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The Spanish Latin lover: a strictly domestic myth?

A visual inquiry about the role of eroticism in Spanish tourism imaginaries (1950-70)

Alicia Fuentes Vega

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Traduction(s) :

El *latin lover* español: ¿un mito ibérico? [es]

El *Latin lover* espanyol: un mite estrictament domèstic? [ca]

Résumé

The character of the Mediterranean Latin lover became increasingly popular in late-Francoism Spain owing to a subgenre of films that exploited masculine phantasies of sexual encounters with foreign tourists. Building on a visual analysis of several media (brochures and magazines, Government propaganda, guidebooks and travel books, postcards), this paper examines the actual presence of the Latin lover in Spanish tourism imaginaries during the Franco dictatorship. Despite its important role in the hegemonic narrative of Spain's tourism boom as a liberalizing factor that clashed against the regime, the myth of the Spanish Don Juan remains absent from the destination image intended for foreign audiences. This suggests that its circulation was strictly domestic, and reinforces its interpretation as a governmentality device.

Entrées d'index

Keywords : tourism imaginaries, visual culture, Latin lover, Don Juan, Franco dictatorship

Texte intégral

Introduction

1 Images have long been a focal point of tourism studies discussions. If early understandings of tourism as a collection of signs and symbolic representations revealed the importance of the visual in the tourist dynamics (MacCannell 1976, Urry 1990), images are currently regarded as one of the forms through which intangible imaginaries of places or people circulate and become visible (Salazar and Graburn 2014). Images participate both in the formation and transmission of place-myths (Lübbren and Crouch 2003), and in the personal imagining of the tourist, who compares and negotiates his/her individual experience of a destination with the preconceived images of it (Crouch, Jackson and Thompson 2005). The visual is important for the hosting community as well, which usually adjusts its behavior to its tourist identity (de Diego 2014). Even as the traditional "ocularcentric bias" of tourism studies (Spode 2015) is beginning to be overcome, with approaches that read tourism as a sensuous and expressive practice rather than a highly mediatedone (Crouch 2005), images are still awarded an important role in the tourist experience, if only as references for the verbalization of emotions (Picard 2011).

2 From the point of view of academic knowledge production, images allow us to investigate about aspects which may not present themselves with so much clarity through traditional, non-visual methods (Rakić and Chambers 2012). This is especially true in a case like that of tourism studies in Spain, where the pivotal role played by the tourist industry in the late-Franco regime has monopolized the historical discourse. This has generateda rigid, hegemonic narrative that is difficult to permeate, which focuses on the presence of foreign tourists in the country as a liberalizing factor and links tourism to a certain push towards democracy.

3 A critical analysis of the images produced by the tourist boom in Spain mays hedlight on other cultural, ideological and sociological aspects of the phenomenon, contributing to a much needed revision of the tourist discourse in Spain (Afinoguénova 2007). In this paper I will try to demonstrate how images can help us challenge certain preconceptions by analyzing the representations associated to one of the most popular figures in the historical narrative of Spain's tourism boom: the Latin lover. I will examine tourist publications appeared between 1950 and 1970 – from promotional brochures to guidebooks and travel books, as well as tourist magazines and postcards – in search of visual representations of this figure. Was the Latin lover as present in tourist representations intended for foreign audiences as it was in national discourses?

4 The myth of the erotic encounter with the tourist female (the *sueca*) enjoyed wide popularity for instance amongst male workers of the tourist branch. Was the figure of the Latin lover really a product of a cultural liberalization induced by international tourism, or rather a defensive myth created by domestic imaginaries to build a coherent image of masculinity as compensation for a certain subaltern position? In this case, how did it affect national attitudes and mindsets towards the tourist industry and – more importantly – towards the Spanish government and its tourism policies?

Ladies and Gentlemen, the *Macho Ibérico*

5 While the exotic phantasies about the Spanish woman date back to the Romantic travelers, the origin of the masculine version of the myth has been placed around the 1920s, one of its first milestones being the Italian-American actor Rudolph Valentino. The myth of the Latin lover reappeared according to hispanist Justin Crumbaugh in

the 1960s, when there took place "a countertrend in Hollywood depictions … of Mediterranean culture in which it is the native male who is eroticized" (2009: 100).

6 During the late Franco regime in Spain, the character of the Mediterranean Latin lover became increasingly popular owing to a subgenre of films known as *comedia sexy celtibérica* (Vanaclocha 1974) that exploited masculine phantasies of sexual encounter with foreign tourists. These films coined the phrase *macho ibérico*, which is still used to mock the Iberian traditional concept of masculinity. Compared to the sophisticated and attractive Latin lover of the 1920s, the *macho ibérico* is shockingly plain and primitive, but according to the legend this did not prevent him from arousing female desire. The *macho ibérico* par excellence was Alfredo Landa, the actor that most commonly starred in those movies. This short, dark-haired and uneducated Don Juan was presented as irresistible for all kinds of women, especially the attractive, young and blond. The latter were typically identified as foreign – and, more specifically, Swedish– tourists, who were supposed to be sexually more open than their Spanish counterparts. Fictionalized over and over again, the myth of the Latin lover and the foreign tourist became commonplace, and from cinematic fiction it turned into uncontested reality – a status it nowadays still has. Not only in the popular imaginary but also in academic literature, whenever the boom of Spanish tourism is mentioned, it inexorably centers the discourse.

