Tourism and Imperfect Island Futures: Simulacra and Nostalgia in the Contemporary Mallorcan Dystopia

Mercè Picornell

University of the Balearic Islands, Department of Catalan Philology and General Linguistics, Cra. de Valldemossa km. 7,5 07122 Palma, Illes Balears, Spain
https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6289-0980
m.picornell@uib.cat

The article discusses the triangulation of the notions of insularity, tourism, and dystopia on the basis of five works of Mallorcan literary fiction. It takes as its point of departure the wager that the genre of dystopia, given the hypertextual and time-based character of the dystopian narrative structure, is a form conducive to raising awareness about the over-saturation of mass tourism. In the article, five novelistic works of anticipatory fiction written by Mallorcan authors will be read from the perspective of the dystopian genre. In these speculative works, the aesthetic logic of the simulacrum becomes particularly important as a tool for the construction of tourist leisure scenarios. When those settings recreate emblems of pristine nature or cultural authenticity in order to promote a holiday destination, they undermine the potential for a pre-tourist nostalgia that might otherwise serve as a foundation upon which one could build an alternative future, one that does not entail mass tourism as an inevitable outcome.

Keywords: Spanish literature / Mallorca / tourism / dystopia / insularity / the Mediterranean / simulacrum

Tourist utopias and the transformation of insular space and time

Utopia and island are two notions that have been interconnected ever since Thomas More built his imaginary world in 1516.[1] This identification is perhaps facilitated by the sense of wholeness attributed to islands—as territorially confined ecosystems—which Fredric Jameson also observes in utopian forms: "this combination of closure and system … which is ultimately the source of that otherness, or radical, even alien difference" (Jameson 11). In the Western imagination, the island is by definition in a different place, and this otherness makes it an attractive space for tales unbound by time, whether they take the form of a utopia, a dystopia, or a place of leisure, far removed from the routine of everyday work (see McMahon; Su et al.). This perception of the island as something that is at once complete and timeless is particularly relevant in Mediterranean settings, insofar as these have been imagined against the backdrop of a mythical past and repackaged as a place of rest and relaxation for the contemporary visitor. In this regard, Aina Vidal-Pérez writes:

> The myth of the Mediterranean inspires the tourist's holiday dreams; dreams that, on the one hand, are tinged with the desire to get to know—albeit briefly—this cultural space of great heritage value, and on the other hand, hope to see the fulfilment of expectations that have been generated by institutional campaigns, brochures, posters, adverts, travel guides, travel agency catalogues, etc. This gives rise to an image of the Mediterranean Sea as a myth and symbol of leisure in industrialized Europe; its value increasing in proportion to the appeal of the sea as a mosaic of cultures, as well as the promise of enjoying the three Ss: *sun*, *sea*, and *sand*; a paradise-like image of the Mediterranean that has gradually taken hold throughout history. (Vidal-Pérez 79)[2]

Following Pau Obrador Pons, Mike Crang, and Penny Travlou, we can add two more s-words to those listed by Vidal-Pérez, namely *sex* and *spirits*, which have become important in building a tourism image for

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[2] From here on, quotations in Spanish or Catalan are translated into English; all translations are by Susan Feuer.

the Balearic Islands (see Obrador et al.). A great deal has been written about the construction of this image, which is rooted in exoticizing accounts by cultured and wealthy Northern Europeans who frequented the island in the early twentieth century, an image that has been in constant use since the dawn of the tourism boom of the 1960s in Spain (see Martínez Tejero and Picornell).

The novels that I will discuss below transmit critical discourses surrounding the impact of tourism on the environment and on the construction of island culture. This construction is usually assessed through the paradigm of acculturation understood as a sudden, massive contact with external cultures that bring about the loss of the region's own cultural roots. The reassertion of traditional local roots in the face of tourist acculturation is the result of a romantic perception of the region and can be seen in protest pictures that use the folkloric image of the peasant as an emblem of a culture under threat that is empowered to resist what is presented as an invasion (see Picornell, "Back Side"). In such images, tradition is used not only to counter the effects of touristification but also to subvert the appropriation of images of local culture in products that target visitors (such as postcards and souvenirs).

Figures 1 and 2: Postcards with folk scenes (originals in color).

Figures 3 and 4: Illustrations against tourist explotation of folk culture by Juanito Comicartor and Foners (originals in color).

Figures 5 and 6: "Resident Evil" by the design company Melicotó and postcard by Malafolla.

