Space and Immigration in the 1970s

This paper approaches questions of citizenship and public space in the urban landscapes of the Swedish Million Program, which created one million dwelling units across the country from 1965 to 1974. Critically, this Social Democratic initiative included common spaces, explicitly intended to engineer ideal citizens for the modern Swedish welfare state. Of particular note was the town center (centrum) with its “service” functions, such as workers’ education centers, shopping, social clubs, and other leisure facilities. Here, I examine these spaces in relation to how Swedish public life was reshaped during the 1970s, when economic crises disrupted the promises of the state and demographic changes broadened notions of citizenship. As politicians and architects increasingly described Million Program areas as failures and ethnic Swedes abandoned them, immigrants arrived and began to renegotiate both their physical and social forms.

In this paper, I focus specifically on the centrum of the Million Program neighborhood of Ronna, located in a distant suburb of Stockholm that has become home to a large Middle Eastern Christian population. Emphasizing the centrum, I focus on how immigrants claimed spaces that were designed for a Sweden assumed to be ethnically monolithic. Initially, this precipitated local level conflicts over the right to public space. I then investigate how the centrum’s modular structure allowed for immigrants to occupy and redefine its spaces, and that these actually conformed to the architectural and political intentions for them. In Ronna Centrum, a Syriac Orthodox church stands on the site of what was once a Swedish church, and hairdressers from Syria use storefronts designated for salons in the original plans. I therefore contend that the centrum actually functions almost exactly as designed, albeit with a different constituency of users, even as it simultaneously offers evidence of expanded definitions of both Swedish citizenship and public space.

Measuring Italian Welfare: The Debate on the Spatial Quantification of Social Services and Amenities in Postwar Italy

Between 1967 and 1968 the Study Centre of the Italian Ministry of Public Works was involved in the elaboration of the decree on “urban standards”, i.e. the minimum provision of social services and urban equipments that planning documents had to ensure. After several drafts – quite dissimilar from one another – the decree was finally issued on April 1968. It set a minimum quantity of services (18 sqm/inhabitant) that had to include car parkings, schools, common facilities (such as health care equipments, religious centers, libraries and cultural centres, and other social services), green open spaces and sport facilities. The decree of 1968 was the conclusion of an intense, decade-long debate that brought about a revision of such concepts as “needs”, “rights” or “citizenships” and was influenced by the new ways of life that emerged strongly during the economic-boom (1958-1963). Together with social housing interventions, this quantification and its effects represent still today the more tangible effect on the city of Italian welfare state policies in post-war years.

The contribution aims to investigate the role played by the discourse on leisure in the debate on the spatial quantification of social services and amenities that took place in Italy between the 1950s and the 1960s. In this debate – it will be argued – issues related to leisure remained mostly implicit and partly hidden behind the prevailing rhetorics of needs and rights. Nevertheless, leisure represented an important aspect of the approach to urban facilities and the focus of many interventions on collective infrastructure. The debate was animated by public officers and ministerial technicians, institutional study centres (especially the ones within the national housing programs), politicians, experts’ organizations, individual architects or sociologists, citizen’s associations (such as gender associations, sport associations, local committees) and various stake-holders. Through an analysis of the different documents they produced during those years, it is possible to follow different ways to shape the question of leisure in an interesting moment of collective construction of new demands of welfare.
Andreas Rumpfhuber
Saturday, 18 February 2012 / 9.00 - 9.30 — respondent: Sven Sterken

Leisure as the Extended Field of Labour
An Incubator for Spare Time & the Invention of Live-long Learning

My presentation focuses on the Fun Palace project. Fun Palace is a piece of cybernetic workers' architecture for a leisure society, designed and conceived by the agit-pop theatre maker Joan Littlewood, the architect Cedric Price, and the cybernetician Gordon Pask between 1962 and 1966, but never got built.

I read the project as a subjectification machine that, according to cybernetic premises, activates the visitors for spare time. In its programmatic conception, it expounds the problem of a new leisure society after the Second World War and the expedient use of the (spare) time that increasingly is won through the “soaring automation of production” (Price, Littlewood). In doing so I will be discussing Fun Palace from an angle of discourse on Immaterial Labour (Lazzarato, Hardt, Bologna).

