

New Tourism in the 21st Century

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CHAPTER SEVEN

TOURISTIC IMAGES AND NARRATIVES OF IDENTIFICATION BETWEEN THE NORTH OF PORTUGAL AND GALIZA (SPAIN) IN THE TOURISTIC PROMOTIONAL LITERATURE⁶

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Abstract

In this paper it is analyzed, from an anthropological perspective and not from the marketing vision, the "official" images of tourism promotion since 1990 in the North of Portugal and Galiza (Spain). It is presented a cross-cultural perspective to compare two selected regions of Portugal and Spain in terms of the promotional touristic literature. Special attention is given to the international promotion and to the transnational touristic cooperation between the two territories. The two territories are privileged areas of fieldwork research and, at the same time, areas of intercultural and transnational exchange, intensified in the final decades of the 20th century with the creation of the Euroregion Galiza-North of Portugal. The paper presents an analysis of the touristic images, narratives and maps considering that as representations of the political and cultural identifications and as ideological discourses of the different levels of collective identities. In this research the methodology has used the touristic guides, brochures, pamphlets and web sites as important sources of data. The findings of the

research are that tourism and their images are a way of reconstructing transnational identities and identifications.

Key words: Touristic images and narratives, cross-cultural representations, North of Portugal, Galiza (Spain).

1. Introduction

The main aim of this paper is to discuss tourism as a way of constructing images, discourses and narratives of transcultural and transnational identities, contextualized in transnational spaces such as Galiza and North of Portugal is. The choice of these contexts for research can be explained by the historical reasons of cultural proximity between each other; by the present politics of transnational cooperation in tourism beginning in the 1990s; the important role of tourist images in the construction of transnational European identities operated in these contexts; and by personal reasons of the researcher; who is Galician and has taught in the North of Portugal since 15 years ago, teaching anthropology and cultural tourism.

The theoretical anchoring of the paper is social anthropology and semiotics applied to the discourses and content analysis of touristic promotional images and narratives. From this point of view, the policies of touristic promotion are an exercise of power confined to an ideological conception of collective identities (McLeod and Carrier 2010). This theoretical perspective is different from the functionalist perspective of the marketing tourist that underlined the mercantilization aim of the tourist images. My approach is from anthropology of tourism, with the objective of understanding the ideological conceptions and definitions of collective identifications that tourism has.

The methodology that was used was first the documental collection and analysis of: a) scientific literature review; and b) tourist promotional materials at different levels (Galicia, the north of Portugal, and the global world).

This collection was joined in tourist promotional events as FITUR (Madrid), BTL (Lisbon), Gallaecia (Vigo), Turisport (Silleda – Galiza). In second place, it has been done a classification and a discourse analysis of the materials from a semiotic point of view. The type of images and narratives used for the research were: i) 250 official tourist brochures collected since 1997; ii) touristic Internet sites of touristic promotion; iii) tourist guides -local, regional and international-. The findings of this paper are: a) the influence of state national identities is being questioned by new

transnational identities expressed in tourism promotion materials; b) the cross-cultural identifications between North of Portugal and Galiza has been changed in the last two decades caused by cooperation in tourism between other aspects; c) touristic images reflects a complex identification between Galiza and North of Portugal.

The organization of the paper presents first a theoretical framework for understanding the anthropological perspectives of touristic images; second the analysis of touristic images and narratives that international tourist guides has been constructed about Galiza and North of Portugal; in the third part of the paper I reflect about the images and identifications of Galiza in the Portuguese tourist promotion; in the fourth part I study the images and identifications of Portugal in the Galician tourist promotion. Finally, I concluded the paper with the conclusions and a general discussion about the ideological discourses of tourist images crossed between North of Portugal and Galiza.

2. Touristic images from an anthropological view

The science bibliography about tourist image is extensive and has been summarized by works as Baloglu and McCleary (1999), Gallarza et al. (2002) and Frías and Castañeda (2008). More part of the papers underlined a marketing perspective about the relationship between images and tourist behavior, but less the way as image has been created for meaning and make sense about the people identities of a destiny for visitors. From an anthropological perspective (Santana 2009: 97), touristic image is a mental representation about the knowledge or believes about the attributes of tourist destination (cognitive element) and the appreciation and sentimental feelings that stimulates (affective element).

