Mediterràniament. The Balearic Islands as seen through online Turespaña and IBATUR promotional materials

José I. Prieto-Arranz[*]
Universitat de les Illes Balears

Tourism as a discursive formation

This article aims at analysing the discourse of Balearic tourism promotion, most especially the image it disseminates and how this may relate to both identity issues in contemporary Balearic society and the needs of the Balearic tourism industry, for which some historical contextualisation is required.

Even though 'tourist resorts' can be traced as far back as Roman times, when Capri established itself as the Empire's favourite destination for the ruling classes (Baum 1996: 25), it might be argued that tourism as a 'discursive formation' (Foucault 1984) only began to show signs of consolidation in the 1700s. Indeed, prior to the 18th century, travel had been dominated, like most other areas of life, by religious discourses (Pfaff 1994: 7; Sheldrake 1999: 6), a situation that only started to change with the 'crisis of secular modernity' brought about by the 16th and 17th centuries (Elsner; Rubiés 1999a: 5).

The 18th century, when the very term *tourism* first entered the English language (Barnes; Hoose 1999: 16), brings to memory the *Grand Tour* of Europe, a mostly northern European phenomenon that involved an 'educational' trip to some of 'the sacred places of origin' of western culture' (Jefferson 1991: 18; Sheldrake 1999: 8). Above anything else, however, the Grand Tour brought about an unparalleled boost to travel. Thus, the number of Englishmen visiting the Continent

almost quadrupled between 1763 and 1785 (Newman 1997: 43). By 1830, such figures had grown tenfold (Hodgson 1988: 3; Baum 1996: 25). Holidays and tourism were soon to be institutionalised through the creation of the first travel agencies, in which Thomas Cook played an essential role (Barnes; Hoose 1999: 16). Indeed, travel agencies quickly turned the English seaside resort into a one-week paradise for the lower middle and working classes (Inglis 2000: 36-54; see also Urry 2000). Crucially, their (and other related) discourses also began to "domesticate" foreign countries (Litvak 1984: 11; 1987: 12).

The discourse of tourism was given a boost in the early 20th century, when the first tourist boards at state level appeared (Spain, 1905; France, 1910; Italy, 1919; Germany, 1920; Britain, 1929) and started to produce their own materials (Barke and Towner 1996: 16). Consolidation, however, came in the 1950s, when tourist boards (at national, regional or even local levels), travel agencies and their resulting materials multiplied *ad infinitum* making ample use of the increasingly powerful mass media —including, most recently, the virtually infinite possibilities offered by the Internet. All of these help to disseminate a perfectly distinct discourse, which lures all of us — potential tourists at heart— into a world of fantasy and illusion, far from our dull, grey daily existence, exerting a great deal of power in the process, not least because it most certainly helps to create and, ultimately, disseminates potentially influential images of entire societies and cultures packaged as destinations.

In the light of this, it is the aim of this article to provide some insights into the Balearic Islands' official discourse of tourism promotion as seen in the latest "sales literature" available, 'the most important promotional device since it has the greatest factual content and focuses on the *unique* attractions of the destination' (Dann 1996: 136). More specifically, our emphasis will be placed on what Dann calls 'national tourism organisation and government pamphlets' (1996: 156) currently used to promote this destination. As previously done by Prieto (2005: 113), this work will not use Dann's term "pamphlets" (1996: 156). Instead, the term "National Tourist Organisation" or "Official Tourist Administration Info-Promotional Publications" (NTO/OTA IPPs) will be used. Such materials are both written and visual/sensory in nature and may well be consumed during

both the pre- and on-trip stages of the travel experience (see Dann 1996: 140-169). Our choice of term is in no little part due to the fact it also comfortably covers the online materials that clearly dominate nowadays (and which this article will focus on) whilst clearly reflecting their hybrid textual function.[1]

In order to do so, this work will first introduce the Balearic Islands as a tourist destination and will then move on to analyse its official discourse with a twofold aim, namely (1) to dissect the image it disseminates of this culturally-distinctive Mediterranean territory, with particular regard to its possible connection (or lack thereof) to the complex identity issues that currently characterise the Balearics; and (2) to discuss the role it may play in the Balearic tourism industry. This will be done through an analysis of the available official online materials (see below) catering for both Spanish and UK nationals. This will in turn involve an overview of materials published in three different languages (Catalan —when available—, Spanish and English), often involving translation from one into the other(s). It is for this reason that translation norm theory will be drawn on (Toury 1995 and 1999; Hermans 1999); more specifically, reference will be made to the mostly Delabatista-inspired (1989) macrotextual matricial norms identified by Prieto (2005: 523-530) in the field of British tourist translation.

The Balearic Islands on the tourist map

World tourism demand truly began to soar in the years after the Second World War (Cohen 1984: 376), involving 25 million international tourist arrivals in 1950, hitting the 600 million figure at the turn of the century (Baum 1996: 25), and reaching some 880 million in 2009 (a 4% decline with respect to 2008), generating up to €611 billion in export earnings, whilst a recovery is expected for 2010 (WTO 2010). This indicates that tourism, for some time now the world's largest industry (Hawkins 1993: 175), has experienced uninterrupted growth except for the minor recessions in the aftermath

---

[1] Turespaña, Spain's NTO, has clearly made online marketing one its top priorities (Turespaña 2010a).

of the 9/11 events and the current economic crisis. It is therefore a key for growth, ranking among the top 3 industries in most countries (Font; Ahjem 1999: 73).

Although gradually losing its share, Europe remains the most frequently visited region by far, generating up to 60% of OECD tourist receipts in what seems to be a self-protective situation, since half of EU tourists traditionally choose a destination within the EU itself (Boniface 1995: 106). Especially worth of mention is the Spanish case, which has experienced an increase of over 4,000% in the number of international arrivals in the last half-century or so (Bote Gómez and Thea Sinclair 1996: 65-66). After a peak of 58,665,504 international arrivals in 2007, the current crisis scenario has resulted in the number of international visitors dropping to 52,231,098 in 2009, according to the latest estimates, out of which 13,324,626 were British. This automatically places the UK as Spain's main international market, well ahead of its closest rival, Germany, which provided 8,925,908 visitors in the same year —see INE (2010: n.p.) for a full report.