In my presentation I will be focusing (1) on the re-structuring of work processes along cybernetic lines in post-war Europe and its accompanying utopia of the end of labour. Specifically I will focus on specific English practice of cybernetics that is closely linked to managerial discourses and pedagogy. (2) I will be analysing the architecture and its programmatic bias on life-long learning.

I argue that Fun Palace (as one of many other examples) – linked to a prevailing cybernetic discourse in Post War years – forms a reactive manifestation of an architecture of immaterial labour. It mirrors the mechanisms of a cybernetic hypothesis and produces spaces for work as leisure. Its supporting structure is the cybernetics’ systems boundary. Within its borders, countless machines – based on feedback loops – organize the building. Indeed Fun Palace is a cybernetic machine for leisure time, a revolutionary apparatus that produces spare-time as learning, an architecture that prepares people temporarily for a new life.

Juan Ignacio Prieto López
Saturday, 18 February 2012 / 9.30 - 10.00 — respondent: Sven Sterken

Jacques Polieri: Postwar Theatrical Space

Between the First and Second World War the definition of the new type of theater building was one of the main tasks of the European Avantgarde. In its design and theoretical formulation participated poets, playwrights, theater directors, architects, painters, actors, engineers... from different countries and art movements. Despite the collaboration of the leading members of the Avant-garde like Marinetti, Moholy-Nagy, Kiesler, El Lissitzky, Gropius,... none of these proposals were built because of their radical and utopian characteristics.

It was a young French theater director, Jacques Polieri, who became the main compiler and prompter of those proposals in Post-War Europe in two issues of the French journal Aujourd'hui.

The first of them published in May 1958, under the title “Cinquante ans de recherches dans le spectacle” collected the most important experiences in theory, escenography, technic and theater architecture between World War I and World War II.

In those years Jacques Polieri worked with different architects like Claude Parent, Enzo Venturelli or André Wogenscky, in several projects for theater buildings, whose main feature was the mobility of all their elements and components, trying to get a dynamic experience during the performance. Those proposals were published in the second issue of Architecture d’Aujourd’hui entitled “Scénographie Nouvelle” in October 1963.
Die Schule als offenes Haus.  
School Building and Leisure Time in Switzerland in the 1950s & 1960s

From the post-war period onwards school buildings constituted a great training ground for the formation, practice and comparison of Swiss architecture. Since the end of the Fifties, after the achievement of square classrooms, bilateral lighting and movable furniture, one of the main points of discussion was the integration between school time and leisure time. On March 1960, the Swiss review Das Werk dedicated an entire issue to the topic “School and Leisure Time”, militating in favour of the principle of school as an open house. Architectural form and urban location of the school conceived as a living and active neighbourhood centre should be rethought in new ways. Supplementary recreation facilities had not to encroach on school functions and vice versa.

The use of school premises by the community at large, for sports events, meetings, theatre, hobbies – already frequent in rural localities and in other countries – involved social, economical and pedagogical issues. The reduction of working hours and the consequent extension of free time increased the need of community centres, which were considered one of the best ways to prevent the dual peril of modern urban society: the isolation of individuals or their annihilation in the anonymous mass.

Due to the lack of space in the cities and to the increase of land prices, the creation of leisure facilities for different age ranges was not possible. Starting from these premises the foundation Pro Juventute, together with the municipality of Zurich, created the concept of a “Recreation Centre for People of All Ages”. Beyond some independent Community centre, the idea of recreation facilities integrated in schools began to catch on. The school building, while retaining its proper functions, could offer ample premises for community purposes and could thus become the school not only of the child but of the whole man.

Aim of the present proposal is to explain – through period magazines, newspapers and official documents by the city of Zurich – how the idea of an open school influenced the design of new solutions: Community centre set up in an old school, centre conceived as a complement of an already existing school, or new schools designed with recreational facilities for the entire community.

23 August Stadium in Bucharest (1953 - 1989)

In February 1953, Bucharest was elected to host some major events: the International Youth Congress and the World Festival of Youth and Students. On this special occasion, the communist regime in place decided to build a sports complex of huge dimensions, the first of the kind in Romania - actually a culture and sports park -, its main asset being an impressive stadium of 80 000 places. To the building of the aforementioned structure participated, along with hundreds of qualified workers, a great deal of young volunteers, whose joint efforts made possible the completion of the construction in July 1953.

