

THE LITERARY LANDSCAPE AND ITS CONNECTION WITH CULTURAL TOURISM

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The literary landscape has a bearing on cultural tourism and on territorial quality, placing territories at the center of the debate. The connection between landscape, as part of territory, literature and tourism opens up new possibilities to be able to consider the literary landscape—both rural and urban—an object of tourist and cultural interest, with the help of travel guides, novels and, to a lesser extent, verse poetry; and not just as a literary image of a landscape, as it has traditionally been analyzed.

Over the last few decades the romantic ideal of travel has made something of a comeback, a ‘romantic tour’ that forms part not only of a ‘Grand tour’, forerunner of tourism, but also paves the way to literary discovery of a landscape: tourism that becomes based on local cultural heritage. The *Plan Nacional e Integral del Turismo (2012-2015)* (‘National Integrated Tourism Plan’) states that, if it is to be competitive, inland tourism needs to make the most of ‘differentiated experiences’ based on cultural heritage and quality. Once the range of inland tourist destinations has been established in its diversity of environments - rural, urban, mountainous, protected natural habitats and so on – it seems advisable to continue underlining territorial heritage as a tourist attraction. Such integral and territorial heritage is linked here to the geographical districts of the interior, on the grounds that they are the most popular territories. The landscape, when it is interpreted in the same way as any other part of the territory, also becomes a tourist resource and thus the territory and its landscapes need to be analysed from a sociocultural perspective, seen in terms of cultural itineraries and cultural heritage as the key to local identity.

LANDSCAPES, LITERATURE AND TOURISM

The study of subjective space, analysed in terms of geography from a cultural point of view, extending from the mid-half of the last century to postmodernism, has resulted in a very close relationship between geography, landscape and literature. Landscape, insofar as it is a cultural phenomenon, is therefore something subjective, in the sense that it is something that is perceived and not something that exists. The phenomenological contribution to the analysis of the connection between the subject and landscape catalysed a new

field of study centred on the cultural perception and appreciation of the territory. Vision – sight – takes on a leading role, the cultural landscape is transformed into a geographical expression, an accumulative process of historical and imaginative occurrences. This subjective character establishes a connection with culture, with the cultural geography, which invites us not only to pay attention to the observed landscape, but also the landscape as it is reflected in various texts deriving from literature, in their various forms, some emanating from description, others from fiction and a third from symbolism, or, in other words, from travel writing, novels and poetry.

Particularly interesting among works of travel writing are those produced by foreigners: whereas visitors observe, locals experience, which accounts for the formers' contribution and inestimable value. In fiction, the writer renders the landscape in words, which recreates and transforms it through the writer's personality. Lastly, poetry captures an aesthetic sense through words: in poetry, the landscape manages sometimes to impose itself as the protagonist, while coming in many guises, from the descriptive and realistic to the symbolic and spiritual. On the one hand poetry is an emotional landscape, while on the other hand the landscape is a poetic creation. In this way the poem acts as a mediator between emotions and landscapes. Having established the relationship between landscapes and travel writing, fiction and poetry, it only remains to remark that in the relationship between writer and reader, landscape manifests itself in an infinity of hues that transmit all the possible ways of appreciating it.

It has been said that both travel writing and fiction represent ways of being a tourist, serving to motivate the reader into visiting places, replacing tourist guides. This explains the emergence of literary tourism as a strand within cultural tourism, turning books and their authors into creators of tourist destinations.

A TOUR OF THE LITERARY LANDSCAPE, BOTH RURAL AND URBAN

It seems reasonable to start with the first great modern novel, *Don Quijote*, followed by travels to the venerable imperial city of Toledo and ending with the two cities that have been used as a backdrop in a host of novels: Madrid and Barcelona.

In the context of *Quijote and his rural environment*, it is worth remembering firstly that this work laid the foundations for the modern novel, possibly the most referred to and least read in Spain. It unfolds in such rural terrains as La Mancha, the Campo de Montiel, etc. To celebrate the fifth centenary of publication (1605 and 1615), which will climax in 2015 to coincide with publication of the second volume, much has been made, among other things, of its geographical interest and references to landscapes. In order to carry out a tour of the territory the novel describes it is advisable to bear a number of aspects in mind: the travellers that offered us their experiences from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries; the debates on Don Quijote's so-called fatherland; the singularity of the literary plain of La Mancha. And lastly, concerning the 'Don Quijote Route', it is necessary to point out the controversy that surrounds having such an extensive tour of the region: it ought to focus exclusively on the places named or reflected in the immortal novel, with the aim of fostering the most prominent scenarios in this singular *European Cultural Route*, which the Council of Europe has compared to the Camino de Santiago, among others.

Travellers and the venerable imperial city of Toledo. It is essential to point out that with the transformation of tracks into roads from the middle of the eighteenth century it became easier to traverse the country, independently of the dangers presented by highwaymen. The enlightened minority, both indigenous and foreign, understood that travel was a highly suitable activity for cultural enrichment. Undoubtedly one of the most visited cities was Toledo, which had lost its status as capital city to Madrid in 1561, solely because the latter is located in the centre of the peninsula. The reasons for the change were its location and the fact that features more appropriate to a mediaeval, monastic society still prevailed. Enlightened travellers and romantics have bequeathed us their impressions: the steep, narrow and twisting lanes, a city that languished as it fell into ruin, which its citizens deserted while the monks remained behind: in short, one of the oldest cities in Spain and the world. Toledo has continued to be one of the most visited cities in Spain, and is currently enjoying its moment of greatest splendour; especially noteworthy is Corpus Christi day, an official 'Fiesta of International Tourist Interest', when it rediscovers all the grandeur of its past.

The city and fiction or novelized cities: Madrid and Barcelona. Although knowledge of cities was traditionally derived from travel writing, as we have just seen this interest subsequently extended to fiction, which managed to describe the characteristics of urban life with clarity and vigour, focussing above all on the different atmospheres that go to make up the city, proving especially fruitful the analysis and contrast of literary descriptions with other aspects of reality. The narrative, or more specifically the novel, was used more than any other genre to explore the theme of the city. Although *La Regenta* by Leopoldo Alas "Clarín" was undoubtedly the first great urban novel, it is indisputable that the two cities to have featured most prominently in novels are Madrid and Barcelona; as Spain's two great cosmopolitan cities they have been attractive to visitors seeking to make connections between fiction and reality, and tourism has been the consequence.

CONCLUSION

Postmodern tourism represents the reaction of demand against standardization, the search for uniqueness, the return of the romantic ideal of travel and, in short, heritage tourism as a byword for cultural tourism. It is a type of tourism based on micro-spaces, on territorial heritage connected to geographical districts and, in this case, with the literary landscape, both the rural and the urban, in the search for the rediscovery of new cultural modalities.

To conclude, let us remember that if poetry helps us to immerse ourselves in a landscape, travel writing and novels do so even more; taken in conjunction such works are capable of constituting a veritable tourist and cultural guide.