Opposed to this acculturating perception, recent scholars have defended the need to understand and study tourism as a cultural practice that is actively engaged in the creation of a local identity (see Obrador

et al.; Vives Riera and Vicens Vidal). In what follows, I share this critical stance regarding the romantic essentialism that underlies certain critiques of touristification. Nevertheless, in order to assess the impact of tourism, we must understand that such impact not only changes the imaginary of the touristified destination but can also force a material transformation of that place to adapt it to the tourists' expectations or even to create a new market niche. Such transformation relies on culturally significant practices for residents and visitors while also being mediatized by whatever the business sector wishes to promote to brand a given destination. The changes spurred by this process are not merely symbolic, as they can also bring about material transformations. For example, the sun and sand holiday supply has historically generated images of Mallorca that imitate those of stereotypical tropics, yet which do not fit with many settings of the Mediterranean island: postcards present vast sandy beaches, landscapes with palm trees, weather that is always warm, and even images of camels carrying tourists along the coastline. Similarly, in the case of Magaluf, an area known for its nightlife and overindulgence, the desire to attract a more affluent target audience would explain the erection of hotels with large swimming pools with surfing waves in a Mediterranean environment that rarely provides the opportunity to surf, and large, green golf courses on an island where water is a limited resource.

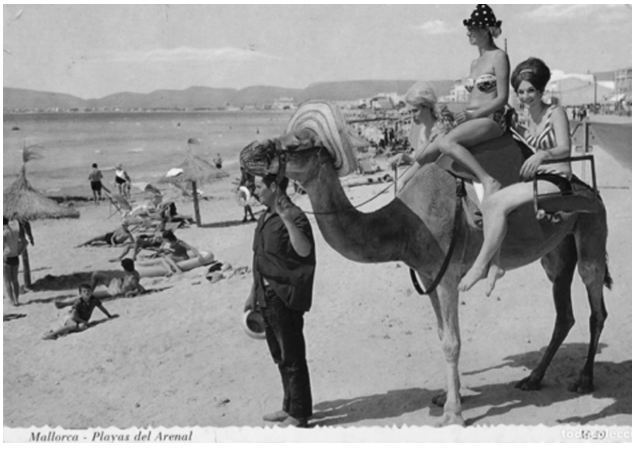

Figure 7: Postcard of the Arenal in Mallorca (original in color).

The touristic gaze that John Urry elaborated as a tool to analyze the touristic experience not only constructs what the tourist wishes to see but can also lead to the adaptation of the tourist space to match the

tourist's expectations (see Urry). In this sense, the notion of anticipation is vital to the shaping of touristic time, as it involves not only generating expectations prior to the visit but also the creation of a place of leisure, that is, a holiday time away from the everyday routine and, finally, an image of the memory of the stay, preserved in photos, postcards, and souvenirs. As such, the configuration of the place and time of tourism is complex for both visitors and residents. Due to this dual impact, this space-time configuration can hardly be viewed as a chronotopic unit. The perception of the region is determined by a palimpsest of mutually interfering hetero- and self-images: the emblematic nature and culture marketed as a tourist attraction and at the same time transformed to match the visitor's expectations. The time of the touristic experience is a hiatus for the traveler, determined by an imaginary machinery consisting of prior expectations and images to be remembered; on the other hand, the resident's identity can integrate the tourist image or recreate an illusory image of life before tourism. In this sense, nostalgia is an ambiguous and at once effective tool for a local reconsideration of the consequences of touristification.

Critical dystopia as a tourist reference

On this basis, I wager in this article the hypothesis that dystopia is a useful genre for a critical analysis of the effects of touristification, and that this is the case due to two key aspects of its configuration: its hypertextual nature and its expression of time. Regarding its hypertextuality, dystopia always entails a secondary story because its very construction requires the existence of a previous point of reference. According to Fredric Jameson, the utopian discourse is characterized by its radical and explicit intertextuality: "[F]ew other literary forms have so brazenly affirmed themselves as argument and counterargument" (Jameson 6). Based on this idea, Elizabeth McMahon analyzes dystopia and utopia as connected forms in the portrayal of insularity as both paradise and prison. This connection would favor a complex reading of utopian and dystopian depictions that forces us to contemplate both the projection (be it optimistic or pessimistic) and its counter-discourse:

> In this process, the reader not only compares utopian and dystopian projections but must also consider the negative elements within the supposedly positive alternative and vice versa. The simple binary is thus doubled as a chiasmus, with the reader directed to consider and dismiss not two but four alternative visions in a complex grid of separate and shared qualities. This double cancellation

> acts as a double negative to disallow reification. In its place, the reader must constantly shift between possibilities, none of which are acceptable but which cannot be wholly discarded, and which direct the reader to assess the merits of each possibility against their own historical circumstance. (McMahon 7)

McMahon's revision reinforces my proposal regarding the capacity of dystopian characteristics to juxtapose different opposing versions. Moreover, in those dystopias that have used tourism as a reference, the model to be re-examined refers to the construction of an earlier image that serves as an attraction for visitors and which was built on the foundation of mythicized icons. The touristic dystopia therefore operates by creating a double feedback loop where a simulation that constructs the touristic image is critically simulated. It resembles the finger pointing at the mask that Roland Barthes invokes to characterize the metalinguistic orientation of literature as a meta-imaginary process that forces us to see the processes involved in the construction of images of reality, that is, the simulations that are often normalized in our social life (Barthes 123).