Our study aims to analyze the building of this stadium in a special political environment, namely the establishment of the communist dictatorship in Romania, and also the highlights of its existence until 1989. We believe that its purpose was not only that of hosting various sport events, but it transgressed the sports world and became a favourite location for fastuous public festivities, meant to illustrate the support the Romanian people gave to the communist regime. This type of communist manifestations, where thousands of young people were forced to participate, were also called patriotic activities and consisted in: hours of stiff parading while holding placards, patriotic songs those in power agreed with, reciting poems that underlined the benefits of the communist regime.

During the communist dictatorship in Romania, sport served propagandistic purposes, while its infrastructure was meant not only for leisure, but also for compulsory civic activities people would have gladly renounced, if given the chance.
Local Inspiration for the Leisure of Travellers: Early Tourism Infrastructure in the Algarve, 1940 - 1965

The consolidation of the welfare state model in central and northern Europe countries had implications in their southern counterparts. It provided markets for the development of tourism infrastructure in peripheral locations virtually unknown, until then, to central Europeans. Peripheral destinations in the Mediterranean basin combined favourable climate and landscape features with socio-economic circumstances that made them, from the 1960s onwards, important magnets for middle-class families in pursue of the sun-and-sea holiday formula. The Algarve, the quasi-Mediterranean province of Portugal, was the first in the country to suffer (and profit from) the impact of such European progress. Geographically and culturally remote, an exotic African outpost in Europe with a mythical Moorish background but none of the Andalusian architectural splendour, the Algarve's built identity was filtered, stylised and processed through a modernist lens in new buildings. Until the 1950s, this construct was a process of negotiation between local tradition and centrally fabricated stereotype aimed at the national and regional audiences; since then, the requirements of a rising European tourism industry took an increasingly important part in such process, with the growing realisation of its international appeal.

In this paper, I intend to explore the implications of the developing European welfare state in the establishment of an infrastructure of leisure in the Algarve, a geographically – but also politically, socially and economically – distant reality. Using a selection of projects – from a 1940s inn, an offshoot of pre-war state hospitality policies that celebrated the virtues of countryside life and the picturesque of inland Algarve traditions, to a 1960s sun-and-sea hotel where traditional features were given a cosmopolitan slant – I wish to discuss the part played by such infrastructure and its elements in the construction of a regional Algarve architectural identity.

At the threshold of mass tourism industrialisation, the first purpose-built facilities for the leisure of travellers in the Algarve were another episode in a longstanding debate between maintaining the region’s original features – derived from its socio-economic backwardness – and exploiting their potential for development. The European welfare state may have been decisive in the success of the latter.

The Project that Went Wrong: The Construction of Inns for Motorized Tourists in Poland in the Decade of Socialist Affluence (1970s)

In January 1978, the Polish Government decided to build 60 inns for motorized tourists along the country’s major roads. This project was to be completed by April 1980 and the first ten facilities were expected to start operating as early as December 1978. Even though only one inn had opened by early 1979, the government - pressured by local officials - decided to expand the program; instead of 60, 139 inns were to be constructed. One year later, the country fell into economic crisis and expenditures on the inns-project were cut. This brought the ‘grand-total’ to 38 by the summer of 1985. The construction of the remaining 101 was frozen and was never resumed.

In my paper, I will use this project as a case-study to demonstrate the measures that were taken by Polish technocratic leaders during the 1970s to modernize the country and thus highlight several important issues. First of all; the inns were to be erected using prefabricated elements, following standard designs. It is thus intriguing to investigate to what extent the authorities of a state-socialist country accepted (and employed) Western, Fordistic methods of servicing tourists and which measures they took to make these methods fit the realities of a socialist economy. This relates to a broader phenomenon, namely: the Americanization of everyday life and the perceptions of Western patterns of modernity behind the Iron Curtain.

Secondly, the inns-project was also designed to make Poland more attractive for foreign tourists. In this respect, I will explore how the interests of foreign and domestic customers were mediated and how the inns were used.

