THE PROMOTION OF TOURISM IN SPAIN
From stereotype to brand image

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1. Introduction

When we speak of stereotypes, few of us are aware that that the word originally referred to a duplicate impression of a lead stamp, used in typography for printing an image, symbol or letter. These stamps could be transferred from place to place, and it is this feature that gave rise to the current metaphorical meaning of stereotype as a set of commonly held beliefs about specific social groups that remain unchanged in time and space.

Etymologically, the term stereotype derives from the Greek words *stereos*, 'firm, solid' and *typos*, 'impression'. The earliest record we have of its use outside the field of typography was in psychiatry, in reference to pathological behaviours characterised by the obsessive repetition of words and gestures.

The first use of the term in the context of social sciences was by the journalist Walter Lippmann in his 1922 work "Public Opinion". He argued that people's comprehension of external reality is not direct but comes about as a result of "the pictures in their heads", the creation of which is heavily influenced by the press, which in Lippmann's time was rapidly transforming itself into the mass media that we know today. Lippmann believed that these mental images were often rigid oversimplifications of reality, emphasising some aspects while ignoring others. This is because the human mind is not capable of understanding and analysing the extreme complexity of the modern world.

Stereotypes are, furthermore, a 'group' concept. We cannot speak therefore of 'private' stereotypes because they are based on collective uniformity of content. They constitute a selective system of cognitive organisation and serve to justify the acceptance or rejection of the group being stereotyped.

Consider the following exchange between the characters Levante and Gino in the Italian film "Il Ciclone" (1997) directed by Leonardo Pieraccioni about the adventures of a group of Spanish flamenco *bailaoras* who spend a few days with the inhabitants of a town in Tuscany:

> Levante: *Ginooo, domani vo in Spagna!* ('Gino, I'm off to Spain tomorrow!')
> Gino: *Olé!*

Gino's answer is a clear reference to Spain. The exclamation *¡Olé!* is used mainly in the South of Spain and is sometimes also heard in its variants *¡Ele!* or *¡Ole!* (with the stress on the first syllable). This exclamation has become a stereotypical reference to the Spanish, like the French *Voilà* or the Italian *Mamma mia*.

Those who have had the opportunity to visit Spain, France or Italy, or to get to know the inhabitants of these countries, will have noticed that these words are not used as often as we might think and that their use depends to a large extent on the speaker's region of origin. We are thus dealing with stereotypes, since, as we mentioned, they are doubtful ideas about a group that belong to the collective imagination and are considered by foreigners to be real.

In many cases, the Spanish (or Italians, French or British) themselves deliberately exploit such stereotypes in order to please foreigners by living up to their expectations.

Tourism needs icons, and icons beget stereotypes. So let us pose the question: is Spain's image a stereotype, and if so, is it positive?

Spain's current image derives from a number of stereotypes that arose in different historical epochs, which may be summarised as follows:

2. The Spain of the *Leyenda Negra*

As José Varela Ortega has pointed out, the stereotype of the indolent and warlike Spaniard was key to the representation of Spain as being inquisitorial, cruel and despotic, stigmatising the Catholic monarchy in particular. This basically explains why Spain was the universal enemy for Europe's new nations.

The *Leyenda Negra*[1] was fuelled by the struggle for hegemony between France and the Hapsburgs, the clash between Philip II and Elisabeth I of England, the religious antagonism between Protestants and Catholics, the excessive militarism of the patriarchal Spanish monarchy and the expulsions of the Jews and *Moriscos* (Juderías 1917). In the context of 16th century Spanish hegemony, any community seeking to establish a group identity of a national and/or religious nature had to do so against 'the Spaniard'. As John H. Elliot pointed out, the rapid rise to world superpower status of the Spanish crown in the 16th century following the colonisation of America transformed it into an object of enmity for governments and movements in Western Europe of all political persuasions (Elliot 1971).