In his illustration of the operation of simulation, Jean Baudrillard used the image of Borges' map, a chart so realistic that it completely covers the reality that it supposedly represents (Baudrillard 1). In a dystopia, this map would not seamlessly fit the world that it aims to represent but would rather signify its very disruption. The second feature of the dystopian concept that reinforces its effectiveness in criticizing touristification is the gap in time that it establishes between real-life reference and its fictionalization. The dystopian story is displaced, often in time or in the unusual, or in both. Such displacement generates a particular structure of time in which the points of reference that constitute the past of the dystopian story and which could almost be contemporaneous with the reader establish causal links with an undesirable future. Adam Stock regards these "future histories" as essential to the political dimension of dystopia as a genre, as they serve as anchors in the conflict-ridden present of the reader (Stock 417).

So far, scholars have identified three connections between tourism and dystopia. The first refers to dark tourism, which, according to Hazel Tucker and Eric Shelton, could be segmented into two subtypes: last chance tourism and disaster tourism. These are not dystopias in the generic sense of the term, but rather spaces that are touristified through a sort of staging that somewhat resembles what occurs in dystopian stories or images. The second connection, which is rather limited yet no less interesting, can be seen in prospective reflections such as the one that appears in the book *Science Fiction, Disruption and Tourism* (see

Yeoman et al.), where science fiction and the dystopian story are used as tools for the projection of future scenarios from which one can gauge the challenges of tourism exploitation. Thirdly, and returning to the literary sphere, Mariano Martín identifies three types of tourism-themed dystopias: those in which the natives adapt their way of life to attract tourists; those that relocate the plot to a galactic setting; and those that depict oppressive forms of organization.

If we consider the case of *England, England* (1998) by Julian Barnes, we can arguably add a fourth category, where the dystopia operates as a parody of tourist attraction models that are based on stereotypical notions of cultural authenticity. According to Martín, in dystopian tourism-themed fiction "there seems to be a promotion of nationalism-inspired tourismophobia within the framework of an implicit opposition between localism and universalism" (Martín 287). Martín's starting point is the idea that "tourism has always been a powerful vehicle for universalization, which favors more open societies and can therefore be detrimental to the maintenance of traditional homogeneous societies" (287). From this point of view, he correlates such "traditional homogenous societies" with those that would defend nationalist positions in the tourist areas of Spain, such as Barcelona and the Balearic Islands. For Martín, the reiteration of the touristic dystopia in Catalan literature, which includes the Mallorcan novels that I will examine below, might be explained by the disruption that tourism has caused in "communities that were previously closed and whose individualistic mindset was very much alive as a result of the use of a regional language" (229). Martín does not consider the history of the areas studied, which were opened up to mass tourism in the 1960s, during the Franco dictatorship, a regime that had actively attempted to remove these languages from public use. Nor does Martín consider that the critical discourses against the touristification of these regions initially emerged from environmentalist advocacy groups and have only recently become linked to other aspects of social life (see Valdivielso and Moranta). The undoubtedly broad dystopian casuistry in Catalan literature usually responds to the influence of new trends in European literature. In fact, as Pablo Pesado has shown for Galician literature, only on rare occasions and only very recently has dystopian fiction of this nature made reference to nationalism or placed its focus on identity.

Tourism dystopias in the Balearic Islands

Dystopia has been one of the themes used most frequently by environmentalist organizations in their effort to denounce the effects of overtourism. Maps teeming with roads and images of a completely built-up island are frequently used to warn of the consequences of continuing the current unlimited growth (see Picornell, "Back Side").

Figures 8 and 9: Images from the 2004 campaign "Qui estima Mallorca no la destrueix" ("If you love Mallorca, you won't destroy it") and the 2018 campaign "Autopista mai" ("Motorway never").

The image of overdevelopment is highly present in the five dystopian novels set in Mallorca that I will examine below, namely Llorenç Villalonga's *Andrea Víctrix* (1974), Pere Rosselló's *L'infern de l'illa* (2002), Antoni Roca and Maria I. Deyà's *Territori amortitzat 114* (2001), Jaume Pons Alorda's *Ciutat de Mal* (2020), and Pere Antoni Pons' *Contra el món* (2023). The first and last of these novels warrant a more detailed analysis, given the complexity of their plots. Although these novels are very different from one another, four of them share several relevant features. The first feature to be highlighted here is linked to the intertextual structure of the dystopia. In the novels by Villalonga, Rosselló, and Pons Alorda, this intertextuality pervades conversations, quotations, and innuendos. In Pons' novel, the pictorial reference generates a similar space for reflection on the world and its portrayal. Secondly, these four novels thematize different lines of criticism that are linked to the complex temporality shared by the dystopian theme and tourism. This takes the form of a recurring imagery of the excessive—stimuli, people, shops, urban development—which finds its opposite in the images of emptiness and waste at the spatial or

historical margins of tourism. As a counterpoint, I will also ask which aspects are preserved as signs of recognition of Mallorcan identity in order to draw conclusions concerning the ways in which tourism-based dystopias engage in dialogue with a pre-tourist past that might be recovered or nostalgically idealized.