7 The *macho ibérico* constitutes one of the symbolic images – together with the Swedish blonde and the bikini – on which the discourse of tourism as a liberating force relies. Such images evidence in a most powerful way the disruption tourism brought upon the atmosphere of moral repression that prevailed in Franco's Spain. Great attention revolves for instance around the issue of the bikini, in so far as it objectified all the moral and religious unrest. Authors often highlight that, no matter how hard the authorities and the Catholic Church tried to prevent the propagation of the polemical garment with bathing protocol regulations, it was increasingly adopted by Spanish women (Cardona and Losada 2009, Carol and Playà 2008). This demonstrates – so the reasoning follows – that the contact to foreign tourists had the side effect of modifying Spaniards' attitudes and codes of behavior.

8 Indeed, it has been shown that the popular myth of the Swedish girl (*la sueca*) contested Francoist traditional models of femininity, since it encouraged both a relaxation of repressed male sexuality and increased gender awareness among women (Nash 2015). But the hegemonic discourse then jumps from the disruptive effects beach tourism had on the traditional, catholic values of the Spanish society onto the interpretation of tourism as a destabilizing element for the dictatorship, somehow equating a relaxation in the norms of sexual behavior to a form of political opposition. An eyewitness of the arrival of tourism at the Costa Brava like Rosa Regàs links the fact that Spaniards were adopting modern habits of summer experience to a certain democratization ("It was not the limpid sky of Democracy yet, but some breaks in the clouds were letting us see the end of the shameful dictatorship" ; 2005: 200-204[1]) ; and authors like Cardona and Losada quite plainly suggest that "unintentionally, foreign girls [were] winning more battles against Franco than the International Brigades" (2009: 64).

9 These assumptions seem problematic from several points of view: first of all, they fail to acknowledge the actual involvement of the dictatorship in the tourist industry. The conceptualization of tourism as a destabilizing force of antagonistic nature does not agree with the reality of a regime which, despite internal differences between the conservative and the more liberal ministers, had by the mid-1960s widely embraced the ideology of tourist development (Afinoguénova 2011). Second, insofar as it is taken for granted that new moral codes and freer behaviors were a collateral damage largely unpredicted and unwished by the regime, we are overlooking the fact that Franco's international consideration benefitted from tolerating such liberalization (Valero 2004). Finally, as Justin Crumbaugh has noted, there is a confusion of terms, since "to conceive of tourism development as a path to democratic emancipation

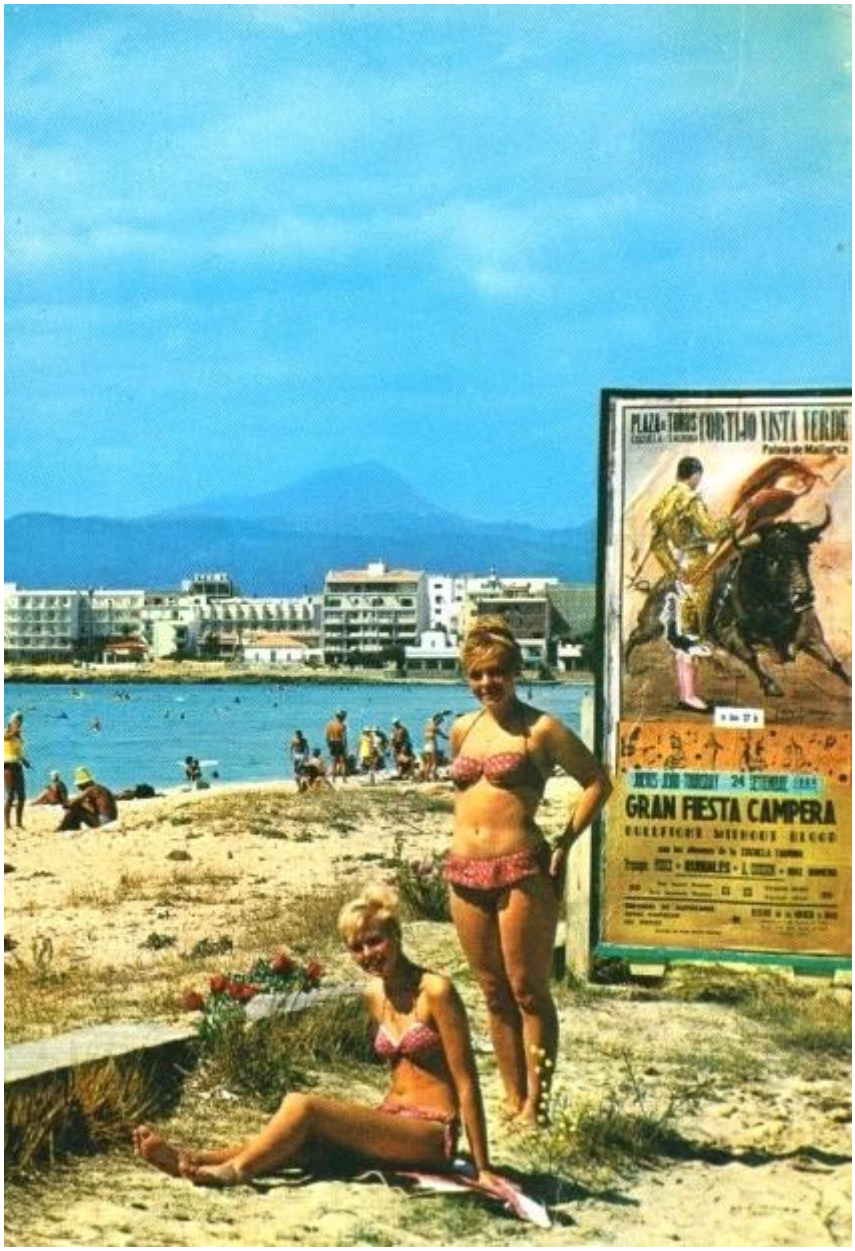
means tacitly accepting the dubious assumption that freer markets make for freer people" (2009: 34).

