

# WAR APPROACHES TO TOURISM: ALL INCLUSIVE

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## MARINA PLANAS

# MARINA PLANAS INTERVIEWED

by Imma Prieto

“Never has the panopticon been so opaque and, at the same time, so ubiquitous”.

Marina Planas

<sup>IP</sup> The onslaught of telephone technology (smart-phones, iPhone, etc.) has led to talk of a democratisation of photography. Strictly speaking, any user produces photographs, images. This has led some photographers to stop shooting reality with their cameras. How would you define your artistic practice? As photography or as post-photography?

<sup>MP</sup> It's been a long time since I've stopped taking photographs with an artistic intention, and I no longer carry around the camera. I take photos with my phone only to send messages, as a means of communication, as reminders or to file them away as mementos. I use only existing images –generally, from a specific archive belonging to my family, but also from the archive offered by the Internet– to generate new readings or to recontextualise them and ascribe new meanings. And today, this is defined in contemporary art as post-photography. I began this practice when I lived in New York, where I studied the work of Martha Rosler, Christian Boltansky and The Atlas Group (Walid Raad), among many others.

Setting my camera aside was not an easy decision, and I still think I will return to it, although it is possible that when I decide to do so, reflex cameras, to give an example, will have ceased to exist. Some recording media do not last forever. Some people say that it doesn't make sense to

Marina Planas, *Son Sant Joan control tower*, 1966.

Variable dimensions © Fons Planas, Marina Planas, 2020

continue taking photographs while there is still so much to say about those that already exist; in my opinion this is true, but I also think that photographers who do documentary work should continue to exist, so that there is no void with respect to an era, and that they should continue to express themselves through the photographic device. But there is a need for a visual ecology, because the void is also caused by oversaturation, there are already too many images. At this precise moment, there is an exhibition curated by Peter Szendy on this subject entitled *Le Supermarché des Images*. Over three billion images are shared every day on the different networks, tending towards what Walter Benjamin foresaw in the last century: a space 100 percent sustained by images. The exhibition presents works by Harun Farocki, Andreas Gursky, Kazimir Malevich, Thomas Ruff, Laszlo Moholy-Nagy, Yves Klein, and Sophie Calle, among others. Today, we are all photographers, we all carry cameras and take pictures incessantly. Contemporary societies have learned the visual language and their eyes are trained by the number of images they consume. I see friends who take really nice photos or make technically correct little videos without any effort. The problem is that most people don't know what these photographs are doing. The other question is, in this situation, what is there to be done by those who have studied the medium technically and theoretically? My approach is to discuss and study these images. We cannot accumulate and accumulate without analysis because then, we would be witnessing a huge graveyard of images existing merely as ashes, and these ashes need to be reactivated. This is the view with which I feel comfortable working right now. That is where I must position myself, as an ethical and moral duty towards the use of the image and as a passion in which I never cease to find new meaning, a new means of presenting an image, a new story behind a group of images, or millions of stories behind the same image. As an example, I recently became obsessed with a 1967 postcard featuring

a camel, and every time I ask someone about that image, a new narrative, a new revelation emerges, and the image takes on more life and greater force. In general, all those stories come from the past and every time a new story appears, Mohamed's (the camel's) aura grows in force, the image shines brighter. Some people happily place it among their memories of the past and, in speaking of it, clear-eyed, are returned to that other age. That postcard speaks of a time gone by and allows us to analyse a period that defines both our past and who we are today, that speaks of presences and absences (like all images from the past). That is why touching these existing images of the past is an exercise in navigating the waters of memory and of things spiritual, intellectual, virtual, political, anthropological, historical, formal, perceptive and social; and that is how I would define my artistic practice, observing images, grouping them together, shaping constellations, talking about them, writing about them, curating them, giving them to others in order for new stories to appear. I spend many hours immersed in these processes, until I finally materialise the work in panels or installations, which usually also include video and sound. Many are only parts of processes; most undergo modifications, as nearly all my projects are influenced by the work of Jacques Derrida, who says that there is always a 'translation to come'. This approach to looking at images is very different from how they are consumed today, when a momentary crystallisation occurs and then we look at the next image. I have also developed a residency programme in which I invite other artists who work in the area of post-photography to the archive that remains after the closure of my family's business, dedicated to photography for decades, so that others shine different lights on and lend different stories and voices to those images from the past. Analysing the archive from other perspectives also fascinates me because I can see interpretations that I would not see without these external interventions. This entire

project is based on a quote by Hal Foster and the post-photographic manifesto of Joan Fontcuberta.

<sup>IP</sup> It might be said that there is feature that is a constant: the research to do with the image and its functions in today's society. It is indispensable to think of its nature, of its origin, but also its outcome and objective. What can you tell us about all this?