Even more interesting than the sheer volume of the Spanish tourist sector is the distribution of international visitors across the country's geography, with Andalusia, the Balearic and Canary Islands, Catalonia, and the Valencian Country attracting 42,478,427 international visitors in 2009, that is over 81.32% of all international visitors to the country. Interestingly, the Balearic Islands are the second favourite destination in the country after Catalonia with some 9,000,000 international arrivals in 2009 (Conselleria de Turisme 2009: 13; INE 2010: n. p.).[2] This figure remains impressive in spite of the 9.5% drop it meant compared to the previous year. Equally worth noting is that, of all the 11,609,161 tourists our Islands received in 2009, only 2,629,175 were Spanish nationals (a 16.9% fall compared to 2008) (Conselleria de Turisme 2009: 13), which is very good

---

[2] At the time of writing, the data available on tourism figures for 2009 are still provisional and therefore vary slightly depending on the source consulted. All figures used henceforth have been taken from Conselleria de Turisme (2009) unless otherwise stated.

evidence of the extent to which the Balearic tourist industry depends on foreign markets.

The rise of the Balearics to world power status in the field of tourism is a well-known story. Its origins can be found in the early experiences of late "grand" and romantic tourists that visited the islands, many of whom contributed, through their writings, to placing Mallorca and the Balearics on the "tourist map". One of the first was José de Vargas Ponce, who published his *Descripciones de las islas Pithiusas y Baleares* as early as 1787. The Balearics received many more such visitors in the 19th century, including Gaspar Melchor de Jovellanos (exiled in Majorca between 1801-1808) and, most famously, the French writer George Sand and her lover at the time, Fryderyk Franciszek Chopin, whose experience in Valldemossa would give rise to her novel *Un hiver à Majorque* (1855). Such examples would be followed by many others, especially that of Archduke Ludwig Salvator of Austria, who set up residence on Majorca, published several books (including *Les Balears descrites per la paraula i la imatge*), and surrounded himself by artists and intellectuals in his Miramar possession, thus pioneering an awareness-raising campaign to defend local culture on the island whilst promoting the Balearics as a destination. Such a climate, especially in the aftermath of the colonial disaster of 1898, led some to consider tourism a plausible industry in the area, spearheaded by two symbolic events: the opening of Palma's Gran Hotel (1903, soon to be followed by similar establishments) and the launch of *Foment del Turisme de Mallorca* (1905) in the footsteps of similar institutions in France, Italy or Switzerland, as well as the so-called "Touring Clubs" (Vives 2005: 23-30).

The greatest rise in tourism arrivals was experienced between 1959 and 1974, i.e. still in the period when the country's tourism policy was centrally determined in Madrid (Ivars 2003: 315). The arrival of mass tourism, clearly fostered by Franco's *Plan de Estabilización Económica* (1959), most certainly changed the Balearic (and especially Majorcan) socioeconomic and natural environment (see Canals Morro 2006; Cirer 2009), turning it into a "pleasure periphery" for mostly British and German package holidaymakers,

even if other models such as residential tourism also grew (Amer i Fernàndez 2006: 28).

Following the end of the Franco regime (1975) and the ensuing birth of the semi-federal *estat de les autonomies*, the Balearic Islands will be among the first autonomous communities to develop a truly autonomous tourism policy within the Spanish State in the early 1980s. The foundation stone was probably the White Paper on Tourism in the Balearic Islands, commissioned by the recently-created Conselleria de Turisme. This was followed by the so-called *Plans d'Ordenació de l'Oferta Turística* for Majorca (1995) and Ibiza (1999) and the *Pla de Desestacionalització* (1997). Both documents point to what may be safely regarded as the two main concerns regarding Balearic tourism policy since the 1980s: sustainability (which has made tourism policy increasingly dependent on spatial planning) (Ivars 2003: 234; 241-243; 276-284: 315) and de-seasonalisation. Needless to say, it is widely perceived that both have been interpreted and ultimately tackled substantially differently by the different Administrations, which has in turn led to changing relations between the Balearic Government and the tourism sector, on the one hand, and Balearic society at large.[3]

---

[3] The Conservative Alianza Popular (later Partido Popular, PP) was in office from 1983 to 1999, with administrations led by Gabriel Cañellas (1983-1995), Cristòfol Soler (1995-1996) and Jaume Matas (1996-1999). Corruption problems as well as language and spatial policy issues account for the quick succession of conservative premiers in 1995-1996, although it was the tourism-related echoes of Matas' *Directrius d'Ordenació del Territori* that would eventually lead to a PP crisis which, together with the diminishing support it started to receive from the influential hoteliers, led to the party's defeat at the 1999 election. The Conservative period was followed by a Socialist Administration led by Francesc Artich (1999-2003) with the help of smaller left-wing parties and the nationalist liberal party Unió Mallorquina, thus creating the first *Pacte de Progrés*. Political change may have been made possible due to the growing environmental concerns that the Balearic society had in relation to what was increasingly seen as an unsustainable tourism industry and policy. This climate accounts for the introduction of the highly controversial *ecotaxa* in this period, to be paid by hotel residents. This ecotax proved immediately unpopular and helped strain relations between the left-wing administration and the hospitality sector (see Amer i Fernàndez 2006: 209-215 for further details), which may well have fostered yet another political turn. Indeed, Jaume Matas would resume office again from 2003 to 2007 supported by Unió Mallorquina, almost automatically repealing the ecotax. The current Balearic Government (2007-) resulted from another

As follows from above, tourism has become the centre of gravity for both Balearic politics and the entire Balearic society. Evidence suggests that the latter is fully aware of its pivotal importance whilst increasingly fearing its environmental impact (Amer i Fernàndez 2006: 37). Indeed, Balearic tourism, in spite of its sheer size, also has its pitfalls. One such, which will prove relevant to our discussion, is the seasonality of the Balearic tourism sector: indeed, the May-September period accounts for the vast majority of tourist arrivals (with a minor peak in the springtime, generally coinciding with Easter, especially favoured by Spaniards) (Conselleria de Turisme 2009: 14-15). A similar imbalance appears in terms of the destination chosen by tourists, Majorca almost completely monopolising the sector with some 8,718,788 arrivals —whereas Ibiza-Formentera and Minorca lag behind with 1,902,703 and 987,671 visitors, respectively (*Ibid*: 13).

