

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

THE SOCIOECONOMIC IMAGE OF SPAIN IN THE FIRST TOURISTS' GUIDEBOOKS AIMED AT THE ANGLO-SAXON PUBLIC, 1840-1930: A COMPARISON WITH THE SPANISH GUIDEBOOKS

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In the 19th century, travel literature experienced a great expansion. Famous specialized magazines appeared, such as the *Nouvelles Annales des Voyages* (1819-1865) or the *Tour du Monde* (1860-1914). But, in addition, from the middle of the 19th century and in parallel to the advance of the industrialization process, a new phenomenon began to emerge in Europe, organized tourism, which would initially lay its foundations in the most advanced countries of the time. In fact, the pioneering country was the United Kingdom, where Thomas Cook began to promote organized tours in the 1840s. Industrialization allowed for a spectacular development of transportation technologies, along with the emergence of a growing wealthy middle class that could afford to take pleasure trips away from uniformity and tedium. It changed the way people traveled and the way they prepared for their journeys.

The first tourists' guidebooks, which would end up being an essential element of the tourist industry that would gradually take shape, appeared in the 1830s by the editors John Murray and Karl Baedeker, and were followed, in the following decades, by those of others such as George Bradshaw, John Longmans or Louis Hachette. The guidebooks were intended to be essentially practical, useful and easy to use, and over time provided increasingly impersonal and synthetic information for the foresight, safety and comfort of the tourist (tariffs and railway lines, currency and banks, accommodations, city maps, museums, illustrations of monuments, etc.). In addition, they proposed specific itineraries with which to get an idea, in a limited time, of the main attractions of the country visited. In this sense, they were becoming more and more clearly distinguished from the usual travel books, which focused on the subjective observations and evaluations of their author: the guidebooks were becoming essentially a commercial and industrial product of a publishing house, conceived as a tool rather than as a literary piece of work by the author.

However, despite the supposedly aseptic and objective nature of the tourists' guidebooks, there were certain clichés inherited from travel literature that were transferred to these guidebooks when referring, especially in their introductory part, to aspects such as the customs and peculiarities of the population. In addition, the selected itineraries, which conditioned and directed the visitor's gaze, often corresponded to a certain stereotyped image of the country that was intended to be transmitted and that in a certain way was already "expected" by the tourist. In fact, the guidebooks tended to reinforce certain clichés and created powerful images of the destinations. On the other hand, it is also true that some of the information provided by the guidebooks implicitly sketched a very basic "snapshot" of the level of socioeconomic development of a country at a given time (state of ports and roads, rail network, public services, degree of urbanization, major productions, etc.). Thus, as the texts were revised with new editions, it was to be expected that this picture would gradually change, reflecting a certain process of transformation.

This paper analyzes the tourists' guidebooks to Spain published between 1840 and 1930, aimed at both Anglo-Saxon and national audiences. The objective is to highlight the contrast between the socioeconomic vision of the country reflected in the foreign guidebooks aimed at the Anglo-Saxon public, where certain stereotypes maintained a notable weight, and the vision offered by the little-disseminated Spanish guidebooks, which were aimed at the national tourist.

There is no clear specificity of the guidebooks written in English that justifies their independent analysis with respect to foreign guidebooks written in other languages (French, German, etc.). Nor is it considered here that the majority of foreign visitors to Spain at that time were Anglo-Saxon, nor that English was in those years the main language for the preparation of tourist guidebooks for a foreign public (since, in fact, French was to a large extent the language of the European intelligentsia and the upper classes). The reason for this work to focus only on English-language guidebooks is purely practical: given the limitations of space, it is necessary to limit the scope. As for the period chosen, it begins in the 1840s, when the first general tourists' guidebooks to Spain were published, and ends in 1930, when there was a certain stagnation in the number of foreign visitors that would continue during the Second Republic.

In the mid-nineteenth century Spain was still far from being a tourist country, because in relation to the most economically developed European countries it was backward, politically unstable and had significant shortcomings in infrastructure of all kinds. Nevertheless, it was beginning to arouse a growing interest in some foreigners—especially French and British— attracted by its picturesque image and its distance from the "beaten tracks". On the other hand, although the number of foreign tourists was small during the whole century compared to countries such as Italy, Switzerland or France, it was not irrelevant, and it increased from 1880 onwards; nevertheless, nineteenth-century tourism in Spain was essentially a national phenomenon.

The first foreign guidebooks to Spain were published in the 1840s, although in reality they were still much closer to the travel book than to the guidebook itself. These included, for example, the French *Richard Guide* (1841) or the influential *Murray Guide* (1845) written by Richard Ford, which would be reprinted numerous times until the end of the century. Around 1860 a new crop of foreign guidebooks appeared, which included

Spain and Portugal together and could be considered fully worthy of the name. The most important among the French was the voluminous Joanne Guide (1859), followed by far by the Garnier Guide (1864); and among the British, two were published with wide acceptance and numerous reprints until the beginning of the 20th century, the Bradshaw Guide (1865) and the O'Shea Guide (1865). It is revealing that the Black Guides did not dedicate any book to the Iberian Peninsula, and that the first guidebooks on Spain by Baedeker (1897-98), Cook (1912), Muirhead (1929-30) and Satchel (1930) took a long time to appear in comparison with those dedicated to other countries by these same editors. Other guidebooks of the first third of the 20th century were the French Conty (1905) or Michelin (1910).