I differentiate between touristic promotional image and the touristic constructed image made by the tourist experience. The first creates, modifies or reinforces collective stereotypes about destination. As the French anthropologist Marc Augé points out, tourism is a search for images, "an illusionary kaleidoscope" (1998:14) that only makes sense when the photographs and videos of our touristic experience in a particular touristic destination are shown other people. I can certainly affirm that tourism is a dynamic system of production, distribution and consumption of imaginary images. From this perspective, tourism needs to persuade potential tourists to desire and consume one specific touristic destination and not another (Quinn 1994:66). The touristic images and narratives are created to attract tourists and to generate expectative (Boorstin 1972; MacCannell 1976; 1992; Urry 1990: 3; Santana 1997: 59; Santana 2009:

97; Salazar 2010). Touristic images are a way of packaging the product, of commercializing and selling touristic products presented as promises (OMT 1998: 314). But far from the desired experience, these images are full of reduced stereotypes that do not escape to a critical reading and to an ideological and semiotic analysis. Touristic pamphlets, brochures and videos present an image of touristic destinations that in the majority of cases overshadow the social, cultural, political and economic realities (Selwyn 1993).

Touristic images and narratives fulfills the role of cultural mediation between the hosts and the guests (Smith 1992; Quinn 1994; Nogueira 1998; Simonicca 2002; Santana 2009) and serves to "sell" the touristic destinations through the creation of touristic imaginaries that shape the touristic products as if they were real (Crouch and Lübbren 2003). I can affirm that touristic images are a type of modern myth (Barthes 1972; Selwyn 1990) in the sense that they are the new iconography of mobilities and collective identities. In this way, the synthetic and "hygienic presentation" of the destinations (Alberts 1992) create a dichotomy between the imaginary touristic space - created by the advertising messages and the marketing- and the real social dimension of the places.

The result can be a homogeneous quality in the touristic products and a process of acculturation that tries to represent in a homogenous way the cultural diversity. In this cultural mediation there is always a play or tension between the way the places are seen and the way they would like to be seen, but also between how they are and how they project themselves to the outside community (Greenwood 1992). In this sense, the role of touristic brochures in these processes has already been demonstrated by Buck (1977) and Dann (1988), but they are not the only elements that participate in these processes, because, media, cinema, fictional literature, videogames, scientific literature and so on are so important to product a touristic image of a territory.

I consequently observe, from several examples, that on many occasions the local communities assume and assimilate the image projected from outside, even though this process is not exempt from tensions, rejections, and negotiations. As far as tourism is concerned with the promotion of a cultural area, that is to communicate, to create, and to project images in order to persuade the consumer that this destination is the best choice (Quinn 1994:62). This is the reason why many touristic brochures present the world as a supermarket (Selwyn 1996:16) where almost everything can be commercialized.

From a critical point of view, tourism normally creates ambivalent or contradictory representations based on myths and fantasies (Crick 1989)

that generate a false image and a simulacrum (Baudrillard 2002). Exceptions to this are the erudite guides and some travel literature based on a deeper and more sensitive knowledge of the realities that they describe. The "touristic place", says Castro (1999), is a cultural construct that is modified over time, and that can be very well observed in the tourists guides and in the touristic brochures.

The touristic brochures create a sense of place, and they not only crystallize the images of tourism in one specific historical moment but also in the thematic narratives. Particular topical and semantic resources are repeated constantly: "a place of enchantment..." "a place to discover..."; resources at the service of tourism and its processes of creating the touristic imagery. These clichés over-dramatize (Quinn 1994: 68) and hyper-ritualize (Goffman 1991) an image that is converted into filmic and static examples of a more complex reality. This cultural construct is associated with the creation of an integrated system of meanings and also with the creation of narratives relative to the interest of the "attraction" that can be visited (Dahles 1996).

The touristic promotion image anticipates the type of experience that the tourist can probably have in the tourist's destination, responding to the touristic ritual process of visiting, seeing, eating, doing and sleeping. At the same time, this imagery guides the tourist's gaze and mediates between the destination and the potential tourist, though not in a mechanical or deterministic way. Each tourist can thus make a proper narrative and build an itinerary different of the promotional materials.

Furthermore, touristic promotion images can be confirmed or not by the images of the tourist's experience, as he can take his own images, deploy the same imaginary ones or create others. The touristic experiences and impressions can thus also serve to shape and to change negative or stereotyped images. Some authors, such as Nash and Tarr (1976), Pearce (1982) and Anastasopoulos (1992), demonstrated that in some cases (British tourists in Greece and Morocco, North American tourists in France and Greek tourists in Turkey) the previous images held by the tourists had positively changed the perceptions of the touristic destination.

The memory of the gift carried away by the tourists (i.e., photographs, videos, narrations, etc.) culturally serve some social intentions, the first one being to demonstrate that we have traveled and that we were there. This practice of "being there" also serves to affirm and to confirm membership in a specific social group that practices a specific lifestyle and is related to the position one occupies in the social structure. Furthermore, the image confirming the touristic experience has the purpose of creating the memorandum of our accumulation of touristic capital. Also from the

point of view of the tourist system (Santana 2009), the images confirming the touristic experience - seeing what they had already seen before in a virtual manner- can serve to guarantee the reproduction of the touristic system itself and to win the loyalty of the tourists to the cause of the touristic destination.