Finally, in the sphere of culture, the story of tourist inns also raises questions concerning the relationship between modernity and tradition. The architecture of the objects constructed under the project was by no means modern. Their names and internal design also evoked connotations with traditional values like hospitality, cordiality and generosity towards guests. All these associations referred back to Polish noble traditions. To respond to the question why the initiators of the project believed that a roadside inn should resemble a noble manor, I will also investigate the ‘sphere’ of official representations of the past prevailing in the 1970s.
Educating Greece in Modernity: Postwar Tourism and Western Politics

Economic progress, kick-started by the Marshall Plan aid and maintained by the rapid growth of tourism, presented a vital pre-condition for the modernisation of post-war and post-civil-war Greece. In 1951, the Government re-launches the Greek National Tourism Organisation (GNTO) to attract foreign currency and invigorate domestic tourism among the rising middle class. GNTO planned and carried out a building program for a network of ‘leisure hotspots’ at archaeological sites, places of natural beauty and along major motor routes. The state-run “Xenia” chain, comprising of hotels, motels, travel stops, pavilions, organised beaches and holiday camps, spearheaded the Government’s policy towards up-to-date leisure infrastructure that sets the standards for private initiative.

This paper underlines the interdependence of western-oriented politics, modernist architecture and a novel lifestyle. In doing so, we follow three intertwined lines of inquiry: 1. Location: varied types of accommodation designed to suit and foreground local particularities create a nation-wide network of destinations for leisure; 2. Society: these destinations are intended for the middle-class visitor, who has eventually secured a steady job and income and free time to enjoy it; 3. Architecture: wide-ranging criteria were introduced to locate potential building sites and secure aesthetic results for the building itself and the public space that it generates.

By 1954, GNTO introduced guided tours to prominent destinations via the new tourist infrastructure, combining leisure with cultural activities. Cold War politics recognise Greece’s prosperity and modernisation as a barrier against Communist expansion. In this respect, GNTO’s activities not only reweave the worn social fabric inherited by WWII and Civil War, but also educate the urban middle-class about modern life, by forging a new national identity based on the construct of continuity with the past and Greece’s firm anchoring to the West, sealed with the 1963 arrival of Conrad Hilton’s hotel chain in Athens.

Alps in Motion

Transformations of a Middle Class Paradise

After World War II the Austrian Alps were transformed into one of the major leisure peripheries of the European middle classes. The mountains became the common playgrounds for both tourists and locals. But in contrast to the centralist French policy that promoted big scale projects, in Austria small middle class entrepreneurs were encouraged and supported by local governments to invest in accommodation capacities, while the infrastructure was built by public institutions (roads, power plants) or by private-public partnerships (cable cars, lifts etc.). The very cheap loans to finance these projects derived from the European Recovery Fond (better known by its popular name “Marshall Plan”). In the specific situation after the end of World War II when Austria was occupied by Russian, British, French, and American troops, the Americans seemingly decided to try to convince the Austrians to join the western political realm, by transferring all this economic support as a gift that – in contrast to Marshall plan loans for other nations – never needed to be paid back to the US!

Due to the federalist policy to support many but small investments and the rather slow production following the demands and tastes of mainly Austrian and German (and later Dutch and Scandinavian) middle class tourists the architecture built in these resorts was rarely modern in style. Nevertheless these sprawling agglomerations of retro style buildings and high tech infrastructures were part of the very same fordist expansion and democratisation of leisure that produced big modern resorts at other destinations. And these agglomerations contributed as well to co-produce post war leisure culture with its specific set of values.

Later when the expanding travel experiences of both Austrian hosts and international guests produced new desires and demands, these buildings and agglomerations had to be adopted to host all the new services and infrastructures needed to survive in competition with other destinations in an increasingly globalized market. But since the economic resources of the middle class entrepreneurs were rather small and time frames for reconstruction extremely short (no building permissions during the season), these alterations were realized only step by step, producing a radical patchwork of volumes, styles and services that remind us much more of Rem Koolhaas’ notion of a junk space rather than on its imagined origins of an “Alpine village”.

SESSION 4: Leisure as Travel [Saturday, 18 February 2012 / 14.00 - 17.30] — Leen Van Molle

Stavros Alifragkis & Emilia Athanassiou
Saturday, 18 February 2012 / 16.00 - 16.30 — respondent: Barbara Penner

Michael Zinganel
Saturday, 18 February 2012 / 16.30 - 17.00 — respondent: Barbara Penner