The image of a conquering and imperial Spain arose from three factors: the power it succeeded in amassing in a relatively short space of time, the consequent admiration and envy that this good fortune inspired among rival monarchies, and the religious conflicts with protestants, *Moriscos* and Jews. As José Antonio Maravall pointed out, the image of the Spaniard at the end of the 16th century is the product of reflection, calculation, cunning and coldness. Spain's image was conditioned by its religious intolerance, political ambition and its economic ineffectiveness, but there were variants:

The basis for enlightenment-inspired prejudices was established in France, where Spain was criticised for its imperialism, greed, cruelty and usurpation, and was repeatedly portrayed as a nation of paupers, idlers, braggarts and cowards, and envious and arrogant to boot. In England, Spain did not form part of the aristocrats' 'Grand Tour' circuit, and there was little contact other than what arose from war and trade.

It was however in Italy that Spain's image was at its most ambiguous, with manifestations of both a positive and negative nature. The former largely accepted the image conveyed by diplomats and travellers influenced by Hispanophilia. The Great Captain inspired much literary praise in Italy, although the Spanish conquests of Sicily, Sardinia and other territories gave rise to the earliest version of the *Leyenda Negra*, by which Spain was associated with the rapacity of the *tercios*[2] and the cruelty of their conquests (García Cárcel 1993). In Germany, the

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[1] In Spanish as in other languages the colour black has strongly negative associations.

[2] *Tercios* was a term used by the Spanish army to describe a type of mixed infantry unit, composed of about 3000 pikemen and musketeers. This type of military formation and the combat techniques it applied were formalised and developed above all by General Gonzalo Fernández de

image of the inquisition, the cruelty in America and the tyranny inflicted by Spain's mercenaries in the Thirty Years War created a stereotype of Spain that was to last until German scholars created the concept of Spain's 'Siglo de Oro' in the 18th century.

The attempts to bring Spain into line with the rest of Europe which began with the change in dynasty – and the arrival of more enlightened rulers – at the beginning of the 18th century did not decisively transform the images and stereotypes associated with the *Leyenda Negra*. Rather, the new century was a period of transition towards the romantic and orientalised image of the 19th century. Whereas Spain had previously been a feared monarchy, it now became subject – in the best cases – to a paternalist critique, in line with the spirit of the Enlightenment. Spain's image in the Europe of the Enlightenment was that of a decadent and sick empire, caught in a profound crisis, which would occasionally see improvements as a result of the momentary actions of some king or minister. From the outsider's point of view, the purpose of criticising the Bourbon monarchy was not so much to attack the soon-to-be-defeated enemy but to highlight the local consequences of not applying enlightened policies. It should be pointed out however that there were important differences between the image of Spain held by the French and the image held by the British. The latter was more concerned with details, interested in the material aspects and morally judgemental, whereas the French view was vaguer, more literary and satirical. For the British, despite the increasing contacts between the two countries, Spain continued to be exotic, papist, and strange (Guerrero 1990). The first travellers that were truly recognisable as such, mainly soldiers, diplomats and traders, praised the enlightened policies, the modernisation of the road network, the factories and the public works. While they were critical of the government, the political system and the power of the church, they held a quite different view of the common people. Indeed, their moralistic descriptions contrasted the virtuous *pueblo llano* ('the third estate') with the upper classes, the government and the church, who were considered corrupt, superstitious, absent, ineffective and authoritarian. Spain seemed to be a prototype of bad government: "they are the best sort of people, and under the worst kind of government in Europe" wrote Alexander Jardine (1788, p. 382).