Touristic images can be created by internal agents or by those external to the touristic destination, by academic experts or by people that "vulgarize" scientific and academic texts, using stereotypes, falsities and fakes about the touristic destinations. The stereotype is a cliché, idealized and reductionist mental image about other people and places, and sometimes pejorative. The communities that receive tourists and the images of promotional material usually create anti-stereotypes (Simonicca 2002: 139) and new stereotypes that can be used as a form of resistance, but also as opposition to touristic overload. Tourism can consequently be interpreted as a process of cultural construction of images about touristic destinations. These images both regulate and construct a way of looking at tourism and the touristic ritual practices in a given touristic destination. But besides, these images influence the cultural exchanges and the intercultural communication between people.

3. Images and touristic narratives of North of Portugal and Galiza abroad

The images of Galiza and North of Portugal produced from outside these two territories are often reduced to idealized and stereotyped topics. In some cases they even present factual errors and errors of interpretation, confirming that the conventional touristic guides normally vulgarize and idealize the complex socio-cultural reality of the touristic destinations in question. I have analyzed more than 40 international tourist guides and tourist web sites produced abroad of the destination North of Portugal and Galiza. I have selected some ethnographical cases very meaningful to illustrate the idea explained above.

An example is the Spanish virtual guide www.viajar.com that in 2003 presented a map of Portugal, copied from the Lonely Planet guide, with toponyms in Spanish (i.e.: "*Braganza*", "*Duero*", "*Tajo*", "*Alta Beira*", "*Oporto*", etc.), and with narratives that forget that the Portuguese dictatorship only ended in the year 1974 and not in 1968:

"Portugal is one of the most inexpensive and fascinating destinations in Europe. It boasts a rich seafaring past, magnificent beaches, melancholic towns and cities and a landscape dotted with olive trees, vineyards and wheat fields. Four decades of dictatorship, between 1926 and 1968, left the

Lusitanian (Portuguese) country entirely on the margins of economic progress and away from the European centers of power, though it has dedicated the greater part of the last twenty years to moving in from the periphery, to forging new bonds with the rest of the European continent, to rebuilding its economy and to making an effort to maintain the best of its national culture" (in www.viajar.com last accessed in June 2003).

The same virtual guide has changed the contents, narratives and images about Portugal, and nowadays the image is more accurate to the modern times, underlined the Iberian Peninsula as its geographical context, the crisis, the Algarve, the beaches and the cities of Lisbon and Porto as main touristic attractive (in <http://www.viajar.com/hotel/portugal/hoteles-portugal.html> last accessed in July 2012).

Other example is the international Berlitz guide of Portugal that presents Chaves, a small town located in the border with Galiza, in the following fashion: "Chaves, a mere 12 Km (7 miles) from Spain, is a quiet place, when it isn't being attacked by the Spanish..." (Portuguese Guide Berlitz, 2011: 57). According to the North American touristic guide "Let's Go", besides stating that Spain is a tourist's dream, a microcosm of all that Europe offers, it also affirms that: "In Spain people do not use short pants away from the beach, specially women. The women cannot wear miniskirts, and have serious problems finding hygienic pads and contraceptives... Tourists must never admit that they are alone, and "better to attend a course on self-defense" (last accessed in June 2010). The Australian "Lonely Planet" touristic guide says that "the "encaixes" (type of embroidery) from Camariñas" (in Galiza) "are only made to adorn virgins" (last consulted in June 2012).

One magazine on Tourism and Trips from the Spanish periodical "*El Mundo*" (*The World*) (10-05-2003) ignored the fact that we can get to Galiza (and also to the North of Portugal) by expressway and states that you can only get there via a national road. This is not only information, is the reinforcement of a peripheral destination. The "Rough Guide", besides defining the Northern Portuguese as Celtic and Germanic and the Southern ones as mysterious and more of a Mediterranean type, presents the Portuguese agricultural zones as "remarkably" underdeveloped: "But in its rural areas this is still a conspicuously underdeveloped country, and there are plenty of opportunities to experience smaller towns and countryside regions that have changed little in the last century or so." (<http://travel.roughguides.com/roughguides.html> last accessed in July 2012).

Another example of abroad promotion of touristic images is what has happened with the websites of the Secretary of State for Spanish Tourism, www.spain.info and www.tourspain.es, in the year 2002. The mistakes and

untruths about Galiza and other Spanish autonomous communities provoked a reaction that forced an improvement of the contents. Among the mistakes I highlight some toponym-related ones: "Arxuá" instead of the official "Arzúa", "Mugía" for Muxía, "Viana del Bollo" for Viana do Bolo, etc. This internet site stated that the International Celtic festival of Ortigueira was held in Coruña instead of Ortigueira (more than 100 Km away). A curious detail is the information given about the festival of the "*Día da Patria Galega*" (The Galician Country Day), organized by the Galician nationalists on the 25th of July in Santiago de Compostela. It is listed in the above-mentioned websites as one of the most ancient festivities of Galiza, when in reality it is no more than 80 years old.