In order to complete the picture of the Balearic tourism industry it must also be said that it is extremely dependent on selected markets, especially two: Germany (which provided over 3,600,000 tourists in 2009) and Britain (over 2,800,000). Other nationalities (such as Italy, France or Switzerland) also provide important numbers although they lag well behind both Germany and France (*Ibid*: 22). The average length of stay currently stands at 10.8 days, mostly (61.2%) spent in hotels and resorts (*Ibid*: 56).

A fairly accurate picture of the Balearic tourism sector results from analysing the profile of the average tourist in Majorca. Overall, 23.7% of tourists on the island are not yet 25 years old, while 38.2% are within the 25-44 age group, which is indicative of the strength of the island's young- and family-oriented sector. Roughly half those tourists (47.3%) come on a package (often all-inclusive) holiday, almost 73% stay in a hotel or resort, and almost 74% use the Internet, which somehow highlights the relevance of the online materials to be analysed in this work. This average profile varies slightly if the country of origin is also to be taken into account. For instance, UK visitors to Majorca are known for coming to the island almost

---

Pacte de Progrés led by Francesc Artich, after a Conservative Administration marred by environmental and financial problems.

exclusively (97.6%) on a holiday, thus excluding other (profitable) reasons for travel; but also for providing an exceptionally large number (27.3%) of tourists under 25 (60), which might be safely interpreted as an indicator of the strong presence of not only entire families but also young tourists (generally on a budget holiday) (*Ibid*: 59-60).

These and other factors well beyond the scope of this article have recently resulted in the latest white paper of Balearic tourism (Riera; Aguiló 2009) that clearly states that changes should be made if the challenges of 21st century tourism are to be met. Indeed, the Balearic tourism industry has long sought short-term profit and it is now in the mid- and, especially long term that the future of the sector lies, with new strategies aiming not quite so much at increasing the number of visitors to the islands as at 'securing the best economic, environmental and social conditions for the development of tourism' (Riera; Aguiló 2009: 360; our translation; see also 359-362). This, in turn, involves

> fostering the visibility of "new" products of high added value as well as "new" tourist areas, based on our own cultural and environmental values, in which the quality of the service and the high levels of environmental efficiency should rise as the main "appeal factors" to new customer niches within a more balanced [i.e. less seasonal] distribution of tourist flows. (Riera; Aguiló 2009: 382; our translation)

As can be seen in the white paper, there seems to be widespread agreement that one of the main tools that should be used in order to make the Balearics a competitive, sustainable destination in the 21st century is the development of a strong, easily recognisable brand image (Riera; Aguiló 2009: 363; see also Haak 2009) that could help potential visitors truly differentiate the Balearic Islands from competing destinations —hence the relevance of the analysis this article aims to carry out. Accordingly, a new image of the Balearic Islands should be developed, (1) taking into consideration not only the visitors' preferences but also "the local population's values and identity"; (2) serving as an umbrella brand under which the different islands' own brands could also be developed; and (3) ensuring that

this brand is recognised both globally and locally (Riera; Aguiló 2009: 375).

Officially promoting the Balearics: Turespaña and IBATUR

In the light of the above, there follows a brief analysis of the image disseminated by NTO/OTA IPPs promoting the Balearics. And it is precisely here that one important methodological difficulty is encountered since there are two different institutions, namely Turespaña and IBATUR, that publish NTO/OTA IPPs promoting the Balearics as a tourist destination. This is a clear sign of fragmentation and may well result in far less cost-efficient promotional campaigns (see Prieto 2007). Such fragmentation results not only from complex identity issues but also from the not always well-managed decentralisation of the Spanish State, which often leads to what may be perceived as a permanent atmosphere of competition between different political and administrative levels.[4]

Fragmentation, however, does not end here. Balearic NTO/OTA IPPs available online also compete with a good many other materials to be found on entirely privately-run websites. To mention but a few examples, a Google search with the keywords "Balearic Islands" renders countless matches, the most prominent of which are (1) Turespaña's devoted site to the area;[5] (2) the privately-run *All About Spain* site on the Balearics;[6] and (3) similarly *The Balearics Islands Information Site*.[7]

---

[4] This fragmentation is considerably more complex since, beside the existence of the Spanish central Government in Madrid (on which Turespaña ultimately depends) and the Govern de les Illes Balears (the Balearic Government, responsible for IBATUR), the four major islands also have their own Consell Insular (Island Council) — detached itself from Ibiza's only in 2007— and each in turn publishes its own OTA IPPs: <http://www.informallorca.net/>, <www.menorca.es>, <www.ibiza.travel> and <www.formentera.es>. At any rate, the very existence of four different Island Councils as well as their different tourist promotional materials already hints at a deeply fragmented Balearic identity.

[5] <www.spain-info.com/Areaguide/balearics.htm>.

[6] <http://www.red2000.com/spain/baleares/index.html>.

[7] <http://www.balearicsislands.com/>. As a rule of thumb, such privately-run sites may feature cultural and historical information on the destinations they cover,

Should the same search be run for the Spanish world "Baleares" instead, the first three matches would be (1) IBATUR's tourism site; and the privately-run (2) *Guía de las Islas Baleares* and (3) *Baleares.net*.[8]

Fragmentation is all the more obvious should the keyword "Mallorca" (by far the most important Balearic destination) be Google-searched instead. In this case, IBATUR's especially devoted site is the first to be triggered although closely followed by the private sites MallorcaWeb,[9] *Mallorca Quality*,[10] and *Mallorca.com*.[11] For its part, the Consell de Mallorca's *InfoMallorca* site[12] appears well behind all these, whereas Turespaña does not make it anywhere within the first pagefuls of results.[13]

Given the aims and scope of this work, only Turespaña and IBATUR materials will be considered here since those published by the different Island Councils do not cover all of the Balearics whereas

---

although they are clearly commercial in nature, with links to hotels, rent-a-car firms, entertainment venues… featuring prominently. *All About Spain* is available in English (default language), Spanish and German, whereas the latter site is only available in English.

[8] <www.illesbalears.es>, <www.islas-baleares.com> and <www.baleares.net>. (2) is only available in Spanish whereas (3) only uses French. The latter is operated by the French market-targeting tour operator Tourismia SARL.

[9] <www.mallorcaweb.com>. This prominent portal is part of the entirely private BalearWeb conglomerate, with sites for each of the four major Balearic Islands. It provides Catalan, Spanish, German and English versions, Spanish being the default language.

[10] <www.mallorcaquality.com>. This site is only available in Spanish. Although it does contain more factual information than other privately-run sites, the prominence of its "guía comercial" betrays its mostly commercial aims.