10 Given that the myths of the Swedish girl and the *macho ibérico* are the main cornerstones of this discourse, a closer examination of their visual representations may help us rethink such narrative. Considering their powerful, symbolic aura within the Spanish collective mind, it is shocking to discover that a different panorama emerges when we track their impact in tourist visual culture of the time.

Eroticism in Spain's Destination Image: Hosts and… Lovers?

11 Eroticism played, just as in other beach destinations of the time, an essential role in tourist imaginaries of Spain. Promotional brochures and postcards of the period 1950-1970, when there took place the definitive identification of the Spanish tourist product with the model of sun and beach holidays (Moreno Garrido 2007), show a tendency towards an increasingly sensuous and dynamic representation of the tourist's body. This process, which has been described as a shift from the *romantic* to the *collective* gaze (Pagenstecher 2003, drawing on John Urry's terms), replaced contemplative iconographies – like that of the coastal panorama – with others that focused on tourists' behaviors – e.g. the tourist lying on the sand. Following the common identification of women as the objects of sight seeing in tourist advertising (Lippard 1999: 51), the semi-naked body of the female tourist centered some of the most frequent iconographies, such as that of the beach, the hotel or the swimming-pool (figure 1). As Carmelo Vega has explained, these images present the woman "as an anonymous presence of sexual nature that contributes to embellish the travelled landscape and to complete specific parameters of identification, associating her body to certain representations of tourist pleasure" (2011: 218).

Figure 1: *Mallorca (Baleares) España*. Foto cine Casa Planas, Mallorca, 1966.



Postcard - Museo del Traje

12 But – what about women's holiday expectations? Was there any space for their sensuous imaginaries? Although one has to look harder to find it, there is also proof of female eroticism in tourist visual culture of the time. One of the graphic series where this is most evident is the one formed by the front covers of *Holidaymaking*, a magazine issued by Thomas Cook since the 1950s as a supplement to their sales brochures. The protagonist role the woman takes in these covers is remarkable, but even more noteworthy is the fact that a significant number of them overtly suggest the idea of a *mènage-a-trois* (figures 2-4). This introduces a deviation from the representational codes identified by historian Cord Pagenstecher (2014) in the brochures of German tour operator Scharnow. Although he also recognized a remarkable high number of trios in Scharnow's increasingly sexualized front covers of the 1960s, in this case the group was always composed of one man and two women –never the other way round, like in Thomas Cook's covers. This leaves little doubt that it was the feminine pleasure *Holidaymaking* magazine was appealing to, and advises its consideration as a female oriented publication.

Figures 2, 3, 4: *Holidaymaking*, 1953, 1956, 1957

Thomas Cook Archive

13 A personal testimony that attests to female desire in the tourist imaginary of Spain is provided by author Juan Bonilla (2007), whose curiosity was triggered by the discovery of a collection of photographs of naked Nordic women taken on the sands of the Costa del Sol in 1962. Bonilla was able to locate both the amateur photographer who took them and one of the sitters, a Danish woman who was still living in Torremolinos. The interview he made her is a fantastic source of information about the erotic aura that surrounded destinations like Torremolinos and Marbella during that time. The Danish Irene makes it clear that a Spanish vacation was synonymous of liberation for the female northern European tourist:

> When I ask her if she's aware of what the landing of so many patrols of foreign tourists meant, when we stumble into the unavoidable term of "liberation", Irene stares puzzled at me: she has no doubt, they didn't bring anything, it was a collision, they weren't so liberated where they came from, they waited to get here in order to liberate themselves. (Bonilla 2007: 104-106)

14 Quite an irony, Bonilla remarks, if we think that from the Spanish point of view it was them who were bringing moral freedom to a dictatorial country. In any case, this all proves that eroticism played a major role in female tourist imaginaries of mid twentieth century Spain, but it does not necessarily follow that this liberation was imagined as a sexual encounter between *hosts* and *guests*. In fact, in a closer examination it becomes manifest that compositions such as the ones of the *Holidaymaking* series were not trying to depict the Latin lover myth. The men's fair hair on the one hand, and the fact that they are wearing bathing suits and performing tourist activities such as sunbathing, on the other, argue for their consideration as tourists rather than local men.

15 The same happens with Thomas Cooks' brochures that carried specific information about Spain and Portugal. Although here the native was sometimes seen in the front cover (figure 5), his world was always represented as completely isolated from that of the tourist. The only case where there seems to take place a faint blend of both realities is that of the 1952 brochure, where a couple of fair-haired tourists are seen strolling amidst the local population in a Mediterranean-looking village (figure 6). Apart from that, the only native that clearly trespasses the frontier and actively participates in the world of the tourist is the waiter (figure 7).