These examples demonstrate the unfamiliarity, stereotyped and superficial knowledge of the destinations of Galiza and Portugal being promoted abroad. At the same time these images and narratives are lacking in the necessary seduction to make the foreign tourists feel motivated to travel to these destinations and are a negative force in capturing new markets. To create an image is to build a perception of what we want as a brand, in this case a touristic destination. These exotic images became the destination in something static and no interesting for foreign visitors.

Besides, these images represent separately the tourist offer of Galiza and North of Portugal, reinforcing the state national identities and hidden the new transnational cooperation in tourism and other areas. This strategy of isolation used touristic discourses that do not question the national state borders. As we shall analyze below, something different happens in the Euroregion Galiza-North of Portugal.

4. Images and touristic narratives of Galiza in the North of Portugal

The Portuguese New State (Estado Novo) touristic policies were a matter for the State (Pires 2003). After the mid-20th century and with the increase in the number of tourists, local participation in the promotion of tourism grew apace. Portugal thus created the Municipal "Tourism Divisions" and the "Tourism Regions". The latter had been established by the Tourism Act 2082 (Lei de Bases do Turismo) of 1956 and served to decentralize touristic policies despite the problems and dependencies faced by the town halls and the Central Government. Nowadays, touristic policies are integrated into the Ministry of Economy, which has a Secretary of State for Tourism who co-ordinates national touristic policies. Together with the Secretary of State for Tourism there are "Tourism Regions" and some municipal divisions.

The debate passes over the discussion on the need to promote and articulate micro-regional, macro-regional and national policies for promoting tourism. Among the specific purposes of the "Tourism Regions" are the promotion of the touristic offerings, the supervision of touristic activities, the support of touristic establishments, the performance of touristic studies, the definition of touristic products and the cooperation with national touristic policies (Wedge 2001: 430-436). In The North of Portugal, the Portuguese State has concentrated the ancient tourism regions and has been created only one: the public institution "Turismo do Porto e Norte de Portugal" (Tourism of Porto and North of Portugal). This institution has the mission of the promotion of tourism of this region and it is cooperating with Galician authorities for the common promotion of the Euroregion Galiza-North of Portugal. An example of this transnational cooperation is the opening of a tourism office in Santiago de Compostela to attract visitors to the North of Portugal.

In 1999 Portugal received 27,016,400 foreign visitors, of which 75.2% were Spanish (Directorate General for Tourism -DGT- 2001). From this data, it is necessary to differentiate between 11,632,000 tourists, 15,119,600 excursionists and 264,700 in maritime transit. Among the excursionists, 99.1% were Spanish and among the tourists 47.2% were also Spanish. This shows the importance of Portugal as a touristic destination for Spaniards at the end of the XX century. This proximity tourism experience means the Spaniards in general as the tourists who remained in the country for the least time. This data are conditioned by the integration in the EEC (today EU) of Spain and Portugal, confirmed at the end of the 1980s and that has contributed to impulse the social and economic relations between these two territories of the Iberian Peninsula. One example of that change it is enlightening in the research conducted by the Spanish sociologist Amando de Miguel (2000), according to more than half of *Ourensanos* (Galicians from Ourense province) recognize that they visit Portugal at least once a month.

In 2001 the number of visitors to Portugal was 28.2 million, of which 12.2 million were tourists, representing 1% more than in the year 2000. These amounts placed Portugal in 16th place in worldwide touristic destinations. The income for 2001 was 8.9 million USD, which means an increase of 10.9% in the 1996-2001 periods (DGT 2002). To better understand the change that has occurred in recent decades, we must clarify that in 1963 the number of foreign visitors to Portugal was around 514,069 (132,805 Spanish) and that in 1981 it was 7,227,000 (5,226,900 Spanish). (Source: INE - National Institute of Statistics of Spain).

The last and more actual official data from 2007 confirm the 1999 trend, but with some small differences. The Spanish Touristic Market is placed in first place, but the second and increasing is the British. The French Touristic Market is placed in third position, the German in fourth. The number of Spanish tourists decreased in 2007, while the number of Spanish excursionists has decreased (81% of the total average) meaning the less interest of Portugal for Spanish visitors.

Of the many Spaniards who visit Portugal, the Galicians play a very important role in this market segment. But, given that Galiza is one of Portugal's first touristic markets, what is the image manufactured by the Portuguese policies of touristic promotion? The first thing to highlight is that Galiza is almost little existent as a concept in touristic brochures of the North of Portugal. References are generally made to "Spain" and only seldom to "Galiza" as an autonomous community, territory or as a cultural entity differing from the other Spanish communities. This is no new, but it has deep historical roots. In the First Portuguese Colonial Exhibition held in Oporto in 1934 - during the New State - touristic promotion was already aimed at Galiza as a touristic market. In that case, the campaign to attract Galician visitors represented Galiza as if it was Andalusia - bullfights, sun and "flamenco" - (Medeiros 2001).