[11] <www.mallorca.com>. This site seems to offer German, English, Spanish, Majorcan and Polish versions although the Majorcan version leads to a Spanish site. It is heavily commercial in orientation.

[12] <www.infomallorca.net>. This is an interesting, and recently revamped, website available in Catalan, Spanish, English and German (in this order) although the Spanish site appears by default. InfoMallorca claims to help in the pre-trip preparations (through useful tourist information) as well as provide a community space in which both locals and visitors may share their knowledge and experiences.

[13] Other matches triggered in the search lead to other privately-run sites like <www.mallorcaspain.net> (which calls itself the "Mallorca travel guide" in spite of its obvious commercial nature; <www.guiamallorca.com> and <www.mallorcaonline.com> (the latter clearly targeting the German market).

those by private institutions simply cannot be taken as NTO/OTA IPPs.

Both Turespaña (Instituto de Turismo de España) and IBATUR (Agència de Turisme de les Illes Balears), as the tourist boards for Spain and the Balearic Islands, are public institutions depending on Spain's central Government (Ministerio de Industria, Turismo y Comercio) and the Balearic Government (Conselleria de Turisme i Treball), respectively. Here lies one of these institutions' signature features, namely their dependence on public administrations, which makes them very different from northern European models such as the British. Indeed, in countries like the United Kingdom, tourist boards at local, national or even State level have long been state-funded agencies separate from the Government Tourist Department and effectively working jointly with the private sector (Jenkins 1991: 71 and 107; Lickorish 1991: 132) —a joint cooperation which, in the light of the data above (and especially the existence of a vast number of privately-run, commercially-oriented websites) does not seem to be quite so fruitful in the Balearic context.[14]

The *Islas Baleares/Balearic Islands*, by Turespaña

Both Turespaña and IBATUR have their own especially devoted websites on which potential visitors may find out information about their destination of choice. Turespaña's site[15] has changed enormously over the last few years becoming not only more attractive but also increasingly sophisticated. Visual appeal is instantly detectable through the importance granted to imagery (on 8 July 2010, drawing on Spain's success at the Football World Cup Semi-Finals) and colour; additionally, the site introduces a soundtrack through certain links, which makes browsing an even more pleasing sensorial experience. Sophistication can be seen in that the site (1) is available in an increasingly wide range of languages; (2) is intelligently

---

[14] Turespaña, however, states that it supports 'the commercialization of Spanish tourist products abroad', for which 'we cooperate with Autonomous Communities, local administrations and the private sector' (Turespaña 2010b).
[15] <www.spain.info>.

designed so as to encourage the visitor to browse it rather than check a particular piece of information; and (3) is clearly based on a niche-marketing policy that was absent from the site up to very recently. Thus, key markets have their own devoted site (Britain of course has its own, as befits its status as a key market for Spain's tourism industry; in the particular case of the British Turespaña home, the football motif has been replaced by a creative image of Ferran Adrià, thus encouraging gastronomic tourism), and links are also provided to special products like "Privilege Spain" (addressing the upper-end, discerning visitors) and "Europe Senior Tourism" (addressing the EU's 55+ segment). Both products point to the different strategies being implemented to "de-seasonalise" the Spanish tourism sector combining both sustainability and profitability. The single most important textual/translation norm that lies at the very base of each country-exclusive Turespaña site is without a doubt *substitutio*, which involves replacing an element by a different one. *Transmutatio*, i.e. the shifting of the order of the different textual elements, together with *aiectio* and *detractio* (i.e. the addition or deletion of particular elements) may also play a role. The Turespaña site is effectively provided with a 'brand' feel largely thanks to Joan Miró's prominent *Sol de España* logo which Turespaña has been using for decades in combination with a series of slogans, the latest of which is "I need Spain".

Our interest here, however, concerns the image of the Balearics disseminated by Spain's premier tourist authority. In order to see into this, materials on the subject will be reviewed from Turespaña's international Spanish[16] and British sites.[17] Before going any further, it is necessary to state that, however appealing the site may be, cultural information on the country is fragmented and can only be gathered by clicking on, or unfolding, countless links and menus that do not address any specific area. For this, visitors must run

---

[16] <http://www.spain.info/?l=es>. This is the site that Spanish nationals will check should they choose Turespaña as a source of information. The site is not available in Catalan.

[17] <http://www.spain.info/en_GB/>. Other sites in English include the English international site plus others targeting Canada (available in both English and French), Ireland, and the USA.

a search on the "*Buscar en España*"/"Search in Spain" search engine that each site provides. Should this be done, using "*Baleares*" and "Balearic Islands" as keywords, the site retrieves 46 matches —the "*destinos turísticos*"/"tourist destinations" option having been used from the left-hand menu to filter the search. Such matches appear to be presented in order of relevance, the most general coming first. It is worth mentioning that this page is identical in both the Spanish and English versions, which suggests that (1) the latter is a "loyalty-based" translation of the former, mostly resulting from the application of a matricial norm that could be referred to as *repetitio*; and (2) most importantly, that the niche marketing policy is no longer applicable on the site when highly specific information is being searched.

The first match leads to a brief introduction to the archipelago to be found under a small yet interactive Google-powered map that may help the reader locate it geographically. The lower half of the page is dominated by changing images of the Balearics which clearly emphasise the beauty of the Mediterranean Sea in the area. The copy is nothing but a quick, rather shallow introduction to the Balearics, largely presented as a unitary group, with particular emphasis on weather and political aspects (the latter being probably incomprehensible for a foreign visitor unacquainted with Spain's *Estat de les Autonomies*). As an anecdote, the text mentions the institutions referred to as "insular councils" although this information is not fully updated since Formentera is still made to depend on Ibiza. The site also highlights events taking place on the islands within the next few weeks, suggests a number of town and city destinations (a total of 8, of which 7 are Majorcan and 1 —Maó— Minorcan), and finally provides "travel ideas", namely "Diving in the Balearics", "Birdwatching in Formentera" (a most British pastime) and "Shopping in Ibiza". Finally, at the bottom of the page the "*Islas Baleares para ti*"[18] section offers a number of links to sights,[19] in a clear attempt to

---

[18] Section title kept in Spanish in the English version.