Figures 5, 6, 7: *Summer Holidays in Spain and Portugal*, 1952, 1961 and 1965

Thomas Cook Archive

16 In his well-known study about "The People on Tourist Brochures", sociologist Graham Dann (1996) observed that hosts and guests were hardly ever depicted sharing a common space. According to his analysis, natives and tourists displayed physical proximity only in those places where tourist consumption took place, such as the restaurant, the hotel or the night club. This implied that, whenever tourists and natives shared visual space, the tourist was always depicted as the consumer, while the native adopted two possible roles, both implying a subaltern position: either that of the servant, or that of folkloric object of observation. Cord Pagenstecher (2014) arrived to a similar conclusion in the case of Scharnow brochures. While the front covers opted for images of young vacationers and hardly ever depicted the local subject, this did appear in the inner pages, usually in the form of a waiter.

17 Seen in this new light, the narrative of the Spanish Latin lover begins to look less solid. Beach images often depicted the female tourist while enjoying male courtesy, but this was always provided by a travel companion, whereas the closest the local man got to her was either as waiter or vendor (figure 8). An iconography like that of the tourist couple enjoying a flamenco show at a nightclub appealed to the allure of luxury and eroticism, but again, the Spanish man was left out of the equation (figure 9). In these representations it is the male tourist who performs the lover's role, while the native plays the host. His mission is that of creating the proper framework for an exotic, romantic night –in other words, he caters for refreshments and local color. If, as Juan Bonilla concludes, in that time "the Costa del Sol was a party", tourist representations would seem to suggest that Spaniards were not invited to it.

Figure 8: *Spanistyp*. Creación Avil, Barcelona, 1966

Postcard - Utopía collection

Figure 9: "Golden Days in Sunny Spain", *Holidaymaking*, 1963

Thomas Cook Archive

18 It should be noted that I am not formulating any conclusions about the actual behavior of female tourists in Franco's Spain. It is not my intention to look into the existence of sexual encounters *per se* but rather into the way they were visually enacted (or concealed), in order to reflect on the implications this has for the mythical narrative of the *macho ibérico*. The fact that the character of the Latin lover, so pervasive in the Spanish national subconscious, was absent from the country's tourist destination image, poses some questions. Just as the figure of the Swedish female tourist has been described as a Spanish construction created by a male gaze that exoticized the northern blonde (Nash 2015), we should also rethink that of the Latin lover as a myth of primarily domestic circulation. The question that arises is two fold: first, why was the idea of sexual encounter with the native excluded from the canonical representations? And second, how can we explain the persistence of the myth within the Spanish national imaginary of the tourist boom?

Contested Don Juans

19 To answer the first question we must take into account how tourist literature of the time dealt with the subject of sexual contact between the female tourist and the local male. First of all, it can be stated that guidebooks and travel books intended for European and American audiences between 1950 and 1970 hardly ever mentioned this subject at all. Secondly, the few guidebooks that did acknowledge the existence of a certain sexual tension usually presented it in the form of an undesired attention from the Spanish man towards the female tourist.

20 One of the possible topics along these lines was that of the harassment women travelling alone would suffer in Spain. Australian guidebook writer Colin Simpson, for instance, tells an unsettling story about a worldly lady who, having journeyed all over the world, confessed that Spain was the only country where she had really feared she could be raped (1963: 105). A similar story told Richard Wright in his travel book *Pagan Spain* (1960: 80). Strolling along the Ramblas in Barcelona he came across an American lady acquaintance of his who asked him for help because the owner of her pension had been verbally abusing her since he had found out she was travelling alone. Apparently, he had assumed she was a prostitute. It goes without saying that such narratives are diametrically opposed to the cheerful, lighthearted connotations of the Latin lover.

21 Other authors avoided such negative images and gave a more harmless view of the Latin Lover, but in doing so they also casted doubts on his effectiveness. Guidebook author Ramiro Belso, for instance, ridiculed the Spanish Don Juan as completely inoffensive if not helplessly unskilled:

> From the earliest infancy Spaniards have heard it repeated that they are temperamental, impulsive, violent –none of which is certain– and they exert themselves to honour this tradition. One of their habitual stratagems consists in accompanying the tourist from tavern to tavern, trying to make her tipsy. This gambit is rarely successful ... Although Don Juan was born in Spain, it cannot be said that Spaniards are great Don Juans. They lack style, cosmopolitanism, audacity, a sense of humour, and "*savoir faire*". They are, on the other hand, good husbands and excellent fathers. (Belso 1968: 148-151)

22 Another of the core narratives that revolve around the issue of the Latin lover focuses on the particular type of woman that could be prone to wish the company of the local male. In his well-known *Babel in Spain* (1958) John Haycraft, founder of the International House Organization, talked about a Canadian girl he and his wife Brita met in Cordoba, whom he describes as "plump", "vast and cheerful". According to Haycraft, this woman declared herself delighted with the frenzy her liberal looks caused among the local masculine population:

> It's amazing here. You know I haven't been noticed much before –I mean, I don't consider myself attractive. But here – why, it's wonderful ! (Haycraft 1958: 174)

23 It is not unintentionally that Haycraft remarks the robust figure of this woman. In fact, whenever a lady tourist was suggested to feel attracted to the Spanish male, sarcastic remarks were made about her. Another example would be the guidebook *Time off in Southern Spain* (1964: 71), where the author made fun of those "Middle-aged Swedish women" who "come to whistle in the streets after arrogant young local Spaniards".