This phenomenon is characterized by what the anthropologist Arjun Appadurai (1994) calls metonymic freezing, that is, a trace of a human group's life that starts to represent the entirety of that human group or another one with which it is in contiguity, embodying an essentialist representation. For better understanding of this image I point out that the Spanish Mediterranean and the Canary Islands are the foreign destinations most intensely promoted in brochures published by the Portuguese touristic operators (Ruiz Boudrihay 1999: 80). This is a representation of the image that the Portuguese tourists have of Spain and it can help us to better understand the images and exchanges between the North of Portugal and Galicia.

In Portugal, from the small ratio of touristic references to Galiza, the Camino de Santiago, the Way of St. James, is the one targeted. On other occasions, some touristic images draw up a narrative of geographic or historical linkage between the two territories that reveal a lack of familiarity with the "other". A meaning example is a brochure from the ancient Tourism Region of the Alto Minho published in 1992: "Situated between two major urban centers, the metropolitan area of Oporto and the Xunta da Galiza, the Alto Minho is in fact an area of choice in this peninsular northwestern corner".

A very important aspect of the content of the Portuguese touristic brochures about Galiza is the maps, which can be understood as a cultural and political representation, but also as mediation between knowledge and power (Castro Seixas 1999). The map is part of the touristic image and is based upon an authority as a descriptor of an area and their social and political identifications. In the Portuguese promotional images we barely find either maps of the Iberian Peninsula or of Europe or Galiza. Usually they present only local and regional maps, presenting those in international touristic events.

This strategy is being changed in recent years because limits the relational and glolocal interpretation and the knowledge of the promoted territory North of Portugal. This also happens in the Portuguese virtual guides on the Internet (i.e.: www.portugalinsite.pt, www.turismoportugal.com). In the best-case scenario they show very generic national maps of Portugal with little information about communications and transport networks. It is an isolate representation of Portuguese national identity. In some cases, as in the maps of the old Tourism Region of the Alto Tâmega and Barroso, the only maps presented were the micro-regional ones. This makes the relational promotion with Galiza and other European segments of the market very difficult from the start.

Another aspect, related to the previous one, is that if we browse through the touristic brochures we do not know how to get to the territory in question, not only because of a lack of maps but also because of the absence of references to airports, public routes and transportation. It is important to note that 80.6% of foreign visitors to Portugal arrived in the country by road in 1999 (DGT 2001). This is not only a question of more or less information; it is the construction of an image of a country that seemed does not exist.

Language is an identity indicator; speaking the same language or different languages is a marker of identity. And the Portuguese tourist brochures with references to Galiza show the Galician toponyms translated into Spanish (i.e.: Orense, La Coruña, Puenteareas, La Guardia, Tuy, Caldas de Reyes, etc.), and only rarely into the official Galician language (i.e.: Ourense, A Coruña), and even less frequently translated into Portuguese (i.e.: A Corunha). As for the idioms in the language of the brochure narratives, those produced by the Portuguese Tourism Regions are normally translated into Spanish, English, German and French, which are in this order the languages of the people who most often visit Portugal. Around 250 brochures produced by Tourism Regions, City Halls and Municipal Associations of the North of Portugal were analyzed by me and it is ever a regularity that misunderstanding the Galician culture and

language. My interpretation is the ethnocentric Portuguese view of Galiza as a part of Spanish culture, because the dominant Portuguese view of Galiza is pointed to Spain as one culture, one territory and one language, that is, without sociocultural and political diversities.

In general, touristic promotion in the North of Portugal has little relation to Galiza, the latter being a region (or a nation without state for Galician nationalist people) in another country. Even so, the processes of mutual approach and construction of a European identity have caused Galiza to turn itself into a touristic product for the Portuguese, boosted in the years of the Holy Saints of Compostela with trips to Santiago de Compostela. This is the case of the company "Templar-Rotas e Destinos Turísticos, Lda." (www.templar.online.pt), headquartered in Tomar, that in 2002 offered a product called "Galiza 2002" comprising lodging, meals and a touristic adventure program (rafting, canoeing, moto4 circuits, etc.). Another example of transnational promotion is the touristic-cultural itinerary "*O Românico em Portugal*" (The Romanesque in Portugal) from the "*Museu sem Fronteiras*" (Museum Without Borders) project. Circuit "I" offers the product "*O Minho/Miño. Entre a Galiza e Portugal*" (Minho. Between Galiza and Portugal), that invites visitors to tour the Romanesque monuments on the banks of the Minho river (See Turismo-Património Magazine no. 4, May 2002).