Andrea Víctrix

Andrea Víctrix has been viewed by some as the culmination of Llorenç Villalonga's oeuvre. A depiction of a world in decline, the novel was seen by the author himself as his third take on Mallorca, a narrative standing alongside his two most successful novels, namely *Mort de dama* (Death of a Lady), his 1931 debut portraying the social change that took place at the turn of the century, and *Bearn* (1956 in Spanish, 1961 in Catalan), an exploration of the decline of the estate-owning aristocracy of the nineteenth century. *Andrea Víctrix* portrays the future narrated through a register that resembles neither the Catalan *costumbrismo* of *Mort de dama* nor the psychological realism of *Bearn*. Villalonga's dystopian attempt oscillates between irony and absurdity brought about by the hyperbolic use of contemporary literary references, specifically those of the 1960s and 1970s, such as the profusion of useless electrical appliances that do not fit inside homes or which are ultimately thrown off balconies, and the tropes of the thesis novel, with long discussions of history and morality.

The narrator of the novel, which Alfons Gregori believes to be a sort of "alter ego" of Villalonga himself, is frozen in old age, only to be revived in the year 2050. When he wakes up, he discovers an island that has been transformed into a single city. Palma, the capital of Mallorca, is now Turclub, which is short for the official name, Club Turista de la Mediterrània (Tourist Club of the Mediterranean). The year is now 632 of the so-called Fordian era, located in the United States of Europe under an authoritarian regime controlled by Monsieur-Dame. In Turclub, everyone apparently lives a luxurious life guaranteed by the massive purchase of so-called atom-domestics and the consumption of the regime's official drink, Hola-Hola. The waiters are regarded as the highest class, and anyone who questions the regime is locked up in a psychiatric clinic where they are taught to accept the constant pursuit of pleasure as a way of life. The narrator rejects this sense of pleasure, yet due to his old-fashioned mentality he cannot help but be attracted to Andrea Víctrix, a youngster who, like the current inhabitants, is androgynous.

The protagonist gradually ventures into this new world to discover its falseness and to connect with a network of people who oppose this model that will only hasten the decline into which the very system of constant progress is heading. Golden signs with the motto "Progress can't be stopped" adorn the city. In one text of the underground resistance, "The Veil of Isis," a former Hola-Hola worker realizes that this beverage is actually nothing at all. The mystery of its formula, which, like the name, ironically evokes Coca-Cola, masks emptiness. As the narrator writes, the story "lifted the tip of the veil and revealed to the frightened reader a blank wall" (Villalonga 108). This exact wording of the manuscript is seemingly transposed at the end of the book that we hold in our hands, where the narrator also gives in to the resistance by questioning the very reality of the authority he opposes. "I'm thinking," he laughingly remarks in the last line of the novel, "that Monsieur-Dame is perhaps also an ornament" (290).

Indeed, the notion of the ornament is essential to the make-up of this new world of pleasure: it is entirely superficial, with no content to speak of. The Universitat Clàssica is staffed by professors who specialize in decorative history; sexuality is omnipresent—the government holds free mass orgies to which attendance is advisable—yet the protagonist's desire for Andrea and the others who offer themselves to him is inaccessible to the morality of a person displaced from the twentieth century who expects an assigned gender; the trees and flowers are all plastic, and the birds, which are scheduled to sing, become cacophonous when the batteries run out; similarly, restaurants are lavishly staffed with elegant and attentive waiters serving tasteless tinned food. This absence of food in a world that has abandoned agriculture is what actually triggers the decline of this new industrial and touristic empire.

Tourism appears repeatedly in the protagonist's descriptions. As Pilar Arnau has shown, Villalonga has already touched on the subject in his earlier novel, *Mort de dama*, where he draws a contrast between the old aristocracy of the historic quarter and the modern customs of the tourists (Arnau 79). In another novel published in the 1960s, *Les fures* (The Ferrets, 1967), tourism is a source of quick money for the peasant farmers who abandon the countryside, as well as for a young boy who works as a gigolo for wealthy, middle-aged tourists. This demise of moral values is revisited in a more ironic tone in *Andrea Víctrix* (see Ventayol Bosch). *Andrea Víctrix* denounces not only tourism, but also the notion of limitless progress and the loss of modern cultural references in the consumer society. In Villalonga's Mediterranean setting, however, tourism is the main culprit. Three aspects of this industrial

tourism are critiqued. The first one concerns the lack of calm and makes explicit reference to one of the works that laid the foundations for the tourist image of the island, namely Santiago Rusiñol's "L'illa de la calma" ("The Island of Calm"), an essay from 1912 which presents the island as an ideal place for rest and relaxation. In Turclub, this calm is both a draw for visitors and completely impossible due to the very activities offered to them. The streets are eternally flooded with light and brimming with noise and smells. Loudspeakers fill the streets with advertising to such extremes that there is some concern as to whether this excess might affect the influx of tourists. We are told that the city of Cannes has hotels that advertise "No radio or TV: all top quality" (Villalonga 59), but by attempting to trumpet this slogan louder than the neighboring hotels which copy it, the managers defeat its very purpose. Some of the advertising slogans that are repeated are copied from those that appeared in the Balearic press as early as 1963. One intrusive author makes this explicit in a footnote. This minimal gesture is enormously relevant and contributes to the awareness of the simulation to which the narrative's intertextuality points as well; it breaches the limits of the story by a footnote that necessarily comes from an intrusive author, distanced from a narrator who, as we have seen, could be viewed by the informed reader as an alter ego of Villalonga. It is in this manner, through the novel, that the author underscores the novel's fictional nature.