24 So, not only was the possibility of sexual encounters with the Spanish male largely ignored, but on top of that the woman who harbored such expectations was clearly looked down on. By deliberately highlighting her unattractiveness, the authors depicted her as a ludicrous human being and judged her motivations, implying that if a woman actively sought an affair with a local man there must be something wrong

with her: either she was overweight, overaged or of doubtful morality. The subliminal message was obviously to call the respectability of such woman into question, which proves that, as the Danish Irene pointed to Juan Bonilla, the tourists' societies of origin were not so liberal, either. In the prevailing norms of behavior, a sexual encounter with the exotic *Other* would be perceived –at least with regard to women– as a threat to the moral order. This could explain why the image of the *macho ibérico* was utterly absent from tourist visual culture of the time.

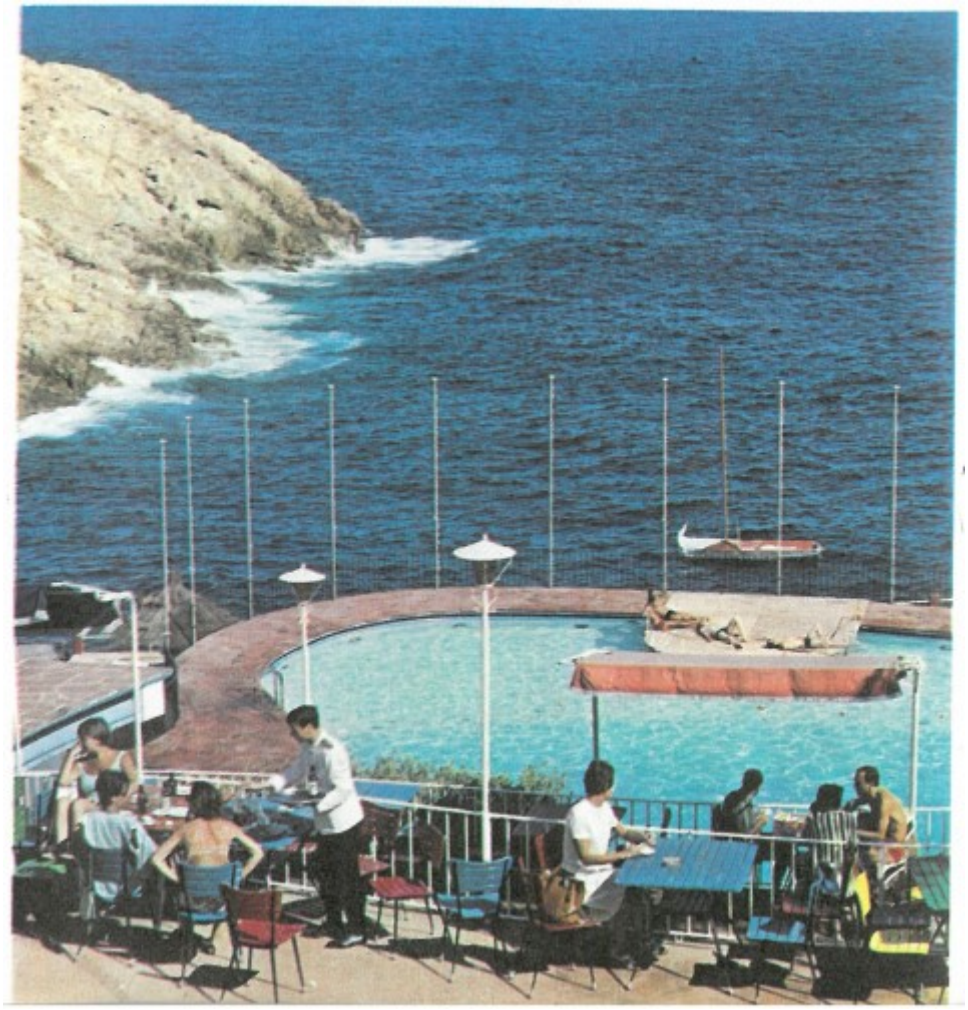
25 A similar subliminal message has been detected by historian Sasha D. Pack (2006: 146) in Swedish comic books that depicted holiday stories in Mediterranean countries: after being courted by an olive-skinned Don Juan, the romantic young girl always went back home hand-in-hand with a fellow countryman she had met during her holiday. So, after a slight deviation, the social order is happily restored. The fact that in the tourists' countries of origin those same olive-skinned men stood for migration and cheap labor force[2], would make it all the more advisable to counteract such deviations.

26 Ironically, Spanish films that depicted stories of tourist-local romance supported very similar values: the common happy ending depicted in this case a repentant Latin lover going back to the arms of his chaste, lifelong girlfriend (Crumbaugh 2009: 101-103). So, regardless of the blurring of social, cultural and gender hierarchies that may have taken place in the interstices of the tourist experience (Nash 2015: 153), it seems that the establishment resisted any disturbance of the prevailing moral order, both from the *hosts*' and from the *guests*' points of view.

Cherished waiters

27 On the opposite end, the Latin lover's lack of visual representation contrasts with the regime of hyper-visibility that was assigned to the waiter. Although this figure could be thought to be simply implicit in any scene that depicts tourist consumption, his presence was often explicitly staged (figures 7, 10). The inclusion of a waiter in compositions that represented tourists enjoying themselves at a bar or a restaurant may seem random at first, but his presence plays an essential role for the imaginary of what could be called the *good life* cliché.