In contrast, the French writers, travellers and visitors considered the *pueblo español* to be licentious, lazy and treacherous. This was the prevailing image among Napoleon's officers during the War of Independence (Gil Novales 2000). The truth is that the 'cursus honorum' of the *philosophes*, theoretically opposed to tradition, actually strengthened the worst of the inherited stereotypes about Spain: Montesquieu spoke of Spain as a southern country "in which the passions multiply the crimes". In his Persian Letters he wrote: "For you must know, that, when a man possesses some special merit in Spain, as, for example, when he can add to the qualities which I have already described, that of owning a long sword, or that of having learnt from his father to strum a jangling guitar, he works no more: his honour is concerned in the repose of his limbs. He who remains seated ten hours a day obtains exactly double the respect paid to one who rests only five, because nobility is acquired by sitting still" (Montesquieu 1873, p. 170). The reciprocal phobias of the French and Spanish, widespread among all

Cordoba during the Italian wars. It represented a key phase in the transformation from medieval to modern military institutions. The *Tercios* were composed mainly of professional soldiers, highly disciplined and ferocious, who were known for being invincible in combat in the Renaissance and even during the 16th and 17th centuries.

social classes but articulated by the elite, at times exploded into violent intellectual conflict. Of all the Hispano-French polemics of the 18th century, the most severe was sparked by the famous article on Spain by Masson de Morvilliers, which appeared in the 1784 edition of the 'Encyclopédie'. Starting with the provocative question "What do we owe to Spain?", Masson affirmed the total absence of any significant Spanish contribution to the progress of the human race, declaring Spain to be the most ignorant nation in Europe, lacking in books, science and the spirit of progress. As well as being indolent, lazy and proud, the Spanish were portrayed as enemies of reason, conservative and fanatical (Lucena Giraldo 2005).

3. Romanticism: Carmen and the bandits (*bandoleros*)

The first substantial change in Spain's image in the modern epoch was the fruit of the influence of romanticism, sustained by the real or imaginary experience of travelling around the peninsula. Thus, as with the 'oriental' landscapes, a new route by which travellers could be initiated was born. While the final destinations were Seville, Cordoba and Granada, the route began as soon as one had crossed the border, in Guipuzcoa or Girona – and it had concrete stereotypes in the form of Carmen and the bandits. The War of Independence marked the advent of what would constitute the starting point of the romantic interpretation of Spain, not just because it was linked to the direct experience of Spain by hundreds of thousands of combatants, but because it was seen as a struggle for freedom. However, there was also a clear distinction between the image held by the British and the French, based on their opposing military interests, which were now the inverse of what they had been in the 18th century. In France, Napoleon's invasion was justified by portraying it as struggle between the *Leyenda Negra* and the values of the Enlightenment. Thus the French officers were presented as liberating Spain from the centuries-old grip of intolerance, clericalism and tradition. In contrast, Great Britain adopted the romantic image of a people who had taken up arms in defence of their liberty against a tyrannical and unjust government.

For the rest, Spanish decadence was brandished as an argument in the debate about the triumph of the industrial and bourgeois revolution in Europe and the United States. The Hispanic decline was seen as the manifestation of a more general syndrome of decadence affecting the 'Latin' countries of the South, incapable of discipline and lacking in entrepreneurial spirit. In this sense, it should be pointed out that there was a significant difference between Spain's romantic image and Italy's. Given the greater knowledge of Italy in Europe at that time, it was much harder for the country to be identified exclusively with its *Mezzogiorno* (the Southern regions), which on the contrary was considered an exception in the Italian peninsula. In contrast, in the case of Spain, the caricature of an orientalised Andalusia was identified – typically by references made out of context – with the whole, which undoubtedly conditioned mutual perceptions (García Sanz 2002).

In time, the stereotypes and romanticism were taken up by many Spaniards themselves, happy to accentuate their country's exoticism. The inquisitor was replaced by the *bandolero* and the toreador, but the great novelty was the fabrication of the attractive and sensual Carmen, whose archaic and barbarian inclination towards passion made her dangerous and threatening. For the romantics, much of her charm lies in her 'mystery': the cloak both obscured and accentuated her beauty, awakening the imagination. She was also an emancipated

woman, a cigar-maker, with irresistible magnetism. In the words of Merimée, Carmen is "madly independent" – a promiscuous and indomitable creature (Serrano 1999, p. 21).