The second effect of touristification denounced by *Andrea Víctrix* relates to the urban development of the region. The metamorphosis of the entire island of Mallorca into a sprawling city is a central concern of critical geography studies as they address the issue of land use and zoning on the island (see Picornell, "Insular Identity"). In Turclub, skyscrapers block the view of the sky, and cars flood the roads and avenues, where drivers are rewarded for running over pedestrians. The island's emblematic buildings have been converted into hotels, and Palma's cathedral has been replaced by a functional building. The city obtains an opulent and highly developed appearance, "with modern streets, and once in a while, some freshly built ancient monument" (Villalonga 15–16). Classical architecture is presented as an architectural pastiche, reconstructed as a purely aesthetic artefact entirely stripped of any cultural reference. Hence, we see newly built Roman palaces in streets where most of the citizens are dressed in togas. The authorities have made this dress code compulsory for everyone except for troublemakers, who can wear jeans. The reason for this exception, Andrea explains to our astonished narrator, is the fact that the troublemakers "have

become part of the folklore. … They seem to be of interest to certain tourists" (64).

As to the third effect, cultural localism appears to have been transformed to adapt to the tastes of the tourists. In Turclub's world of pleasure and overindulgence, the peasant women dressed in traditional Mallorcan attire who were once portrayed on folkloric postcards now appear to be overly prudish, and are therefore placed alongside bullfighters, odalisques, and Spanish Civil Guard officers. Moreover, in the new fast-track tourism, supersonic tourists can no longer really know what place they are visiting. For this reason, the tour guides inform them that when they get home, they can watch a ten-minute television show and read a 560-word summary with "the history, monuments, folklore, and cuisine of the countries they have seen" (Villalonga 167), so that they can describe them to their friends. Hence, the times of tourism have also been transformed.

Villalonga's ironic nightmare invokes tourism to create a story of disillusionment with an opulent world with muddy feet. Here, the classical and local cultural references do not disappear, but rather become a commodified pastiche. Moreover, the target audience of this place is made up not only of tourists but also locals who live their lives strictly for leisure. The Mediterranean spirit becomes a source of attraction that is built on clichés as a purely aesthetic element resembling an artificially projected classicism, as seen in the architecture, the togas, and the very name of the touristic city. At the end of the novel, the only salvation imaginable for those who want to resist is to head off to new islands in Indonesia, colonized to restart a story of progress with no point of reference. In Villalonga's narrative, those islands, too, will continue along the road to decline.

L'infern de l'illa, *Territori amortitzat 114*, and *Ciutat de Mal*

Published a year apart, Pere Rosselló's *L'infern de l'illa* (The Hell of the Island) and Antoni Roca and Maria I. Deyà's *Territori amortitzat 114* (Amortized Territory 114) exemplify two different approaches to excessive touristification. While Rosselló's book uses irony to weave a critique of both the current model and those who are presently promoting it, including politicians, hotel owners, and residents who have lost their identity, there is no hint of humor in the novel by Roca and Deyà. Instead, their family story uses references from pre-tourism Mallorca to reconstruct an island that has been completely devastated.

L'infern de l'illa is a humorous short novel that explicitly takes the form of a meta-literary pastiche. In fact, it is difficult to understand most of the book's references without considerable knowledge of Catalan literature. This local bias is interesting in a work that is presented as a nod to the reader. It generates a space for recognition as part of a literary and cultural community that acknowledges its own impending extinction in the novel itself. In it, modernist writer Santiago Rusiñol, who, as we have seen, appears in *Andrea Víctrix* as the founder of the image of Mallorca as an island of calm, returns to the now-deceased island. Upon arrival, he cannot find his way out of an ever-expanding airport which is so large that the workers building it have not even been informed that the construction work is complete. Threatening to engulf the entire surface of the island, the airport is described as a sort of parodic Dantesque hell through which Llorenç Villalonga, the writer-turned-character, accompanies Rusiñol. The airport, full of walkways and paths, in fact takes the form of an enormous ensaïmada, the island's most emblematic pastry.[3] When viewed from the mountains of accumulated construction debris, its expansion resembles a cancer devouring the entire island. Despite Rusiñol's initial dismay, the ensaïmada-shaped airport is not a particularly dangerous place. According to the writer-guide, who quotes another writer, Salvador Espriu, it is a labyrinth, "inconsequential, harmless for tourists, … a sort of a theme park, a virtual reality. Do not forget that at the end of the day, our island is a place for enjoyment, a paradise" (Rosselló 36). The most terrifying hall of this labyrinth leads to an immense city of hotels, apartments, golf courses, and discotheques that are completely empty, under the threat of a storm that is preventing tourists from visiting. It is the hell of the hotel owners who have destroyed the island and who are condemned to live in their world, uninhabited by visitors.