Figure 10: *Costa Brava. Spanien*. Ministry of Information and Tourism, ca. 1965



Brochure, detail -Centro de Documentación Turística de España, Tourspain

28 Building on the understanding of tourism as an inversion of everyday life (Graburn 1977), it has been suggested that while it might be attractive for affluent tourists to play *peasant for a day*, blue-collar workers are more apt to play *king/queen for a day*. In the context of modern mass tourism, the prospect of being served would be an important appeal for those "modest middle-class people" who began to travel abroad and "found themselves for the first time in a position to command and to be served, whereas at home, they might themselves be the servers" (Lippard 1999: 7). This would be even truer in the case of Spain, whose tourist product heavily relied in the allure of cheap prices[3].

29 In a textual level, the *good life* discourse was reflected through slogans and headings that highlighted the low prices[4]. But one of its most evident visual translations were those images that represented the tourist being served by an elegantly-dressed waiter. That the figure of the waiter was linked to a certain idea of luxury is made clear in tourists' personal testimonies. The formality of restaurant services fascinated for instance the American Doris Stanislawski, who in a letter to her mother described the high-class treatment her family received at the Gran Hotel Zaragoza as follows:

> The waiters were all dressed in tails, except for the very head one who only wore a morning coat. The second head one took our order – he wore a black tie and tails. He transmitted the order to our waiter, also black tie and tails and a lower waiter brot [*sic.*] the food actually in. He had on tails but a white tie. ... It took in all about six flunkies to serve us a simple but very excellent meal.
> (Stanislawski 03.10.1952)

30 There is no doubt that the tourist associated ideas of opulence and high-living to the image of the waiter, who, seen from this point of view, adopts a servile meaning.

In fact, the figure of the servant also seems to have played a role in the imaginary of becoming *king for a day*. In his 1956 tourist guide, the British Dawson Gratrix linked the possibility of hiring servants to the idea of a perfect Spanish apartment holiday:

> There are several reasons [to rent an apartment]. The first the modest price of the apartments. Another is the cheapness of food and drinks, particularly the latter, when bought at the stores. But the chief attraction is, that in Spain *you can get servants*. A bachelor can take a flat here and not lift a hand in the house. Man and wife and family can have a perfect holiday without any washing up, bed-making, clothes-washing, cooking or cleaning. You can see what life was like in Grandma's day. (Gratrix 1956: 89-90)

31 It seems clear that the very idea of *being served* was one of the main allures of the temporary aristocratization linked to the tourist experience – hence the frequent representation of the waiter. From the point of view of the tourist industry, this figure also played an important role in the *enactment of hospitality*, understanding *hospitality* as a construction that allowed to silence the hostile elements of the tourist experience, such as that of economic exchange (Obrador 2009, drawing on Derrida).

32 As for the Franco regime, the discourse of hospitality was key in the implantation of the ideology of Tourist Development (*Desarrollismo Turístico*) within the Spanish society. Francoist authorities presented tourism-related professions as matters of state importance: "the hotel receptionist, the tourist guide, the delegate of a travel agency ... should always consider himself an ambassador of a country with great history and dignity" (*Nuevo horizonte del turismo español* 1962: 64-66). At the same time, they tried to instill the idea of hospitality as an intrinsic quality of the native population, claiming that the "welcoming character" so characteristic of "the Spanish nature" was the country's second main attraction, only after its climate (*Nuevo horizonte...* 1962: 10-13). Such remarks sought to flatter the population's nationalist pride in a way that would encourage their identification with the nation's touristic project.

Redefining the *macho ibérico*

33 We have seen that the myth of the *macho ibérico* was not only largely ignored but also to some extent contested in tourist discourses of the time. Judging by the sharp contrast between the Latin lover's lack of representation and the hyper-visibility of the figure of the waiter, it could be said that tourist-local contacts were only visualized as hierarchic relations that took place in the *safe spaces* of tourist consumption. Regardless of whether contacts of erotic nature did happen, it seems that in the context of tourist normativity a relationship between equals was out of the question. How can we then explain the resilience of this imaginary in Spanish representations?

34 The most straightforward explanation connects its success to the fact that Spaniards were living under aregime of highly repressed morality, implying that the legend of the foreign tourist and the Don Juan would work as means of evasion in the form of sexual phantasies. The cinematic subgenre we started this article with is usually interpreted along these lines. Film critic Jordi Costa (2004) has described the *comedia sexy celtibérica* as "a genre that attempted to give a very light weight form to an over-deep desperation" through apparently frivolous and risqué plots that concealed in his opinion "a strangled cry". But this explanation places us once again in the interpretative framework that reads tourism as a source of freedom.

35 While I agree with Justin Crumbaugh (2009:87) that "it is equivocal to assert a categorical equivalence between sexual transgression and opposition to the dictatorship", at the same time it seems difficult to separate both categories entirely. Mary Nash (2015:147-148) maintains that in the more liberal milieus the figure of the

sueca "was resignified as a symbol of liberty and democracy", suggesting that "political hopes for change overlapped with the longing for personal and sexual freedom from Francoist repression". The fact that the feminine model adopted by the progressive circles of the Catalan *Gauche Divine* as a symbol of the modern woman – blonde, tall, slim and open-minded – was in essence an appropriation of the image of the Swedish tourist (Villamandos 2011: 71), seems to confirm such overlap. However, the antagonistic nature of this figure may have been overstated, since the same feminine prototype was used by the official promotional campaigns (figure 11).

