

International and Interdisciplinary Scientific Symposium: Call for papers

*“Between Territories, Lands and Heritage...
From the Discourse of Experience to the Discourse of Existence: Company
Objects, Collectibles, and Cult objects”.*

July 16 and 17, 2020 - Clermont-Ferrand

Proposals expected by 15 February 2020

As part of the international event "International Convention of Michelin Object Collectors" which takes place every year and whose 20th anniversary will be celebrated from 16 to 19 July, 2020, the international symposium *"Between Territories, Lands and Heritage... From the Discourse of Experience to the Discourse of Existence: Business Objects, Collectibles, Cult Objects"* will be held in Clermont-Ferrand.

On the 16th and 17th of July 2020, this symposium will host researchers from multiple disciplines who will examine interactions between organizational practices (entrepreneurial, institutional, associative, federative, etc.) and traces left by objects that participate in the construction of industrial, cultural and historical heritage, and lead to the creation of imaginary worlds of symbols and identities...

Organized by the CIMEOS laboratory (EA 4177, UB) in partnership with the TIL laboratories (UB), the Centre Georges Chevrier (UB), the Communication and Society Research Lab of the University of Clermont Auvergne and the International Convention of Michelin Object Collectors, this symposium aims to analyze all forms of speech and representations triggered, constructed and highlighted by these objects.

The general thematic framework of the symposium is widely open to a range of interdisciplinary approaches and aims at expanding theoretical discussion on the concepts of heritage and territories and their multiple facets. Concepts of terroirs, territories and heritages emerge as beacons of identity, oscillating between individuality and collectivity. Intangible as they are, they become part of specific spaces or forms. They come to life in speeches, in imaginations and in objects (Paveau, 2012). Thus a given terroir tends to be asserted within the framework of a claimed authenticity, while a travel or restaurant guide is capable of defining a cultural and/or gastronomic heritage or marking the history of a city or a country. As we live in a society of dislocated time and space, fragmented communication imaginary representations seek to recreate a universal bond, reproduce a crave for living together. Search for meaning is therefore definitely present in various fields and gives rise to questions such as "the need for connection" (Bolle De Bal, 1996).

The organizers of the symposium therefore invite researchers to reflect on the impacts revealed by these creations in terms of communication strategies, on the discourses and stagings that surround them as well as on their impacts (sociological, economic, etc.) in and on society, be it tourism, specific events or associative creations (collectors)...

But what do such objet creations generated by organizations reveal? Do we have to deal with communication objects par excellence, in Mauss' sense, which considers communication objects as objects with "a strength" that can promote practices of exchange, interaction and cooperation? Being integrated into communication strategies, how do these objets then move from a status of a communication or production objects to that of collector's items or even cult objects? Some of them reveal the brand identity, but also leave their mark on society. Others reflect the history of the organization but also their country of origin. Examples include the Michelin Man, the Michelin Guide, (the Haribo teddy bear or the Alsthom TGV on the motorway in Belfort, are also significant achievements of the same phenomenon). The same is true of global brands that have developed objects and merchandising practices, such as Guinness, Carlsberg, Coca-Cola, just to name a few.

Objects of all size and type surround us, helpful or not, "utile or futile". They are all part of our life and follow us closely in our personal stories through the organizations that has produced them. What is then our relationship with them? While the world is tending towards the dematerialization of objects, how do some objects manage to become cult objects and reach pretty sums and still mostly remaining objects of collection? Thus the value of these objects goes far beyond their usefulness or functionality, as they become "vector(s) of communication, in the socio-cultural sense of the term." (Moles, 1969).

The notion or idea of cult in its etymological sense refers to the Latin *cultus*, (derived from the verb *colere*, "to cultivate" and by extension "to render a cult"). It is a "religious tribute paid to God, to some divinity, to a saint and by extension veneration of a religious character to a being, a privileged object" CNRTL.fr.

"Advertising" objects allow us to question the process of heritage construction and their link with the territory. Between technical, utility objects or art objects, on what scale should these genuine objects be classified or measured? How do they evolve? What intrinsic or extrinsic meaning should be assigned to them? Simultaneously expressing a widely claimed aesthetic dimension as well as a profound attachment to a brand, what kind of a relationship do they create with their owners? What signs do they transmit? To whom or for whom? What kind of value is chosen to be assigned to them and why?

These objects can also express the extension of social bonds, thus allowing a global reflection on visions of the world and on relationships between humans through all the common passions that animate them during particular events or on social networks. These objects are revealing of a society and its evolution, and somehow represent our world. They also federate communities and are the testimony of a "shared economy" (meaning by that economic relations motivated by transmission), which is expressed on collaborative platforms or during specific gatherings.