Recently, the Porto and North of Portugal tourism region has opened a space of touristic promotion in the Galician city of Santiago de Compostela with the aim of attracting visitors to Portugal. Besides, nowadays there are also examples of promotion and territorial market techniques, both combined and transnational. One of this is the websites www.portugalicia.org and www.portugaliciahoteles.org, a hotel group from Galiza and Northern Portugal whose touristic slogan is "visit two countries for the price of one". This grouping intends to create a transborder and transnational cluster. Some other examples can be observed on the Internet. The Portuguese tourist portal www.agroportal.pt/Turismo/regioes.htm also integrates a guide from Galiza: www.galice.net together with all Portuguese tourism regions.

But among these examples it is distinguished the "Eixo Atlântico do Noroeste Peninsular" (Peninsular Northwestern Atlantic Axis, see <http://www.eixoatlantico.com/eixo/>), a transborder association integrated by the main towns of the Euroregion Galiza - North of Portugal, forming its urban system.

Eixo Atlântico was created in 1992 with the support of the European Commission, and develops network programs, cooperation, information exchange and joint strategic planning for the euroregion. Located in the

northwest of the Iberian Peninsula, the Euroregion North of Portugal - Galiza has a surface of 50.853 km² and a population of approximately 7 million inhabitants.

The Eixo Atlântico deserves special attention for its avant-garde thinking in the creation of new touristic imaginaries. Among their specific goals is the joint promotion of tourism (Pardellas 2002). Some of its slogans are quite significant in this joint promotion drive: "Visit two countries on your vacation", "The cities of stone and water". The new imaginaries of "Eixo Atlântico" are the representation of North of Portugal and Galiza as a "Euroregion", a brand for a unique and singular territorial and tourist destiny. The "Eixo Atlântico" touristic imaginaries have presented a network for proximity tourism and transnational tourism, with a cultural link narrative that questioned national boundaries and contributes to the construction of a new European identity.

5. Images and touristic narratives of Portugal in Galiza

Galiza is, from a geographic point of view, the only territory of the peninsular Atlantic front that does not belong to Portugal. Galiza is an autonomous territory of Spain and the politics of tourist promotion of Spain was since 1960s to sell Spain as a homogeneous whole with plenty of sun, bullfights and "flamenco", that is, the iconography of the south of Spain (Lois González and Santos Solla 2000; Santos Solla 2005). This chosen image of Andalusia was the one transformed into the brand for all of Spain's touristic identity, with great effectiveness and international symbolic permanence, ignoring the internal cultural diversity of the Spanish state itself.

It was only after the arrival of democracy in 1975 and the creation of the autonomous communities that it has been decentralized the policies of touristic promotion and the autonomous governments even formulated their own outward-reaching policies. In the case of Galiza, a public company was created, "Turgalicia", which would basically dedicate itself to the promotion of Galiza's touristic images (see <http://www.turgalicia.es/>). Galiza is located away from mass tourism looking for the sun and beaches of the Mediterranean. After the 1990s and with the changes that occurred in tourism supply and demand, it started to affirm itself as a touristic destination. Offers like "*Os caminhos de Santiago*" (*The Roads to Santiago*), "*Santiago de Compostela*", the "*Rias Baixas*", *spas and thermals baths* or rural tourism represent some of the star products that have transformed Galiza into a land where tourism represents approximately 10% of the GDP. Galiza is at the moment the

eighth touristic destination in Spain as far as number of visitors is concerned, behind Andalusia, Catalonia, the Balearics, Madrid, Canaries, Valencia and Castilla y León (source: INE - Spanish National Statistics Institute).

Nowadays most of the tourists who visit Galiza are Spanish (around 85% according to data from the General Tourism Department of Galiza), especially from Madrid and Catalunya. Among the foreigners, the Portuguese occupy first place, followed by the French, the Germans, the British and the North Americans. Even though the daily traffic of vehicles between the two countries in the Iberian Peninsula has greatly increased in recent years, we note that of the 50 border points between Portugal and Spain, the Valença-Tui point is the one with the highest vehicle traffic of all Lusitanian-Spanish borders:

Table 7-1. Vehicle traffic on Portugal-Spain Border 2002

| Border traffic points | Vehicle traffic 2002 |
|--|----------------------|
| Valença-Tui | 12,597 daily |
| Caia-Badajoz | 6,777 daily |
| Monte Francisco-Ayamonte (Huelva) | 6,353 daily |
| Vilar Formoso-Fuentes de Oñoro (Salamanca) | 4,799 daily |

Source: Spain-Portugal Border observatory (See: La Voz de Galicia, Vigo edition, 8-12-2003, p. 12). See also Ruiz Boudrihay (1999: 93).