Less enthusiastic about the myth of Carmen were British travellers. Accustomed to the sight of urban masses sunk in abject poverty caused by incipient industrialisation, in Spain they found a 'poor and simple people', who nonetheless were characterised by a certain degree of self-reliance. For this reason they idealised them as exemplifying the freedoms that had been lost as a result of the 'progress' of modern life. In this way a certain continuity was established between the *Leyenda Negra* and the *Leyenda Amarilla*[3] (García Cárcel 1993) of romanticism. The popular image of the Black Legend, propagated in pictures and theatre, had emphasised poverty and cruelty and the foolishness of Spanish soldiers; thanks to romanticism however, after the success of the anti-Napoleonic guerrilla war, Spain began to be identified with the *bandito*, representative of the people, admired for his skill and audacity and exemplary of a pure and honest way of fighting. Reinterpreted by the romantics, the characteristic that had previously been criticised was now seen to be positive. In reality what had changed was not so much the stereotype in itself as its interpretation. The typical figures of the new version were essentially the same as those of the *Leyenda Negra*, but in new garb.

The romantic stereotype emphasised the exotic aspects, such as flamenco, bull-fighting, gypsies and above all the Arabic influence, an important characteristic of the romantic exoticism implicit in the Orientalist image of Spain and a sign of its pre-modern and archaic nature. Another aspect of the romantic image was its variety of human types and social diversity. The fusion of Roman, Muslim, Jewish, Phoenician and Greek motifs was one of the main attractions for travellers, although the vestiges of Islam – exotic by definition – were the favourites. In addition, the Romantics praised the Spanish 'lower classes' for what they perceived as their contempt for monetary gain and attachment to honour. This exotic ideal allowed Spain to act as a kind of safety valve, an escape from a bourgeois and industrialised Europe, although it could lead to extreme disappointment among travellers when their expectations were not fulfilled. Unlike the dynamic imperial image of Spain, the romantic vision caused it to become frozen in time, since it was now invested with archaic and anti-modern characteristics.

Nobody expressed better than Mérimée the ambivalence of the admiration for a Spain that was "pure, wild and romantic" and the lack of concern (or outright disdain) for its material progress on the path of civilisation. Unlike many other tribunes of Spain's romantic image, Mérimée actually knew the country well, going on seven journeys to the Iberian peninsula between 1830 and 1864. Nevertheless, his intellectual stance, based on exoticism, remained substantially unchanged, as did the images of Spain that he offered his readers, who indeed expected nothing else. This is why, despite his extensive contact with Spain and the Spanish people, he did not vary the stereotypes that he had formed in the works written before his travels. There is no before or after in Mérimée; the country he visited had to conform to the image that he himself had already created in his books. What was it about Spain that interested Mérimée? Andalusia and the human element that chimed most closely with that region and its social rituals. In the first place of course, bullfighting, described, despite his confessed enthusiasm, in a reserved and informative manner. After bullfighting came executions.

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[3] The *Leyenda Amarilla* is the label that García Cárcel used to describe the romantic image of the Hispanic universe.

Although public executions were also carried out in France, those of Spain had a mystic, religious flavour: they were processions that culminated in an act of faith. Writing about one of these occasions, Mérimée stresses the dignity of the criminal, his valorous and impulsive temperamental posture, the religious and secular ceremonials, and the expectations that the bloody spectacle raised in the beautiful women of the town, Valencia, where the episode took place. Bulls, executions and *bandoleros*; references to the exploits of José Maria – *el tempranillo*, the prototype of the generous bandit – reinforced the canon of popular romanticism. Mérimée was not interested in the natural landscape and nor was he, to any significant degree, in the country's monuments. The focus of his attention was the human characters, his *Madrileño* friends, especially the countess of Montijo, her family and her circle. Thus he loved the capital but detested 'European' Barcelona. In spite of everything, his travels do show some form of evolution. In the third journey, undertaken in the autumn of 1845, when the cold and rain of Madrid reminded him of Paris, he saw a changed country which – he confessed – bored him. In the fourth journey the following year, he paid a joyless visit to Barcelona, where he observed that the Catalans were like the French, low and uncouth. In the fifth journey in 1853, he regained his cheerfulness, but stressed the rapid changes that took place from one journey to another. However, he observed that there remained