Their possession also refers to the existence of possessor identities. Can they be given some kind of hierophanic value or dimension, i.e. one that gives rise to a sacred experience, and if so, why and how? Collectors who turn their collections into cult objects gather around publicized events through media that can be experienced as real stagings that ultimately lead to the mythologization of objects (G. Lewi, J. Lacoeyllhe, 2012). Therefore, we will be simultaneously looking at cult objects as well as the cult of objects likewise. But objects are also narrated in privileged settings such as museums. What impact may these sites have on the transformation of objects into heritage (re)presentations?

Proposals will be structured around 4 multidisciplinary paths that logically interpenetrate each other and have no other boundaries than the wording of the outlines given below:

Axis 1 Socio-historical, cultural and economic dimension and promotion

This path will give priority to the idea of cultural and tourist heritage creation in relation to the economic development of a specific territory, region or city. It will focus on the multiple strategies of territory branding used to promote an organization, an ideology or actors that are involved in it. It will also address organizational actors (institutions) of the territory and their role and position in this form of heritage creation which, they, basically, cannot control.

Axis 2 Linguistic dimension

The linguistic approach will question various aspects on the mechanisms of discourse constructions: what should be the conceptual space left to initial technical terminology? How are evaluative, hedonic and emotional dimensions of objects put into words? Do they give rise, among collectors, to some shared idiosyncratic speak or jargon? Have they become part of the lexicographised heritage of language? How can they be analysed in terms of onomastics, i.e. in terms of the scientific study of proper names?

Axis 3 Communication, media coverage and publicization

This path will address information and communication issues related to investigations of terroir, territories and heritage. The path will also question the idea of publics and fans: brand fans, fans of heritage and corporate culture...

It will also explore Brand Collections and brands seen as mirrors of personality and territorial relays.

Work done in this field will address the ideas of information circulation and dissemination, experience and experiential immersion...

The dimension of sharing (between fans or communities) and transmission will also be considered. Various aspects of stagings involved are also based on salient media and mediation dimensions. Objects are also staged by the use of new digital information and communication technologies, of collaborative platforms and communities of collectors are created and communicate on social networks bringing their passions to life.

How are social media used (Facebook, Twitter, Youtube, Instagram, etc)? What are the meanings of the events (auctions, exhibitions, etc.) that put these objects in public place and honour them?

Do these objects also contain or convey some particular memory value?

Axis 4 Marketing and sales dimension

In line with the above mentioned paths, marketing and sales approaches will provide additional insights into communication and cultural paths.

How do organizations implement strategies that lead to the construction or production of objects that reflect them or are intended to represent them?

What possible worlds are invited and what positions are objects representing? Can objects be used as levers of economic and tourist attractiveness?

How do companies manage and instrumentalize heritage constructions of objects of cultural communication that concern them?

Do objects from a company, a collection or a cult possess some kind of embodied identity power? Are they to be seen as identity markers of a territory, or a city..? We welcome here of contributions in the field of territorial marketing

Papers parallel to these paths will also be accepted provided they fall in line with the general themes of the symposium.

This call is addressed to researchers from all disciplines. Work by researchers in the fields of Information and Communication Sciences and Language Sciences is obviously concerned. But work in the fields of Marketing, Sociology, Psychology, Anthropology, Ethnology, Geography, History, Psychology as well as analyses in Art history are also highly relevant and warmly welcome.

The call also invites professionals who wish to share their experience, testimonies and projects related to brand collections and corporate objects, territories and heritage.

Submission procedures :

We kindly invite you to submit a summary of your paper proposal (between 500 and 800 words) in Word format, no later than **February 15, 2020**.

After selection by the scientific committee of the symposium, papers may be proposed for publication in a collective book or an online publication.

Provisional calendar

- Submissions will be adjudicated by a scientific committee
- Authors will be informed of the decisions of the Scientific Council
- Authors whose submissions have been selected by the Scientific Committee will be invited to submit a full paper of 30 000 to 40 000 characters for publication.

Proposals for communication in french or in english should be sent jointly to:

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Important dates to remember

15 February 2020 : deadline for submission of proposals. Length of proposals should not exceed 10.000 characters (presentation of topic, problem, hypotheses, methodologies, theoretical framework and bibliography). Author(s) should also include a separate document stating their names, affiliation, research unit and contact information (email, mailing adress and phone number).

30 March 2020 : notifications of acceptances

30 May 2020 : Deadline for sending in the full version of accepted papers:

Length: 30.000 – 45.000 characters

Papers will also include an abstract of 10.000 characters.

The bibliography is not included in the count of characters.

July 16 and 17, 2020: symposium in Clermont-Ferrand, venue: L'Aventure Michelin

IMPORTANT

To allow the article to be appraised, the text of the proposal must be anonymous, and all references allowing the author to be identified should be deleted. The full contact details of the author(s) will appear in the body of the email, as well as the path chosen (please mention the path in the header of your submission proposal).

In the event of acceptance, authors will be asked to subsequently update their paper with their full names, first names, affiliations, to reinsert removed bibliographic references, and to comply with the style sheet provided to them.

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Indicative bibliography

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