Specifically, in all the tourists' guidebooks to Spain aimed at the Anglo-Saxon public and published between 1840 and 1930 (Murray, Bradshaw, O'Shea, Appleton, Baedeker, Cook, Muirhead, Satchel), the imprint of Ford's *Handbook* of 1845 was noticeable. In them, the image of Spain remained closely linked to the romantic and picturesque, being especially synthesized in Andalusia, with its ideal past of bandits, bullfighters and smugglers, its semi-African character, and the supposed oriental imprint in its music, its dances and the exuberant imagination of its people. However, this was by no means specific to Anglo-Saxon guidebooks, but was also very present in French guidebooks and was probably a common feature of all foreign guidebooks on Spain for the period under consideration.

What was emphasized about the country and wanted to convey to the foreign tourist had nothing to do with modernization or socioeconomic transformation. In fact, the guidebooks written in English during the period considered paid practically no attention to the reflection of specific economic activities, and therefore it is not possible to detect in them, with the passage of time, clear evidence of the progressive transformation, diversification and modernization of the Spanish productive fabric. However, in contrast, there was a notable survival of socioeconomic stereotypes, to a large extent already present in Ford (the plague of begging by trade, the extreme Spanish sense of dignity and pride, bullfighting, the weight of religiosity, or the marked Arab-Oriental heritage in monuments, physiognomy, dances, toponymy, crops, vocabulary, etc.). In other words, a singular image was reproduced over and over again, which in many of its basic features seemed "frozen" since the *Handbook*, and which was very different from the standard of the most advanced Europe. It was especially when speaking of Spain's great diversity that the clichés were most lavishly deployed: the Spaniard in general was individualistic, antagonistic to foreigners and convinced of his own superiority, as well as being little traveled and unpredictable by nature; but, in addition, there were important regional particularities (referring to Catalans, Basques, Castilians, Andalusians, etc.) that were expressed in hackneyed commonplaces.

It is true that some of the guidebooks written in English mentioned in passing certain improvements that were progressively taking place in the country in aspects such as the extension of rail transport or the availability and quality of accommodation. But, in general, they referred mainly to those features indicative of the persistence of Spain's relative backwardness with respect to the main European countries (poor comfort and low speed of the trains, poor general condition of the roads, lack of accommodation at the level of

the large European hotels, widespread illiteracy among waiters and servants, unreliable and corrupt administration, little freedom for women, the existence of semi-wilderness and inaccessible areas such as Las Hurdes, etc.). The reference to specific economic activities, when it occurred, was very sparse and generic, focused only on highlighting the main agricultural and mining productions with some regional nuances, while the secondary sector was practically absent.

In short, the successful and much reprinted guidebooks aimed at the Anglo-Saxon public analyzed in this work reflect two things. First, that Spain was given a secondary place in European tourism at least until the Great War. And, secondly, that the fascination for the exotic stereotype was deeply rooted among Europeans, so it was a key element to be exploited by Spanish tourism policy itself throughout the twentieth century: the challenge of the Spanish tourism brand was to project difference without repelling the average traveler, promoting a “comfortable” exoticism.

Compared to the Anglo-Saxon guidebooks, the four Spanish guidebooks examined in this work and published during the period under consideration (Paula Mellado, Valverde, Toda and Vegue), had a greater level of informative detail on a regional and urban scale, and did give an account of the economic transformations in Spain between 1840 and 1930. This was undoubtedly conditioned by the type of readers for whom they were intended. It is true that these guidebooks also dealt with some clichés, but they used them to a much lesser extent than the foreign guides. That of Paula Mellado (1843) was published in the middle of a period of relative regression, those of Valverde (1886) and Toda (1892), at the beginning of the convergence with the most advanced European countries, and that of Vegue (1929), at the end of the Silver Age. Of all of them, Toda’s was the one that most resembled the structure of the foreign ones, but it provided a wealth of economic information and broke with the most common socioeconomic clichés. In any case, these four guides stand out both for their relevance and their representativeness, since, given their date of publication, they range from the Spain of the stagecoach to the introduction of the innovations of the Second Industrial Revolution, including the period of the construction of the railway network.

The problem with the Spanish guidebooks was their scarce diffusion: they had few reeditions and were not translated into other languages, probably because they were aimed at the national tourist, who represented a very specific type of “client”, different from that of the Cook or Baedeker Guides. The very complete Toda Guide, for example, only had one edition. Perhaps the O’Shea Guide could have made up for the scarce presence of Spanish guidebooks, as the author and his work had some propitious and singular characteristics: of Irish origin but born in Spain, he lived there for many years and published his successful guide in English in the United Kingdom, with thirteen editions between 1865 and 1905. Nevertheless, he reproduced all the usual stereotypes (such as those related to the Andalusian character and the Muslim heritage), paid no attention to industrial advances, and offered a “frozen” image of the Spanish economy (without significant changes in forty years).