> much of the chivalrous spirit on this side of the Pyrenees and a sublime popular character: When I go to Madrid, I go there to study the habits of the lower orders. You would not believe, Madam, how amiable the common people in this country are, or what talent, dignity and greatness of soul there is to be found in places that we would never imagine (Serrano 1993, p. 35).

In 1859, during his sixth journey, he was overcome with an atavistic terror of the changes in progress: "Everything is changing in Spain, becoming prosaic and French. All people talk about is railways and industry." On the seventh journey in 1864, the changes that he noted (many new houses and the growing habit among the women of dressing in the French style), together with a number of uninspiring bullfights, led him to conclude that the country was degenerating. He saw everything as negative, the bare plains, the wind, and even the braziers, a primitive device which obliged one to either freeze or die of asphyxiation. Material progress had not beautified society, but rather the opposite: "All the originality in this country is disappearing. Perhaps it can only be found in Andalusia and there are too many fleas and too many horrible places to stay and above all I am too old to go and find it there."

4. The Spanish Civil War and the strengthening of the romantic stereotype

The end of the 19th century saw the rise of a new approach to Spain, which, in place of romantic purism, highlighted the country's Europeanising and modernising traits.

The task of conveying a new image of the country was hindered by the fact that the new means of communication such as the cinema and photojournalism preferred to perpetuate Spain's romantic image without modification, maintaining traditional assumptions. Don Juan and Carmen (Figure 1) even became characters

on celluloid, reproducing the same stereotypes of archaic masculinity and a tragic, infantile femininity that needed to be restrained by others.

Figure 1
Carmen, a Spain's Romantic image

Contrary to what might be imagined, the civil war did not entail any change in this situation. Whereas the Spanish Republic had been characterised by continuous crisis, confirming the myth of Spain's political abnormality, from 1936 onwards it constituted a neo-romantic space in which the battle of good and evil was played out, a matriarchal, utopian land and the theatre of extreme political violence.

Gringoire, 25/09/1936, p. 3.

Figure 2
Catholic resistance to the Bolshevism

Regardless of what side one supported, the civil war reinforced romantic stereotypes, which were now propagated via effective means of mass communication to the point of promoting 'war tourism' itineraries for travellers of both persuasions. Feelings of sympathy or solidarity tended to be based on existing stereotypes. When the war broke out, it was presented as the result of a history marked by violence and fanaticism.

Propagandists for both sides sought to convince world public opinion of the legitimacy of their respective causes. Each side sought help from abroad and their publicity materials were oriented to this goal. While the Nationalists played on the theme of Catholic resistance to the French revolution (Figure 2) and raised the spectre of Bolshevism, the Republicans deployed the romantic stereotype of the free people in arms and sought to associate their adversaries with the *Leyenda Negra* reproducing stereotypes of intolerant and repressive Catholicism (Figure 3).

Gringoire, 21/08/1926, p.1.

Gringoire, 13/11/1936, p. 12.

Le Petit Parisien 29/07/1936, p. 1.

Le Canard Enchaîné, 29/07/1936, p. 2.

Figure 3
Stereotypes of intolerant and repressive Catholicism

The manifestations of sympathy for the Republic on the part of significant social groups in Great Britain and the United States of America contained an element of internal critique. Thus the British class system was contrasted with the egalitarianism of the Spanish: "One had breathed the air of equality", as George Orwell said in a memorable phrase (Orwell 1938, p. 83). The other side made much of Republican barbarity as seen in the murder of clergy and the destruction of buildings and works of art.