[19] These are "Palma de Mallorca Cathedral", "Almudaina-Ibiza Castle", "Cartuja de Valldemossa Monastery", "Cabrera Archipelago National Park", "*Reserva de la Biosfera de Menorca*" (left in Spanish), "Peguera Palmira Beach", "Santa Eularia [sic] Beach", "Playa [sic] d'Alcúdia Beach", "Cala Galdana Cove". Comments on the

both encompass the four major islands and combine sand & sun and (cultural and natural) heritage tourism. The sites especially devoted to the beaches all feature the same picture (so that the reader cannot know what each looks like) together with some basic information. Worth praising is the information appearing at the bottom of each page, with links to different types of accommodation as well as further sights in the area. For their part, the natural and cultural heritage-devoted sites do feature individualised visual components plus a short text which is quite technical —often enumerating seaweed species to be found in the waters around Cabrera or the (entirely decontextualised) names of the monarchs laid to rest in Palma Cathedral.

The *Illes Balears*, by IBATUR

IBATUR is the public institution in charge of the promotion of Balearic tourism both within the borders of this Autonomous Community and beyond. As stated above, it depends on the Balearic Government's *Conselleria de Turisme i Treball* (as does INESTUR, the *Institut d'Estratègia Turística de les Illes Balears*). Since the former is also concerned with research and a more proficient use of the technologies available ultimately aiming at better tourist products and an overall better tourist environment 'within the framework of the Balearic tourism policy' (*Govern de les Illes Balears* n.d.: n.p.), it is also to be expected that both institutions should work hand in hand.
Just like Turespaña, IBATUR also has its own website,[20] promoting the Balearics as a tourist destination. The site's default language is Spanish but is also available in five other languages, namely Catalan, English, German, French and Italian. Given the scope of this work, only the first three versions will be discussed here.

The IBATUR home site is also aesthetically pleasing, with an important visual component featuring moving images, both at the top of the page (showcasing changing images from the latest "*Molt més*

---

translator's probably ill-judged language choices will not be provided since these would lie well beyond the scope of this work.
[20] <www.illesbalears.es>.

que/ *Mucho más que*/ Much more than..." campaign, whose posters can still be seen gracing billboards and street furniture) and on its right-hand side (from which tennis champion Rafel Nadal, the latest international ambassador of Balearic tourism, invites Internet users to "come and enjoy my islands").[21]

The three different sites present identical lay-outs (*repetitio*), with a top menu enabling visitors to access information on each of the four major islands, and a left-hand menu with links to "beaches", "sport tourism", "leisure activities", "tourism and business", "health tourism", "tourism and culture", "shopping and handicrafts", "activities", "cuisine", "nature", "accommodations" [sic], and "practical information". The centre of the page is in turn subdivided into two main sections: "*No te lo pierdas*/ *No t'ho perdis*/ Don't miss it" (which features some of the season's cultural highlights and prominent Balearic-related news, such as Nadal's recently recovering the No 1 spot on the ATP World Tour Masters 1000 lists); and "*Sabías*.../ *Sabies*.../ Do you know..." (which offers curious information on the islands' natural and cultural heritage). The content of the first of these two sections is identical in the three language versions (*repetitio*). The second is, however, different (*substitutio*). Although there seems to be no clear reason behind the different choice of contents in Spanish and English, the Catalan version of this section

---

[21] By clicking on this image the visitor accesses the "*Las islas de Nadal*" site (<www.lasislasdenadal.com>), an expensive site whose copy, summarising that found on the regular IBATUR site, is written in the first person so as to make the impression that it is Rafel Nadal himself that welcomes and guides visitors around "his" islands. In November 2010, the different media reported that Nadal was still in negotiations with the Balearic Government to see his lucrative contract renewed as Balearic tourism ambassador. The way this news was handled echoed past controversies concerning equally lucrative contracts with celebrities like Michael Douglas or Claudia Schiffer (who both owned second residences in Majorca), under the auspices of the conservative *Partido Popular* (PP) Administration. Thus, such deals often bring to mind a specific model of tourism expansion which the PP is often associated with. At the time of writing, the outcome of the negotiation with Nadal was still uncertain, and Joana M. Barceló Martí (consellera de Turisme i Treball) declared that the protagonist of the latest Balearic tourism campaign at London's World Travel Market (held in November 2010) was to be not a celebrity but the Balearic people as a whole. Controversies aside, the effectiveness of such hugely expensive, star-studded campaigns should be assessed.

seems to specialise in providing anecdotal information relating to several Balearic cultural and natural heritage sites, which may well serve to encourage Balearic residents to re-discover their own heritage.[22]

Just like Miró's *Sol de España* logo dominates all Turespaña materials, the *Illes Balears* logo features prominently all throughout the IBATUR site. This is a stylised representation of the archipelago, each major island being represented by a piece in a different colour. It may be safely stated that the ensemble suggests both diversity and unity at once (more on this below), and its contemporary design is both appealing and easily identifiable, thus certainly contributing to the creation of a strong brand image.[23]

As stated above, diversity or, better put, each island's unique character seems to be emphasised by the fact that the top of the page features prominent links to each of them. This, at least in principle, stands in stark contrast to Turespaña's site. Nevertheless, such emphasis does not go far beyond this. Indeed, each of the island-special sites repeats the layout of the IBATUR home page (*repetitio*), with a "*No te lo pierdas...*" section highlighting a selection of seasonal events on each island (the same in the three language versions — *repetitio*) and a "*Sabías...*" section featuring a mere two information items which, although different again in each language version (*substitutio*), cannot really aspire to provide the reader with an overall image of uniqueness for each of the islands.

What clearly remains constant, both on the IBATUR home site and the different island-exclusive mini-sites, is the left-hand menu. The main difference lies in that, if accessed from one of the island-exclusive mini-sites, this menu will automatically provide information for each field covered which is, with very few exceptions, exclusively applicable to the island to which the mini-site is devoted.

---

[22] By way of example, as accessed on 9 July 2010, the site commemorates the erstwhile production of *malvasia* or *vi dels reis* in Minorca, when specialised vineyards are being reintroduced on the island. Additionally, it provides information on the origin of the name of the highly emblematic *Pas de n'Adolf* in Formentera.

[23] It is worth noting that IBATUR's *Illes Balears* logo is far more widespread than Miró's *Sol de Mallorca*, a gift by the painter to Foment del Turisme de Mallorca in 1973 (Vives Reus 2005: 405).