The ironic and metaliterary nature of this novel is reinforced by countless references to its own fiction. Rusiñol himself notes that this ever-expanding airport could never be a nightmare, since he is dead and as such does not have dreams. Yet it could never be real either. Neither dream nor reality, the airport may well be fiction. It is explicitly presented as "a symbol, a hyperbole, a caricature, … a literary figure" (Rosselló 27). Rusiñol's complaints about the difficulty of moving through this airport with no way out are supported by Villalonga, who reminds him that an author cannot make fiction on his own and that they, the characters, must contribute to its development. In fact, this

[3] This is a spiral-shaped pastry that comes in different sizes and has been marketed as a souvenir in bakeries and in the airport itself, placed in octagonal boxes.

very author of the *nouvelle* is critiqued in the footnotes by an alleged editor who, for example, questions the author's placement of words in the mouths of characters who could never have uttered them. Similarly, at the end of the book, when Rusiñol complains that the novel we are reading is too short, another writer, Gabriel Alomar, reminds him: "You forget, Tiago, that the island is small, that the land and the water and the energy resources are limited, and that this hell, this ensaïmada, airport, or labyrinth—whatever you want to call it—is only a toy" (111). Moreover, he adds, with the little time currently available for reading, it is necessary to facilitate the task for readers. The readers are in turn left with doubt as to what is specifically meant by this present tense, which is simultaneously included in the dystopian present and in the present moment of reading. The novel ends by evoking a lost paradise that humankind has destroyed: "There remains only the country of our memory and of our sweetest dreams, populated by those who can only see its beauty because we know how to look at it. Here we can remain forever" (112). This ironic pastiche is at once a eulogy in which all that remains of the island is merely a remembrance. The authentic island is only accessible through memory and fiction.

In 2001, a year before the publication of *L'infern a l'illa*, Antoni Roca and Maria I. Deyà published *Territori amoritzat 114*, a book that follows the clichés of the genre much more closely than Rosselló's short novel. Like *Andrea Víctrix*, a different geopolitical world is presented here, one in which the specificity of each individual region has been replaced by global confederations. In this new milieu, Mallorca is an island lacking in resources, marginalized on the fringes of international financial networks. The island is therefore portrayed as a counter-image to the tourist destination. In the face of today's growing demographics, we are confronted with an almost uninhabited place, with a small airport that can only be reached via horse-drawn carriage. A quasi-historical report explains the reasons for this situation. Although it was a prosperous place in the early twentieth century, almost entirely geared to mass tourism, which generated wealth in the hotel and construction sectors, the island's water and energy supplies and waste management presented significant problems. As a result of its monoculture of tourism, the island was listed on the world stock exchange under the name "Mallorquische, Societat Territorial Anònima" until the rise of the sea level caused by climate change made it an unattractive place for tourists. Despite the fruitless attempts of a Mallorcan nobleman to purchase the land, by 2030 the island had become a depreciated, unsalvageable place that could not generate wealth.

In this case, the virtual banishing of the island's landscape is taken up by a new traveler, a scholar of Mallorcan origin on a quest for the jewels of the ancient crown of Mallorca. On this journey, she meets different characters who refuse to leave the island and who guide her through places that can be recognized by any local resident. Those places are described among the ruins—abandoned villages, debris in constant combustion—and the recovery of a simpler, more natural life. The island's few remaining inhabitants subsist by farming or by trading in waste. Nature has gradually reclaimed places and the children play traditional games in the street, as there are no television sets. The characters who guide our protagonist are archivists and historians, custodians of the past. In this way, the dystopia exposes and denounces the effects of the region's over-commercialization and presents the image of an impoverished landscape destroyed by the rise in sea levels. This scenario nevertheless generates a twofold place for optimism. On the one hand, nature is creatively regenerating abandoned spaces, not only by recovering the land but also by taking in new species. On the other hand, there is new hope in the discovery of the protagonist's ancestry, as she is the heiress of medieval jewels that embody wealth and symbolic importance which would enable her to buy the island. Personal history is therefore rooted in the collective history, to generate a possible future. Oddly enough, this critical and hopeful story does not include images associated with simulation or any recurring intertextual references. Mention is again made of the changes of historic place names—the city of Palma had at some point come to be called Palmabadia (Palma Bay)—yet the timeline of the basic story is linear: from the lost heritage and inheritance, the story moves on to the recent past, when such loss occurred, to the present time of the novel, when the consequences of that loss are explained, and finally, to the anticipation of a possible future that might allow that damage to be undone.