The two propaganda machines had the same iconography, with interchangeable vocabulary and images and stereotypes that reproduced the 'romantic *bandolero*', either through the upright Nationalist officer or the

anarchist militiaman turned guerrilla: the last noble savage, as in the 'The Last Good Country', by the *bon viveur* and war correspondent Ernest Hemingway.

5. The normalisation stereotype

The bitter aftermath of the civil war produced an authentic freezing of Spain's image, now fixed in its isolation, archaism and rejection of change. However, the sociological and economic changes of the 1960s, with emigration and the development of mass tourism, shattered some of the stereotyped images, which were replaced by direct and personal experiences on a large scale. Leaving aside the 'Spain is different' of the tourist brochures which reproduced romantic stereotypes (passion, the slow pace of life, sex, heat, fiestas and siestas), sociological change and economic development created the conditions for more profound changes. The process of democratic normalisation, which began in 1975, brought about the collapse of the romantic image because, since it was accompanied by intense economic development, on the international level it facilitated the resurgence of elements linked to Spain's imperial image and the *Leyenda Negra*.

The normalisation of Spain, with the successful transition to democracy, destroyed the stereotypical notion that violence and fanaticism always dominate the process of political change. Shortly afterwards, the newfound joys associated with life in the *movida madrileña*[4], as famous as it was ephemeral, showed that the ghost of romantic exoticism had not in fact disappeared. In this sense, while the rigid, colonial and hierarchical Spain had given way to another, more cooperative identity, Spain's romantic image continued to supply much of the content for the cultural industry, endowing film-makers such as Almodovar with iconic status (Botrel 1998). In addition, stereotypes of democratic normalisation are common to all countries. In the case of Spain, although part of the success of the tourist industry is even today sustained by the residue of the romantic stereotype, the rise of successful multinationals has resuscitated some of the stereotypes of the *Leyenda Negra* associated with greed and rapacity. The contrast between these two sets of images and stereotypes has been mitigated by democratisation, which began in 1975 and has been broadly successful. Obviously though, this situation keeps Spain's image trapped between two extremes, hindering the creation of a country brand (García de Cortázar 2004). This apparent contradiction is the result of history, and says as much about the attitude of foreigners to Spain as it does about the Spanish image of themselves. Such an image may be seen as a symbolic asset, to be used or wasted according to preference.

Having discussed stereotypes in the course of Spanish history, let us see how they have been used in tourism.

We have already seen how French and English travellers of the 18th century observed and described Spain, perpetuating clichés and stereotypes without scrupulously verifying their sources of information, which remains common practice even today.

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[4] The *Movida Madrileña* was a counter-cultural movement that arose during the early years of the Transition after the death of Franco and spread rapidly, becoming the *Movida Española*. Lasting until the end of the 1980s, it began with the famous *Concierto homenaje a Canito*, launching the musicians who were subsequently to become *Los Secretos*. The high point of the *Movida* was the *Concierto de Primavera* in 1981.

5.1 The tourist image of Spain in the last 100 years

The first ministerial order creating a governmental department with the purpose of establishing a tourist development policy was signed by the King of Spain, Alfonso XIII, on 7th October 1905. The main reason was to further the economic interests of the state. A permanent national commission was thus created, charged with promoting foreign tourism in Spain. How was this to be achieved? By studying the means to attract tourists and the factors which hindered tourism.

In 1911 a royal commissariat was set up that lasted until 1928. Two years earlier, in 1926, the first resort of what would subsequently become the *Paradores de Turismo de España* network was opened in Gredos, inaugurated by King Alfonso. In 1927 the first scheduled flight from Madrid to Barcelona took place. The flight, with 10 passengers aboard, took three and a half hours.