There is no denying that the information that can be accessed through this menu is remarkably useful. For a start, it is presented in a user-friendly manner, avoiding the fragmentation of the otherwise visually-appealing Turespaña site. Secondly, it is of use for visitors and Balearic residents alike. Thirdly, it is quite clear from the fields covered by the information provided that, while an attempt is being made to diversify and de-seasonalise the islands' tourist offer, sand & sun tourism is by no means neglected. In fact, the most prominent feature on this menu is the "Beaches" section, which leads to highly detailed, daily updated information on each of the islands' most significant beaches and coves. Further down the menu, however, there are equally detailed sections which will be of interest here not only because they may appeal to an entirely different tourist niche but also because it is mostly through them that IBATUR's Balearic image is disseminated.

Cued by the omnipresent *Illes Balears* logo and the existence of individual mini-sites for each of the major islands, the suggestion is clearly made that the archipelago encompasses four main islands, each unique in its own way whilst also sharing elements in common. Interestingly, this suggestion, which seems to echo Francesc Antich's first Left-wing administration (1999-2003) and its slogan *Quatre illes, un país, cap frontera* (more on politics below), is not truly complemented by any text, however introductory in character, that could help the visitor ascertain the essence of such diversity and unity.

This does not mean, however, that historical and cultural notes are completely absent from the site. Indeed, these abound (and are at times surprisingly detailed) in those sections and sub-sections devoted to such aspects as "Festivals and shows", "Singular buildings", "History & archaeology", "Shopping and handicrafts", and "Cuisine". Indeed, snaps from the Balearics' rich past can be glimpsed when reading the mini-articles devoted to the myriad of items listed under such categories.[24] The visitor, however, cannot aspire to anything but a glimpse, since historical and cultural information is once again

---

[24] Interestingly, these are generally presented in a slightly different order in each of the different language sites (*transmutatio*), although the reason behind this is far from clear.

presented, as already seen on the Turespaña site, in a highly fragmented and entirely decontextualised manner.

This probably plays most visibly against a strongly differentiated image for each island —avid readers may well realise that each island offers a slightly different sightseeing and culinary experience but will remain completely ignorant of the reasons behind such diversity.

More visible is, however, the image of the islands as sharing a common cultural legacy and —it may be inferred— sense of identity. This may be seen through a brief overview of the translation norms operating on the site. As stated above, *transmutatio* does play a role in that features within each section are often enough presented in a different order on each of the language-specific mini-sites. What truly prevails, however, is *repetitio*. This may be seen in that the copy is almost invariably translated following a loyalty-based approach from the source language (which we assume to be Catalan) into the different target languages (for the purposes of our analysis, Spanish and English). *Repetitio*, however, may also go beyond this and, in the particular case of the IBATUR site, it often involves leaving elements untranslated, thus creating a clear element of difference that characterises what may ultimately seen as a foreignising (i.e. not domesticating) translation. This is precisely the effect resulting from the countless names of monarchs of the former Kingdoms of Majorca and Aragon as well as cultural institutions and artefacts (sometimes even generic place names), which are systematically left untranslated even when these could easily have been translated into the different target languages.[25] Admittedly, this strategy will be most effective in the case of the Spanish IBATUR site, since Spanish speakers will automatically recognise untranslated terms as Catalan. Through translation, therefore, and at least as far as Spanish-speaking visitors are concerned, IBATUR clearly succeeds in presenting the Balearics

---

[25] Interestingly, leaving Spanish names untranslated is something that Turespaña also does on its English site. There are reasons to believe, however, that the reasons behind this are different, so that whereas IBATUR most probably means to differentiate the Balearics from mainstream Spanish culture by leaving Catalan names unstranslated, Turespaña's examples of *repetitio* are probably related to their translators' competence in the target language.

as a culturally-distinct territory, especially with respect to the rest of the Spanish State.

Discussion and some conclusions

At present, the officially promoted image of the Balearic Islands is hampered by fragmentation, mostly on two different fronts. First, the existence of not one but two national / official tourist organisations must be stressed once again. As seen above, in spite of the possible cooperation between them, each publishes its own materials, which thus compete for attention among the reading public. Secondly, greater cooperation must be sought not only between the central and Balearic administrations, but also between these and the private sectors involved in the tourist industry. This should result in a stronger Internet presence for national/official tourist organisations (as is well known, Google orders results according to, inter alia, each website's "PageRank") and, consequently, in more cost-efficient promotional campaigns and a stronger brand image.

As for the particular case of Turespaña and the role it plays in the promotion of the Balearic Islands, it may be argued that its recently revamped website clearly follows the visual style already used, and marketing strategies implemented, by the British Tourist Authority (now VisitBritain) since the early 2000s (see Prieto 2005). However, even though this certainly helps make the visit to the site a pleasurable experience, marketing is obviously boosted at the cost of information. The latter is mostly fragmented, found disseminated across countless especially-devoted mini-sites, and often decontextualised, especially as far as history and culture are concerned. Altogether, the reader may well gather the idea that the Balearics are rich in history but will not know whose history this was, which role it played and how it still permeates contemporary Balearic society and identity/ies. Certainly, Balearic culture is not sufficiently differentiated from mainstream Spanish culture —in this regard, it must be stated that foreign visitors most probably cannot distinguish what is Spanish or Catalan —let alone, Balearic— unless this difference is clearly foregrounded in the text. Lastly, the image prevails of the Balearics as a culturally homogeneous territory, not

different enough from other Mediterranean, not necessarily Spanish, destinations. The strategy followed by Turespaña, therefore, deletes individual island identities and seems to suggest that the ultimate aim was clearly to position the Archipelago within a wider, globally recognised Mediterranean dreamland (very much along the lines of the latest Estrella Damm *Mediterràniament* campaigns).

As seen above, the IBATUR website somehow counterbalances this, making a clear effort to differentiate the Balearics from mainstream Spanish culture —although whether this attempt succeeds among foreign visitors may well be worth exploring further. And although an attempt is also made to individualise each island, the way the information is presented clearly makes it very difficult for the reader to grasp their different and deeply-felt cultural identities. Indeed, as the preceding discussion has suggested, there is evidence that this sense of a highly unified Balearic cultural identity is nothing but what Pfister would fittingly refer to as a "heterostereotype" (1996: 4), an image produced and imposed from outside (often enough through the discourse of tourism promotion, as evidenced in Prieto 2005).