Unlike *Andrea Víctrix* and *L'infern a l'illa*, *Territori amortitzat 114* does not rely on literary references to underpin simulacra. Those references, however, abound again in Jaume Pons Alorda's novel *Ciutat de Mal* (City of Evil). Here, intertextuality is constructed both through quotations, which can be more or less overt or even stated in the epilogue, and through alter egos of certain characters, who bear some level of resemblance to certain writers. However, in this case, there is no external, time-traveling narrator, but instead an outcast writer with an inferiority complex who seeks out points of reference in a depraved world controlled by an authoritarian figure known as "el Constructor"

("the Builder"). The immense city that the island has become is a place built anew over the rubble of the obliterated space. The image of simulation reappears in a dystopian world.

The novel begins as follows: "I have always thought, too, that the sea is like a person. It penetrates and is penetrated. However, this sea is not what it seems, but instead a gruesome illusion, an artificial pond made by the Builder and his assassins. After the fiasco of the City's last update, they had to demolish entire neighborhoods to rebuild nature, but a false one" (Pons Alorda 11). In the heart of the city, our protagonist, a writer who always stammers when speaking directly, travels inside a worm-metro to find a typical dystopian city with outlandish and somewhat violent characters and strange shops. Surrounding the city is a ring of "destruction, wasteland plots, changing streets, this parched road and the snow that cakes everything with brownish scum" (35–36). Like Villalonga's Turclub, the setting is characterized by false opulence and sexuality that is far more explicit here. The Mallorcan cultural references that enable us to recognize the place in question are perhaps the most stereotypical and are evoked without the slightest hint of nostalgia. The pig slaughter appears as the finale of cultural celebration, and ensaïmadas of all types appear recurrently as a sweet that is often combined with orgies and scenes of sex and violence. Only in one chapter is there a hotel; there, we see the protagonist, who is carrying some ensaïmadas and finds him- or herself in an orgy that culminates with a ritualistic balconing ceremony.[4] The theme of tourism is therefore not explicit, as everything ultimately relates to tourism: the lifestyle of overindulgence, the overbuilt land, and the simulated scenarios over a ravaged landscape.

Contra el món

Finally, Pere Antoni Pons' *Contra el món* (Against the World) provides a contrast to the novels discussed above, given its realist tone. The realism of *Contra el món* is the effect of the contemporary nature of the plot (here, dystopia is generated by the unusual) and of the desire to portray the destruction of the island and its identity through different types of Mallorcan people—builders, ecologists, and artists—who

[4] The term "balconing" refers to the dangerous practice of young tourists who attempt to jump from balcony to balcony in the hotels or who jump into the pool from the balcony of a hotel room—an activity that often ends in death.

represent different attitudes regarding tourism and local life. Here, the dystopian element is generated by a specific event: one day, the Serra de Tramuntana mountains rose up. Everything has disappeared as though it were swallowed up by the atmosphere, leaving a huge, empty plain in its place. The novel narrates the reactions of different characters. Their thoughts about the causes of the unusual phenomenon and disappearance lead to a debate about the recent history of the island. Whereas Matias, who has worked in the hotel sector, believes that tourism enabled progress on the poor island, Miquel, a militant environmentalist, feels that tourism has caused nothing but a squalor that is as "frenetic and opulent" (Pons 48). For this character, the event represents a sort of revenge by nature in retaliation for the wrong that has been inflicted on the island's natural environment. Yet the pursuit of the causes is hardly a priority in the face of the need to rebuild and the possibility of generating profits with an enterprise of this magnitude.

The decision to use the Serra de Tramuntana mountains was no coincidence, as it is a protected natural area and a World Heritage Site. The novel itself describes it as "the most emblematic landscape" and, mimicking a typical guidebook, as "the most ecologically and culturally rich area of the island" (Pons 59). As a result of the natural event, everything suddenly looks both different and similar. A hard-to-describe void fills the space once occupied by nature, as well as by towns with names "that had always sounded hospitably unchangeable, yet now only exist on the outdated fiction of maps" (62). The lost heritage exists only through its images in memory. Government action in response to the disaster is organized almost immediately to maintain the economy and prevent a decline in tourism. Indeed, two tourism companies endeavor to take advantage of the situation. The first and most immediate attempt is made by international dark tourism companies. However, it is ultimately unsuccessful because the emptiness left behind by the catastrophe does not make it a sufficiently photogenic location. The company that succeeds in the reconstruction is a corporation with German and Spanish capital that quickly plans a multi-million-euro project to occupy the space. Under the name "Mallorca Nova," a re-creation of the local area is presented as a "revitalizing tribute to the lost Mallorca" (131); yet it can only ever serve as a pastiche designed to attract new visitors and residents. This reconstruction takes a stereotypical local image as its reference. Far from healing the trauma, the project makes it impossible to overcome it. One character explains: "It can lead to an exaltation of tastelessness, which, rather than reconnecting the past with the present in an

attempt to mitigate the impact of the trauma, actually has the opposite effect, embedding the trauma of the present in the body of the future as a copy of bad taste, ostentation, and greed" (131). And when this same character is invited to visit the redeveloped areas, he is left retching beneath a tree, overwhelmed by the images of this reconstruction of the historic site, which has now been transformed into an apparently bucolic setting that justifies the construction of large housing developments in the area.

