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War and thanatourism: Waterloo 1815-1914

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Abstract

This paper examines the historical evolution of Waterloo as a tourism mega-attraction. It locates battlefield visits as a form of thanatourism and explores the development of Waterloo through a sight sacralization model. The model proposes that an attractions appeal is achieved through progressive stages of marking which comes to invest it with a quasi-religious mystique, sacralization, as a goal of ritual pilgrimage for tourists. The paper comments on the sequencing of the model in the case of Waterloo and suggests how the social and ideological environments of the potential tourist may affect the potency and stability of the sacralization process over time.

Résumé: Guerre et thanatourisme: Waterloo 1815-1914. Cet article examine l'évolution historique de Waterloo comme méga-attraction touristique. Il identifie les visites au champ de bataille comme forme de thanatourisme et examine le développement de Waterloo selon un modèle de sacralisation de lieu. Le modèle présente l'idée que l'attrait d'un lieu touristique est réalisé par l'intermédiaire des étapes progressives de marquage, qui investissent d'une mystique quasi religieuse, une sacralisation, comme objectif de pèlerinage rituel pour les touristes. L'article commente l'enchaînement du

modèle pour le cas de Waterloo et suggère comment les environnements social et idéologique du touriste éventuel peuvent, avec le temps, avoir un effet sur la puissance et la stabilité du processus de sacralisation.



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Keywords

battlefield tourism; dark tourism; ideology; sight sacralization; thanatourism; history; Waterloo

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