Figure 11: *Fuengirola. Málaga. España*. Ministry of Information and Tourism, Madrid, 1969


FUENGIROLA
MALAGA
ESPAÑA

Brochure, detail -Centro de Documentación Turística de España, Tourspain

36 My contention is that the figure of the *sueca* exerts such symbolic power that tourist historical discourses can hardly ever escape it shypnotic aura. This is why I propose to focus on the myth of the Latin lover instead. In order to be able to overcome the transference of meaning between sexual and political transgression, we need to address other cultural and sociological implications that surrounded this figure. When we read the masculine role of the *macho ibérico* in the context of the social milieu where it was originated, it becomes obvious that the main recipient of the meanings it carried was not a foreign, female audience but the national man. Quite specifically, it was the tourist workforce that was most strongly addressed.

37 As early as 1977, the authors of the book *The Costa del Sol. Portrait of a colonized people* (Galán et al. 1977) identified the legend of the one-night stand with a foreigner as one of the "false images" that shaped the aspirations of countless unskilled workers who flocked to the tourist centers in order to work as waiters – those lucky or good-looking enough– or as construction workers – the most. The figure of the waiter evoked according to these authors images of clean hands, elegant uniform, tips and more importantly, "lady customers" (Galán et al. 1977: 87). This made it the most coveted job of the tourist industry, and those who practiced it were proud to personify the myth:

> If the tourist drinks a whiskey, I'll take two. If the tourist spends the night flirting, I flirt more than him. But of course, at seven in the morning, to each his own: the girls upstairs sleeping, me downstairs setting up the tables for breakfast. (Galán et al 1977: 144)

38 In this sense, the legend of the *macho ibérico* can be reconceptualized as a psychological tool that promoted the internalization of the hierarchies and relations of power that supported the hospitality industry, which was, according to the same authors, "one of the most successful achievements of the capitalist order in its aim to create different layers or social strata within the working class" (Galán et al 1977: 107). The myth of the Spanish Don Juan boosted the workers' masculine pride and, at the same time, encouraged them to assimilate their role at the tourist's service, thus contributing to consolidate the tourist labor market as well as social and class distinctions between *hosts and guests*[5].

39 This introduces a deviation from what has been observed in other cultural and historical contexts. Glenn Bowman (1989) maintained that for young Palestinian merchants working at tourist souvenir shops in Jerusalem, the idea of seducing foreigners represented a way in which "these individuals imagine themselves able to manipulate a world designed to suppress or destroy them"; while Greek *kamakia* (equivalent to the Spanish *palanquero*, a somewhat professionalized version of the tourist woman-chaser) took according to Sofka Zinovieff (1991: 212) "revenge on the women (and thus on their countries) by insulting and tricking them, and by conquering them sexually and metaphorically)". These interpretations have been questioned by authors like Hazel Tucker (2003: 138), who criticizes their tendency "towards an over-concentration on the purpose and strategy of the men involved in such relationships, while playing down the voices of the women". In any case, it seems obvious that such readings do not apply to Francoist Spain. Far from mobilizing a hypothetical revanchism, here the myth of the affair with the foreign tourist contributed to the overall positive understanding of tourism, which was definitely not perceived as an oppressing force but quite the opposite.

40 The myth of the Latin lover can be then regarded as a cultural construction that helped mobilize national public opinion in favor of the tourist industry in a broader sense. I support in this sense Justin Crumbaugh's interpretation of the allegory of

sexual encounter with tourists as a means "to map political economy and international class hierarchies in a way that echoed the Franco regime's own perverse symbolic positioning vis-à-vis foreign capital" (2009: 108). Crumbaugh uses the foucaultian concept of *dispositif* to rethink tourism as a *governmentality device* that achieved a deeply but largely unnoticed identification with the official ideology of the tourist boom.

41 One of the most clarifying testimonies in this direction is the article published by José María Moreno Galván under the pseudonym of Juan Triguero in the clandestine journal *Cuadernos de Ruedo Ibérico* in 1965. The anti-Franco intellectual and art critic clearly discredited the illusory increase in freedom brought by tourism as an alibi for the continuity of the dictatorship, and pointed at Manuel Fraga Iribarne as the scheming "middleman of Spain's deflowering". Minister of Information and Tourism between 1962 and 1969, Fraga was indeed one of the main representatives of those liberal Francoist elites known as *aperturistas*, who were responsible for and in turn the main beneficiaries of the hegemonic narrative of tourism as a liberalizing factor:

> The truth is that Spain has changed quite a lot in these famous "25 years of peace"[6]. The development of monopolist capital, the stabilization, the –almost official– discredit of the Falange, the television, Real Madrid´s five European titles, the Opus Dei...[7] Everything has contributed to giving our country a different physiognomy. When one drinks a beer at the terrace of a café in Madrid or when one takes a swim in a Mediterranean beach, one finds it hard to imagine that this was a country of fanatical priests who ordered murder to defend the Holy Mother Church ... Spain´s traditional misery lingers, of course, but it is hidden, kept away from the tourist areas by an exultant brilliance of Seat 600, Swedish tourists, Samuel Bronston[8] and shrimps in garlic sauce. ... It must be recognized that we owe not a little of this brilliance to the present ministerial cabinet. For instance, it seems that in certain "*boites*" [*sic*] of the Costa Brava even "*strip-tease*" [*sic*] has come to be tolerated ... And they say that in the opening night some Iberian male who, repressed by too many centuries of "spiritual values", could not restrain his enthusiasm at the sight of an undressing American lady, lost control and yelled, long live Fraga Iribarne! (Triguero 1965)