The work of the royal commissariat between 1911 and 1928 bore fruit in 1929 with the birth of the *Patronato Nacional de Turismo* ('National Tourism Organisation'), whose work was to be interrupted in 1936 due to the Civil War. When the war was over, the government of General Francisco Franco set up the *Dirección General de Turismo* ('National Tourism Directorate'). In 1940 it set out regulations concerning the opening of hotels, cafés, airlines and travel agencies and the marketing of tourism. 1940 was also the year in which the slogan 'Spain is Different' was first used. In 1951, in recognition of tourism's growing importance and influence, the Ministry of Information and tourism was created. The ministry was to play a key role in the promotion and development of tourism in Spain. The 1960's saw the first real boom in Spanish tourism, with unprecedented growth in the number of arrivals. Tourism was also a vehicle for new ideas and habits, obliging the state to moderate its repressive policies so as to improve the country's image. In 1962 the Medal of Merit for Services to Tourism was instituted, confirming the importance of tourism as a source of income for the still-precarious Spanish economy. This was followed by the opening of the first official tourism schools (1963) and the first 'duty free' shops in Spanish airports. This period also saw the birth of the National Tourism Fairs, whose task was to improve the level of goods and services by the tourism sector and offer tourists what they expected from a country like Spain – thereby reinforcing Spanish stereotypes among foreigners.

The 1970s and 1980s were a period of consolidation for the tourism sector. The first International Tourism Fair (FITUR) was held in Madrid. The famous 'sun' logo by the artist Joan Miró became the national brand, the icon of Spain abroad. Spain became one of the most popular tourist destinations in the world, with more than 40 million visitors in 1981. The football World Cup was held in Spain in 1982, providing the ideal stage on which to promote Spanish tourism's new image and new brand. Just two years after the football World Cup was held in Spain the number of visitors topped 54 million, setting a new record. In the 1990s the Spanish economy grew significantly, enabling it to invest in much new infrastructure that was important to the country's overall development but was particularly beneficial to its main economic asset, i.e. tourism. Tourism enjoyed a new boom, with Spain becoming the third biggest tourism destination in the world after the United States and France.

The start of the twenty-first century saw the Spanish tourism sector facing a new challenge: how to avoid the collapse of its tourism model by adopting innovation and sustainability.

6. The management of the *Turismo de España* brand

The management of 'brand *España*' can be divided into two phases: In the first, the brand became a way of assimilating old romantic stereotypes into a new idea of essentially Spanish values, the projection of which served to safeguard and position not so much a destination as a dictatorial political regime.

The second creative and professional phase coincided with democratisation. In this context the aim was to make use of Spain's historic past and present assets in the tourist industry in order to preserve one of the nation's most important sources of wealth.

6.1 Historic development from its origins in the 20th century

Spain's flag-carrier, Iberia, was to play a key role in the construction of the country's collective image, which it projected to potential foreign customers (Figure 4).

The aim was to attract tourists in order to obtain hard currency for a poor society. Iberia, as will become clear, made extensive use of the stereotype of an exotic country, including folklore, castanets, bulls, etc.

Figure 4
Country's collective image by Spain's flag-carrier Iberia

The Spanish tourist brand with the logo designed by Miró (Figure 5) was launched in 1983 under the guidance of *Turespaña*, headed by Ignacio Vasallo.

Figure 5
Spanish tourist brand designed by Mirò

Under his leadership, Spain's first tourist marketing plan was drawn up. One of the objectives was a clean break with the past: the establishment of a new image – different, cultivated and universal – that would do away with the old stereotypes and go beyond the idea that 'Spain is different'. The focus was on Spanish identity, emphasising the name of the country with its distinctive letter Ñ, which therefore needed to be highlighted.

Another objective was to be a market leader: Spain's competitive advantage in the priority market for tourism, i.e. Europe, was twofold: on the one hand the variety of goods and services on offer: islands, peninsula, beaches, mountains, summer, spring, autumn, etc., and on the other, the climate, fundamental for Spain and all its competitors. Thus the *Diversidad bajo el sol* formula was born.

Without consciously planning for it, brand *España* has been able to count on the support of political forces across the spectrum. The continuity of this support has been invaluable in the construction of the brand itself, the development of brand policy and its funding. All governments have understood the need for consistency in its management.