Table 7-2. Vehicle traffic on Portugal-Spain Border 2004

| Border traffic points | Vehicle traffic 2004 |
|---|----------------------|
| Valença-Tui (Galiza) | 16,798 daily |
| Monte Francisco (Vila Real de Santo António) -Ayamonte (Huelva) | 10,469 daily |
| Caia-Badajoz | 8,773 daily |
| Vilar Formoso-Fuentes de Oñoro (Salamanca) | 7,460 daily |
| Monção - Salvaterra de Miño (Galiza) | 6,000 daily |
| Vila Verde da Raia - Verín (Galiza) | 4,810 daily |

Source: Ministry of Public Works (Spain). See: <http://www.fomento.es/NR/rdonlyres/77CDEB86-BA75-4869-A4BD-9CC1FB6950D2/22322/ObsESPOR.pdf> (30th July 2009).

Table 7-3: Vehicle traffic on Portugal-Spain Border 2008

| Border Traffic points | Vehicle traffic 2008 |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------|
| Goián – Vila Nova da Cerveira | 4.337 |
| Tui – Valença do Minho (puente nuevo) | 15.475 |
| Tui – Valença do Minho (puente viejo) | 4.634 |
| Salvaterra do Miño – Monção | 5.163 |
| Arbo – Melgaço | 2.224 |
| Verín – Vila Verde da Raia | 6.794 |
| San Martín de Pedroso – Quintanilha | 1.567 |
| Fuentes de Oñoro – Vilar Formoso | 7.303 |
| Valencia de Alcántara – Marvão | 2.006 |
| Badajoz – Campo Maior | 2.049 |
| Badajoz – Caia | 8.105 |
| Ayamonte – Monte Francisco | 13.283 |

Source: Dirección General de Carretera – Ministerio de Fomento (España)
http://www.fomento.es/NR/rdonlyres/9B2D7A91-F114-41EF-979F-20B839EF1D2F/70086/triptico_otep_2003_2008.pdf (31th Dezember 2010)

This data is important to better understand the intensive relationship between North of Portugal and Galiza, the most important of the Spain-Portugal border; besides contextualize and reflect on the images produced in relation to Portugal. The first item to highlight in Galician touristic brochures is that Portugal is part of the narratives and touristic images as well as an area of interest in the promotion of touristic places. The Galicians “sell” Galiza together with the North of Portugal as a touristic development strategy of a common destination.

This promotional strategy is a way of flowing out beyond the “border” and of recreating a new, increasingly stretched and flexible border culture. In the brochures on the border with Portugal, this is much more accentuated, since visiting the “neighbor” country is part of the touristic product offered by the promoter. Portugal not only represents a positive value as a product, but also as a segment of the potential touristic market targeted by specific promotions, a trend that does not happen with such frequency in the Portuguese case that is less orientated to Galiza.

Some examples of the tourist image of North of Portugal in Galiza are those of the Pontevedra municipalities of Baiona, Sanxenxo and O Grove. In the case of the latter two, they produced brochures in the Portuguese language that are strongly promoted at Portuguese fairs such as the Lisbon and Porto Tourism Fairs. On the internet the Turgalicia and Xacobeo tourist guides of Galiza represent the North of Portugal as a specific

segment market to attract and besides part of the same product (ex. The Roads to Santiago than has origin in Portugal). Another example is the Galician company Secchi (Touristic and Cultural Services), headquartered in Santiago de Compostela, offering among its guided tours an all-day itinerary of the Portuguese Baixo Minho and Portugal. On the Galician border with Portugal, what is being promoted is not only the clichés on thoughts of “difference” (i.e.: landscape, beaches, green, gastronomy, handicrafts, cultural heritage, sports activities, etc.), but also the Galician-Portuguese “resemblance” and common cultural identity.

Galiza has built historically an imagery of the Galician-Portuguese identification, recognized as a positive value, emphasizing what unites and not what separates: “Salvaterra here and Monção there are two closely connected neighbors, and neither Father Miño nor the rivalry between noble families will hinder the bonds of consanguinity and commercial exchanges. One and the other are united in all that brings life to both. The opening of the international bridge in 1995 was the final impulse.” (Source: Touristic brochure from Salvaterra de Miño 2001). The bridge mentioned above and overall the bridge between Valença and Tui are promoted in many border touristic brochures of Minho as the first or second item listed. The bridge is a metaphor for unity, for the offer and demand that is expected of Portugal: “Even in a touristic area we will prosper. We only have to work more closely with Monção to be a border city” (Arturo Grandal, Mayor of Salvaterra –Galiza- in Faro de Vigo, 23-11-2003, p. 25).

In the official Galician tourist promotion, the North of Portugal is imagined as something “different” yet similar at the same time, an area less developed, with more cultural heritage and more “traditional”. Besides there is nothing odd in finding that in Galician newspapers such as the “Faro de Vigo” there is promotions for hotels in the Portuguese Algarve or the daily cultural events of the Portuguese Minho and Trás-os-Montes (North of Portugal). Galiza had many historical links with Portugal (Lopes Suevos 1987; Pereiro and Silva 2000; Barros 2002; Pereiro et al. 2008) and after the two countries joined the European Union, the interrelation and cooperation was intensified on many varied levels.