There is no doubt that Majorcans, for example, have a strong sense of identity resulting in no little part from the island's Catalan heritage. Thus, Melià points out that Ramon Llull himself referred to himself as a "català de Mallorca" (1967: 141), although he also summarises historical reasons as to why the Majorcan "imagined community" (Anderson 1983) grew to develop mixed feelings about "Catalanness" (Melià 1967: 142), even if, as he sees it, the possible differences between Majorcan and mainstream Catalan culture are not greater than those between Majorca and the other Balearic Islands (Ibid: 146).

This is a crucial issue in that it clearly points to the development of strong yet separate island identities in the Balearic context —strong enough for Melià himself (2006[1967]) to grant Majorca (not the entire Balearic archipelago) nation status (a thesis he would further develop in Melià 1977), in spite of what he identifies as a rapid de-Catalanisation process derived from both the growing tourism industry, a view also endorsed by Arnau (1999: 61-62), and the emergence of Spanish television at the time.

According to Melià, determining exactly where Majorcanness lay with respect to the other Balearic island identities and the rest of the *Països Catalans* was a sore issue already four decades ago (1967: 141), and so it remains today (Mestre i Sureda 2002: 99).[26]

Overall, then, and in the light of all the above, the image resulting from IBATUR materials is all the more crucial. It is clear that the Balearics are presented as a great Mediterranean destination although what makes both the entire archipelago and each of the islands unique within the Mediterranean is not quite so clear. This matter is of the greatest importance, not only if tourist promotion is to take into consideration 'the local population's values and identity' (Riera; Aguiló 2009: 375) but also if the Balearic tourism industry is at all to be diversified and deseasonalised, especially when it is felt that the Balearics are giving in to competing Mediterranean destinations such as Croatia or Turkey.

IBATUR has unarguably taken important steps towards providing Balearic tourism with that brand feel that seems to be so important these days. The fairly transparent and colourful logo it uses is a good indicator of this —and so is its hiring high-profile public figures to star in its campaigns. However, as has been seen, there are other pressing issues that need to be addressed. In any case, it will indeed be interesting to trace the extent to which the image of Rafel Nadal may contribute to a boost of Balearic tourism, especially if we

---

[26] The scope of this article makes it impossible for us to discuss this question further. However, a candid and rather outspoken view of the issue may be the following: 'A les Illes he pogut observar que tothom se sent del seu municipi, de la seva illa, i potser de la seva comarca. Però més enllà, ve el problema. Uns (la majoria) se senten espanyols (una altra cosa seria especificar quina mena d'Espanya voldrien). Altres (la minoria) se senten pertanyents als Països Catalans. Finalment, hi hauria un tercer grup que no es manifestaria. Però, qui se sent "balear"? […]La denominació "Islas Baleares" fou totalment artificial, basant-se en un criteri més geogràfic que històric (menystenint l'arxipèlag pitiús), en tractar-se d'una denominació imposada des de Madrid amb la divisió en províncies de 1833. […] [E]l Govern autonòmic és una institució encara llunyana, més gestora que representant d'una identitat concreta, sobretot enfora de Mallorca. I per si no n'hi hagués prou, el concepte "balear" se l'han apropiat minories gonellistes per representar una suposada "llengua i cultura balear", en resposta a una inexistent invasió catalana que no veig per enlloc, i que en el fons és una continuació de la connotació provincial i centralista del terme "Baleares"' (García 2007).

take into account the values he may be seen to embody in international markets and how this may affect the product —Balearic tourism— he has been selling for the last two years or so.

Finally, some thoughts must go to the very effectiveness of the materials issued by the NTO/OTO under analysis here. To what extent are these materials consulted by the tourists actually visiting the islands? We have been unable to find any reliable data on this matter although the evidence gathered leaves very little room for hope. As discussed above, currently available surveys show that a vast percentage of visitors are Internet-literate but this does not necessarily mean that they have consulted the NTO/OTA IPPs currently available on the Net. Most likely, this would rather be found to be a strong indicator of them having booked their holiday online. Strong structural efforts must therefore be made in the sector, ideally in combination with high-quality promotional campaigns, if the Balearics are to leave the all-inclusive mass tourism model it is still so heavily dependent on and which has caused substantial damage on its natural and cultural heritage.

Bibliography

Amer i Fernàndez, J. 2006. *Turisme i política. L'empresariat hoteler de Mallorca*, Palma: Edicions Documenta Balear.

Anderson, B. 1991. *Imagined Communities. Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (revised and extended edition), London: Verso.

Arnau, P. 1999. *Narrativa i turisme a Mallorca (1968-1980)*, Palma de Mallorca: Edicions Documenta Balear.

Barke, M.; Towner, J. 1996. 'Exploring the History of Leisure and Tourism in Spain', Barke, M; Towner, J.; Newton, M. T. (Eds.) *Tourism in Spain. Critical Issues*, Wallingford: CAB International, pp. 3-34.

Barnes, M.; Hoose, J. 1999. 'Tourists or travellers? Rediscovering pilgrimage', *The Way*, 39: 1, pp. 16-26.

Baum, T. 1996. 'Images of tourism past and present', *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 8: 4, pp. 25-30.

Boniface, P. 1995. *Managing Quality Cultural Tourism*, London and New York: Routledge.

Bote Gómez, V.; Thea Sinclair, M. 1996. 'Tourism Demand and Supply in Spain', Barke, M.; Towner, J.; Newton, M. T. (Eds.) *Tourism in Spain. Critical Issues*, Wallingford: CAB International, pp. 65-88.

Canals Morro, P. 2006. *S'Arenal que he Viscut. Hotel Solimar: 50 Anys*, Palma de Mallorca: Edicions Documenta Balear.

Cirer, J. C. 2009. *La Invenció del Turisme de Masses a Mallorca*, Palma de Mallorca: Edicions Documenta Balear.

Cohen, E. 1984. 'The sociology of tourism: approaches, issues, and findings', *Annual Review of Sociology*, 10, pp. 373-392.

Conselleria de Turisme / INESTUR / CITTIB 2009. *El turisme a les Illes Balears. Dades informatives 2009*, Palma de Mallorca: Conselleria de Turisme.

Delabatista, D. 1989. 'Translation and mass-communication: film and T.V. translation as evidence of cultural dynamics', *Babel*, 35: 4, pp. 193-218.