For the construction of brand *España*, it should be stressed that it entails both promise and validation. The promise is what the brand purports to offer, the tangible and intangible assets that are presented to the customers. The validation is the actual perception of the customer once the tourist experience has been produced and consumed.

Today the emphasis is on the emotional aspects of brand Spain.

Ever since its conception and above all since 1983 with the new design, emotions have been a key feature of brand Spain. The tourist assets of Spain have been presented in a variety of ways but the common denominator has always been the appeal to the distinctive nature of Spanish society, its specific culture, the extrovert personality of the Spanish, the 'Spanish' way of life, the authenticity of their character and the generosity of the Spanish people (Figure 6).

Figure 6
The Spanish way of life

All of this is expressed in the descriptive marketing of brand Spain and its slogans, listed here in chronological order:

- *España es diferente* ('Spain is different')
- *Todo Bajo el sol* ('80-'90) ('Everything under the sun')
- *España es simpatía* ('Spain is cordiality')
- *Pasión por la vida* ('90) ('Passion for life')
- *Bravo España* ('90) ('Bravo Spain!')
- *España marca* (2003) ('Spain Marks')
- *Sonríe, estás en España* (2008) ('Smile, you're in Spain')
- *Necesito España* ('I need Spain')

Emotional branding is also the current backdrop to the dream society, the attention economy and the experience economy. It is the perfect story for a brand to tell, told with honesty and transparency; but it is also consistently and unambiguously the story of a 'culturised' country, adapted to its audience.

The management objectives of the current brand are:

To maintain and strengthen the 'brand Spain' image campaigns in order to increase its recognition and improve its position in the international tourist market (Figure 7).

Figure 7
Emotional branding

To develop for the brand a communication strategy designed to highlight the distinctive aspects of a holiday in Spain in comparison to other rival destinations, emphasising in particular: 1) the Spanish lifestyle, 2) the European context, which entails quality and cultural proximity, 3) personalisation of the experience, 4) the rich variety on offer (Figure 8).

Figure 8
Distinctive aspects of a holiday in Spain

To develop Spain's image as a tourist destination, going beyond the almost exclusive association with sun and beaches and adding new assets linked to other reasons for going on holiday.

Figure 9
Commercialization of Spanish tourist goods and services

To obtain a greater competitive advantage from the existence of the tourist brand itself, whose recognition and attributes contribute to the commercialisation of Spanish tourist goods and services (Figure 9).

7. Conclusion

The identity of a country is the product of a whole compendium of elements – real and fictitious, tangible and intangible, rational and emotional – which lead to the formation of a national image and perceptions that are more or less broadly accepted in the international context. Its reputation is constructed by means of

variables of various kinds, including lifestyle, natural heritage, history, culture, the economy, political and legal institutions, famous leaders, companies and brands, growth potential, natural resources, quality products and leisure potential. Perceptions of these variables are the result of personal experience (one's own and that of others), communication (direct, indirect, controlled and spontaneous), and are conditioned by collectively-held stereotypes. The country brand has a 'corporate' function, encompassing all other product and service brands associated with that country. In terms of brand management, the attributes that are associated with a particular country in the collective international imagination can also become attached to that country's brands, but this works in both a positive and a negative sense.

Constructing a country brand is thus no easy task. It is not simply a matter of increasing investment in advertising, setting up institutions that promote trade and tourism or even gambling on the organisation of the Olympic Games. The process of improving the image and reputation of a country requires constant investment, strategic planning, and good communication and cooperation between a large quantity of stakeholders, including governments, institutions, companies and even the country's citizens.

Spain can capitalise on its good image (10th place in the list drawn up by the Reputation Institute, 2008-09) to promote its products and services such as tourism, but above all it needs to develop a distinctive and positive message around which Spanish institutions and companies can build a common strategy for the country, communicating coherently and consistently so as to occupy a well-defined space in the minds of consumers in other countries.

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