By this reasons underlined before, the images and narratives of the North of Portugal in Galiza have changed in the last decade. The previous image of Galiza as an isolated destination has been partially left, and the dominant image of Galiza as a part of Spain has been questioned by the transnational touristic promotion with the North of Portugal made by Galician-Portuguese teams. One example of this is the paper guide “Guia da Raia pola beira do Miño en Galicia e Portugal” published by “Xunta de

Galicia" (Regional Govern of Galiza) and by the CCDRN (Coordination Commission of the North Region of Portugal). Its author is the Galician geographer Xosé Manuel Santos Solla (1999).

Another example is the Guide of the North of Portugal writes by Vítor Vaqueiro (2001), oriented to Galician tourists and write in Galician language. In this popular guide the North of Portugal is represented as part of Galician culture, reinventing the ancient cultural and political area of the "Gallaecia" (province of the Norwest of Iberian Peninsula in the roman times). This guide underlined history, cultural heritage, gastronomy and natural heritage in nine proposal routes oriented to "cultural tourists".

The North of Portugal is now a very important part of the new euroregional touristic promotion of Galiza, and if in the past the touristic narratives and discourses created underlined the concept of brother country and neighboring country, today the discourses uses the concept of friendship country, euroregion, and "Portugaliza" to define a new transnational space. To illustrate this idea can be observed the serial of guides promoted by the Eixo Atlântico association in collaboration with Nigratea publisher (see http://www.eixoatlantico.com/_eixo_2009/contenido.php?idpag=5008&mostrar=biblioteca&tipo=5; last accessed 4 July 2012), with narrative subjects about spas, rivers, gastronomy, towns, nautical travel, cultural resources and so on. They are editing in several languages and the image of the North of Portugal is presented as a part of the same tourist destination.

6. Conclusions

The integration in the UE of Spain and Portugal has permitted a more intensive cooperation between Galiza and the North of Portugal and an increase of transborder tourism (Zimmerman 2001; Pereiro 2009; Pereiro and Pereira 2010). Tourism and especially touristic images constitute a field of special importance for observing and analyzing identities and the identification processes. What touristic promotion policies do is embrace some of the ideological conceptions of these identities. In the case of touristic images produced outside North of Portugal and Galiza, they have constructed a stereotyped representation, a metonymic freezing and fantasizing as Riemer (1990) has pointed out in other cases. The abroad tourist imaginaries and narratives place Galiza and North of Portugal in a pre-modern and less developed world.

In the Portuguese case, the North of Portugal does not offer so much specific promotions for Galicians but generic ones for Spaniards. This vision contains some ethnocentrism that limits the understanding of

Iberian cultural diversity. The Portuguese ethnocentric vision look at a single and homogeneous "Spain" through the mirror of Portugal, that is, a state, a single nation and a single culture. While all this ethnocentrism can be combated with doses of cultural relativism, we cannot forget that the touristic image can serve to complete and to strengthen the stereotypes of the other: "Galicians are Spaniards". These stereotypes are of little or no help in gaining mutual understanding and knowledge of the diversity. Touristic promotion of the North of Portugal has little relation with Galiza and has few examples of transnational and cross-border joint promotion. Galiza is usually presented as a part of Spanish culture and not as a part of lusophonia as it is from several points of view.

In the Galician case, Galiza conducts specific promotions aimed at Portugal. Especially in the border between Galiza and the North of Portugal, visits to the "neighbor country" are offered as a product and a positive value of the Galician touristic offering. The images and narratives use a strategy of affirmation of Galician-Portuguese similarities and not of the differences as occurs in the case of the North of Portugal. One example analyzed was the Eixo Atlântico role in the transnational tourist promotion. One unique and singular tourist product is presented by official institutions of transnational cooperation.

The common politics of tourist promotion in the Euroregion Galiza - North of Portugal are changed the ideological conception of the other aimed the tourist market interests. They are constructing a new common identification and a new thinking of collective identities. The administrative-territorial limits can have a physical segmentation associated to them, but the social limits affirm and define categories of belonging and exclusion that confirm or contradict the administrative limits. In the case approached we can conclude that the distinguishing administrative identity is still stronger than the cultural identity of proximity and mutual identification, something that is well expressed in the analyzed touristic images and narratives. We also conclude that in a Europe "without borders" the estate administrative identity gradually breaks up, but the cultural identity still creates mental limits that organize a complex diversity in a globalized world. Tourism System redefines the images of the "other" in the Galician-Portuguese area using the touristic promotion for the redefinition and meaning of national and transnational identifications.

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