Elsner, J.; Rubiés, J.-P. 1999. 'Introduction', Elsner, J.; Rubiés, J.-P. (Ed.) *Voyages & Visions. Towards a Cultural History of Travel*, London: Reaktion Books, pp. 1-56.

Font, X.; Ahjem, T. E. 1999. 'Searching for a balance in tourism development strategies', *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 11: 2-3, pp. 73-77.

Foucault, M. 1984[1969]. *L'Archéologie du Savoir*, Paris: Gallimard.

García, M. 2007. 'Les Balears Apedaçades o el Poble Inexistent (L'Identitat Illenca)', <http://www.racocatala.cat/forums/fil/75892/balears-apedacades-poble-inexistent-lidentitat-illenca>. Accessed 14 November 2010.

Govern de les Illes Balears (n. d.), 'Agència de Turisme de les Illes Balears (atb): funcions', <http://www.caib.es/govern/funciones.do?lang=ca&coduo=475>. Accessed 9 July 2010.

Haak, E. 2009. 'Image Analysis of the Island of Mallorca from the Perspective of German Travellers to the Holiday Destination – An Empirical Study', Wachowiak, H. (Ed.) *German Tourists on Mallorca. Travellers Perspectives and Descriptive Consumer Profiles*, International University of Applied Sciences and Verlag K. H. Bock: Bad Honnef and Bonn, pp.27-75.

Hawkins, D. E. 1993. 'Global Assessment of Tourism Policy. A Process Model', D. G. Pearce, and R. W. Butler (Ed.) *Tourism Research. Critiques and Challenges*, London/New York: Routledge/International Academy for the Study of Tourism, pp. 175-200.

Hermans, T. 1999. *Translation in Systems. Descriptive and System-Oriented Approaches Explained*, Manchester: St Jerome Publishing.

Hodgson, A. 1988. 'The Travel Industry – its History', Hodgson, A. (Ed.) *The Travel and Tourism Industry. Strategies for the Future*, Oxford and New York: Pergamon Press, pp. 1-19.

INE [Instituto Nacional de Estadística] 2010. 'Turismo receptor. Entrada de visitantes. Serie 2001-2009', <http://www.ine.es/jaxi/tabla.do?path=/t11/trec/a01/l0/&file=tr10001.px&type=pcaxis&L=0>. Accessed 3 July 2010.

Inglis, F. 2000. *The Delicious History of the Holiday*, London and New York: Routledge.

Ivars, J. A. 2003. *Planificación Turística de los Espacios Regionales en España*, Madrid: Editorial Síntesis.

Jefferson, A. 1991. 'Market Product Relationships', Bodlender, J.; Jefferson, A.; Jenkins, C.; Lickorish, C. *Developing Tourism Destinations. Policies and Perspectives*, Harlow: Longman, pp. 1-57.

Jenkins, C. L. 1991. 'Development Strategies', Bodlender, J.; Jefferson, A.; Jenkins, C.; Lickorish, C. *Developing Tourism Destinations. Policies and Perspectives*, Harlow: Longman, pp. 59-118.

Lickorish, L. 1991. 'Administrative Structure for Tourism Development', Bodlender, J.; Jefferson, A.; Jenkins, C.;

Lickorish, C. *Developing Tourism Destinations. Policies and Perspectives*, Harlow: Longman, pp. 119-165.

Litvak, L. 1984. *Geografías Mágicas. Viajeros Españoles del Siglo XIX por Países Exóticos (1800-1913)*, Barcelona: Laertes.

Litvak, L. 1987. *El Ajedrez de las Estrellas*, Barcelona: Laia.

Melià, J. 1967. *Els mallorquins*, Palma de Mallorca: Daedalus.

——— 1977. *La nació dels mallorquins*, Barcelona: Editorial Selecta.

——— 2006[1967]. *Cap a una interpretació de la història de Mallorca*, Palma de Mallorca: Nova Hora.

Mestre i Sureda, B. 2002. *La identitat reeixida*, Palma de Mallorca: Perifèrics.

Newman, G. 1997. *The Rise of English Nationalism. A Cultural History 1740-1830*, Basingtoke and London: MacMillan.

Pfaff, W. 1994. 'Nationalism and identity', *The Way* 34: 1, pp. 6-16.

Pfister, M. 1996. *The Fatal Gift of Beauty: The Italies of British Travellers*, Amsterdam: Rodopi.

Prieto Arranz, J. I. 2005. *Un Reino (Des)Unido. El discurso de la promoción turística británica y su traducción al español*, Oviedo: Servicio de Publicaciones de la Universidad de Oviedo.

——— 2007. 'From Languages to Cultures and back again. Reflections on Tourist Text Translation', Gromová, E.; Müglová, D. (Ed.) *Preklad a Cultura /2/*, Nitra (Slovakia): Univerzita Constantina Filozofa v Nitre Filosófica Faculta, pp. 227-247.

Riera Font, A.; Aguiló Pérez, E. (Dir.) 2009. *Llibre blanc del turisme de les Illes Balears. Cap a una nova cultura turística*, Palma de Mallorca: Conselleria de Turisme, Govern de les Illes Balears / Universitat de les Illes Balears.

Sheldrake, P. 1999. 'Travelling through life? Subversive journeys', *The Way*, 39: 1, pp. 5-15.

Toury, G. 1995. *Descriptive Translation Studies and Beyond*, Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company.

——— 1999. 'A Handful of Paragraphs on "Translation" and "Norms"', Schäffner, C. (Ed.) *Translation and Norms*, Clevedon and Philadelphia: Multilingual Matters, pp. 9-31.

Turespaña 2010a. 'Marketing on line',
  <http://www.tourspain.es/es/TURESPANA/Ejes+operativos/
  Marketing/>. Accessed 8 July 2010).

Turespaña 2010b. 'Conózcanos',
  <http://www.tourspain.es/es/TURESPANA/Organismo/>.
  Accessed 8 July 2010.

Urry, J. 2000[1990]. *The Tourist Gaze. Leisure and Travel in
  Contemporary Societies*, London, Thousand Oaks and New
  Delhi, SAGE.

Vives Reus, A. 2005. *Història del Foment del Turismo de Mallorca
  (1905-2005)*, Palma de Mallorca: Foment del Turisme de
  Mallorca.

WTO [World Tourism Organization] 2010. 'World Tourism
  Organization', <http://www.unwto.org/index.php>. Accessed
  25 June 2010.