42 Against the backdrop of the tourist boom, the boundaries between sexual transgression and an officially orchestrated process of modernization become blurred. The interests of a freedom-seeking population and those of a perpetuation-seeking dictatorship converged on the ambivalent waters of the ideology of Development (*Desarrollismo*). The latter drank from the century-old Spanish desire to erase the stigma of difference and to present the country as unambiguously European (Pack 2006: 137). This achieved a situation "in which the individual could ally himself with the hegemonic forces voluntarily, and even enthusiastically" (Crumbaugh 2007: 159-160), fostering stances and attitudes that favored the regime.

43 To conclude, there is no doubt that the myth of the Latin lover deserves closer examination within Spanish tourism studies. Far from being just a frivolous cliché, it colonized Iberian erotic imaginations and self-representations from the 1950s on. On the other hand, its absence from tourist visual culture of the time poses questions of host-guest hierarchies in the normative representation of the tourist *Other* and advices to analyze it as a myth of primarily domestic circulation. Finally, an effort should be made not to restrict the historical reading of the narrative of the *sueca* and the Don Juan to its sexually empowering effects. A more critical reflection problematizes it as an ideological tool that encouraged the assimilation of official tourist discourses and ultimately reduced the opposition to the dictatorship.

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Notes

1 All quotations from Spanish sources are author's translations.

2 Between 1960 and 1973, around two million Spanish nationals emigrated to countries of northern and central Europe, most of them in the framework of labor agreements with the Spanish government (Santos 2003).

3 Field studies of the time confirm that low prices were amongst the main arguments that persuaded the tourist to choose Spanish destinations. During her 1961 observations, German sociologist Renate Maynz perceived that English and German tourists chose Spain "not only because of the sun, but also because of the relatively low prices. ... Compared to Italy, in Spain one expects to be able to live like a real gentleman" (Maynz 1961: 13).

4 Thomas Cook's *Holidaymaking* magazine presents an illustrative assortment of such headings: "Romantic Spain... where prices are low... and the sun shines to order!" (1954); "Money goes further on the unspoilt Costa Brava" (1956); "Sunshine costs less on the Costa Brava" (1957); "Big, gay San Sebastian –but see how inexpensive!" (1959); "Brimful of fun, that's San Sebastian –and so inexpensive!" (1960); "Majorca. Sunshine bargains" (1966).

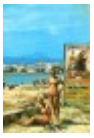
5 The very terms *hosts and guests* have been questioned as a nostalgic rhetoric of the tourist industry that is inadequate to depict the relations of power by which people negotiate and perform their position in the geography of tourism (Lenz 2010).

6 The author alludes to the 1964 public celebrations orchestrated by the regime to commemorate its 25 years in office (see de Haro García 2009).

7 The references to the Opus Dei and to the discredit of the Phalange reflect the political evolution of the Franco dictatorship, which after World War II embarked on a process of *defascistization* and liberalization. This was led by influence groups of the Opus Dei, who entered the government with the 1957 reorganization (see Tusell 2008).

8 The reference to the American film producer alludes to the official promotion of the Hollywood industry during the 1960s in Spain, which was an important strand of late Francoist international relations (see Rosendorf 2014).

Table des illustrations



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Fichier	image/jpeg, 212k

Titre	Figures 2, 3, 4: *Holidaymaking*, 1953, 1956, 1957
Crédits	Thomas Cook Archive
URL	http://journals.openedition.org/viatourism/docannexe/image/1671/img-2.jpg
Fichier	image/jpeg, 412k

Titre	Figures 5, 6, 7: *Summer Holidays in Spain and Portugal*, 1952, 1961 and 1965
Crédits	Thomas Cook Archive
URL	http://journals.openedition.org/viatourism/docannexe/image/1671/img-3.jpg
Fichier	image/jpeg, 460k

Titre	Figure 8: *Spanistyp*. Creación Avil, Barcelona, 1966
Crédits	Postcard - Utopía collection
URL	http://journals.openedition.org/viatourism/docannexe/image/1671/img-4.jpg
Fichier	image/jpeg, 776k

Titre	Figure 9: “Golden Days in Sunny Spain”, *Holidaymaking,* 1963
Crédits	Thomas Cook Archive
URL	http://journals.openedition.org/viatourism/docannexe/image/1671/img-5.jpg
Fichier	image/jpeg, 448k

Titre	Figure 10: *Costa Brava. Spanien*. Ministry of Information and Tourism, ca. 1965
Crédits	Brochure, detail -Centro de Documentación Turística de España, Tourspain
URL	http://journals.openedition.org/viatourism/docannexe/image/1671/img-6.jpg
Fichier	image/jpeg, 1,5M

Titre	Figure 11: *Fuengirola. Málaga. España*. Ministry of Information and Tourism, Madrid, 1969
Crédits	Brochure, detail -Centro de Documentación Turística de España, Tourspain
URL	http://journals.openedition.org/viatourism/docannexe/image/1671/img-7.jpg
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Auteur

Alicia Fuentes Vega
PhD, Center MetropolitanStudies, TU Berlin

Droits d'auteur