The second counterpoint to this idea is presented with an original correlation. Sebastià, one of the main characters, is a painter renowned for his abstract paintings. Following the disaster in the Tramuntana mountains, he begins to paint a series of very large paintings that offer a hyperrealist reproduction of the natural landscape, free of any human presence. As representations of the lost place, the images give rise to multiple interpretations, including those that view the gesture as "a nostalgic lament for an irretrievable past" (Pons 263) or as a satirical portrayal in which "the painter rises above the drama of the mountains' disappearance and cordially laughs at those who hoped to remain entrenched in the Mallorca of the past" (253). The painter himself has no idea what inspired him to create these paintings, which, for personal reasons, he ultimately sells to one of the developers of Mallorca Nova. Not even art can generate alternatives to destruction, as it also ends up entangled in the machinery of power. As such, the story's disappointing ending presents a setting in which everything will remain the same. The debris that has been floating in the atmosphere begins to fall on the island from the sky. Despite the hopes of the group of ecologists, no meteorite actually hits the island. "Mallorca has remained intact," the painter observes, adding: "It's totally destroyed" (409). This sentence, which closes the novel, leaves us with a simultaneously bleak and alarming thought: unless there is a radical change in the mentality of the local people and those who govern the island, nothing, not even a dramatic warning from nature, can lead them off the road to disaster. Undoubtedly, the most disturbing aspect of the novel is that it is presented as if it were the most ordinary of situations. It portrays different viewpoints of the problem, held by politicians, investors, intellectuals, and ecologists, all of whom could easily be those of today.

Conclusion

My aim in this article was to examine the relationship between dystopia, insularity, and tourism through the lens of five contemporary novels from Mallorca. In most of these novels I was able to detect a critical view of a model of progress that relies on an unlimited growth of the island's tourism industry. To convey this view, the novels generate a distinctive poetic of simulation where the paradigm of successful growth, embodied by accessible leisure, large facilities, and promotional images of the island, is unmasked as a sham. The image of tourism is presented as a construction that reveals its falseness and leads to disaster through a dystopian situation. However, any reconstruction based on nostalgia can only ever result in a satirical or revolting pastiche. The only novel that dares to present a glimmer of hope, Roca and Deyà's *Territori amortitzat 114*, does so as a future possibility and by undertaking personal action on an almost deserted region. If the dystopian register does generate a place from which one could rethink the island, it is by exposing the simulated nature of the touristic facade. This opens up cracks in the surface of the tourism growth bubble, affording a glimpse of what lies beyond the facade that is the field of vision of the tourist gaze.

In the 2019 documentary film *Tot inclòs* (All Inclusive), a nature preservationist points out that the environmentalist struggle in the Balearic Islands has gone from being topographical, that is, focused on specific places in need of protection, to being more general, with an attitude summarized by the slogan "Let's save the island." The slogans that have inspired their actions over the last decade, including "SOS Residents," "Life in the Center," and "Today for Tomorrow," connect the need to protect the land with a sense of social and personal well-being. What is still missing is a specific vision of that possible future. If such a vision has not yet been formulated, one can only speculate that it is because it would be extremely complex fiction, and even somewhat discouraging in its sheer slowness. This would be a fiction of persistent change, resistant to the ups and downs of politics, faced with global capitalism and the urgency of immediate action that many people face in their fight for a better future—in other words, short-notice evictions, bulldozers that irreversibly destroy cultural heritage, or asphalt that solidifies far too quickly, giving rise to new roads and housing developments.

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Turizem in nepopolne otoške prihodnosti: simulakri in nostalgija v sodobni majorški distopiji

Ključne besede: španska književnost / Majorka / turizem / distopija / otoškost / Sredozemlje / simulakrum

Članek obravnava prepletenost pojmov insularnosti, turizma in distopije na ozadju petih majorških pripovednih besedil. Izhaja iz hipoteze, da je žanr distopije po zaslugi specifične hipertekstualnosti in temporalnosti distopične pripovedne strukture forma, ki lahko prispeva k ozaveščanju o nevzdržnosti množičnega turizma. Članek analizira peterico romanesknih del spekulativne fikcije, ki so nastala na Majorki, z gledišča distopičnega žanra. Estetska logika simulakra se v teh romanih izkaže za pomembno orodje za ustvarjanje scenarijev turističnega brezdelja. Ko tovrstna prizorišča poustvarjajo embleme prvobitne narave ali pristne kulture, namenjene promociji počitniških destinacij, prezrejo potencial pred-turistične nostalgije, ki bi sicer lahko ponudila izhodišče za zamišljanje alternativne prihodnosti, v kateri množični turizem sedanjega časa ne bi bil neizbežen nasledek.

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