<sup>MP</sup> Image research is a natural thing to do. Since the appearance of the medium and right up until today, its functions have been debated. At first, it was rejected by part of society as something diabolical which absorbed souls. It also had an impact on painting and in the artworld, if we consider artistic practices tending towards the conceptual (Duchamp or Malevich). It has been used for scientific or anthropological purposes, the study of oriental cultures, for classification, anatomical studies of criminals or the mentally ill, the Jews in Auschwitz, in documentary, advertising or journalistic photography. In spite of the fact that the artistic practice of photography began with the birth of the medium, it was not until the 1960s that photography established and consolidated itself as a medium that is an unquestionable part of the artworld, acquiring increasingly greater value on the market. The practice of appropriation, in which the functions of the images as a medium for creation emerge, also began in that decade, nearly a century after the appearance of the device. These practices become more established in 1977, with the exhibition *Pictures*, which identifies a group of young artists who introduce strategies of appropriation and a critique of originality, marking the initiation of the era of post-modernity in art. Hele Winer, the director of Artists Space, invited Douglas Crimp to organise an exhibition with the participation of Troy Brauntuch, Jack Goldstein, Sherrie Levine, Robert Longo and Philip Smith. Later came

Cindy Sherman, Barbara Kruger and Louis Lawler at Metro Pictures. These artists shared not a medium, but rather a new sense of representation as image; representations that were often found or appropriated, which complicated or even contradicted the claims of authorship and authenticity that were so important for the most contemporary aesthetic. "We are not in search of sources of origins but of structures of signification: underneath each picture there is always another picture". The photographic ready-made has survived until today, influencing many artists, and perhaps giving rise to what we call archival art.

In his book *El Archivo Audiovisual*, Miquel Morey explains how, over the past 25 years, the term archive has turned into the fetish of museums. There have been important movements of thought and much theoretical work on the notion; from Michel Foucault's suspicion and archaeology of knowledge, to Jacques Derrida's deconstruction, to the archival urge described by Freud, and including Roland Barthes and Hal Foster. These texts have been quoted time after time by other theorists, exhibition curators and artists, gradually broadening archival art, appropriation art or post-photography. The existing archives and images are increasingly numerous and, over time, they are approached in different manners. Borges and Aby Warburg spoke of classifications and relations between different concepts, creating absurd indices or conceptual constellations within the history of art. Today, with the appearance of the Internet, knowledge multiplies. The dependence on technology for making a record is nothing new, but what is new is the capacity for production and storage allowed by the new media. Nowadays, algorithms that analyse big data are designed to process the vast content. Information reaches us as a mass and that, too, is treated in the new practices involving the archive, given that it is usually an art of accumulating or visiting places with accumulations. Despite having emerged in the '70s, it still holds an interest because

it is a phenomenon that never ceases to grow and to surprise us, particularly if we think of its capacity for expansion.

<sup>IP</sup> We live surrounded by images; years ago, there was talk of the global *iconosphere*. We consume images and generate huge quantities of them. Do you feel that we are overexposed to images? Why so?

<sup>MP</sup> We are overexposed to images and because of this, we ourselves have become underexposed. With the appearance of platforms like *Instagram*, for example, we consume a greater amount of images than ever: the application is nothing more than a series of archives with billions of images organised by concepts and at the same time, shaped by the lives of strangers. We spend hours killing time, looking at those images, consuming information that is essentially unnecessary. Our ego has become underexposed in the face of this in practice imposed overexposure. It seems as though today, if you don't post a photograph, you're nobody, you have ceased to exist. My outlook on this is negative. I can assert that I was happier when this did not exist, among my books, cameras and notebooks. On the other hand, I have always been overexposed to images, and I have never felt annoyed at consuming hours and hours of experimental film, or movies, photographs, books. But the little screen breaks all the magic and connection one feels in a darkened cinema, or a specially lit exhibition hall that one has, furthermore, chosen to visit, or of a paragraph in a paper book. Looking at images online also introduces opaque forms of control and, while we consume online, companies take our data in order to control our choices later. Never has the panopticon been so opaque and so ubiquitous at the same time.

In general, Google generates certain contradictions. Sometimes we find it satisfying to be able to access what is being done in other museums or see the websites of artists

who are a long way away. Doubtlessly, this offers us the possibility of continuing to look, to research images. Is it boundless? Always, the web grows constantly. Is there too much information? I am fascinated by it, it is one of the features of archival art, the expansion and accumulation of content. I accumulate a lot from the Internet. and gradually generate new files on my computer. The desire for total comprehension is always there, as it is generally also there in some forms of archival art. At times, one has to look extensively in the search process itself and, on certain occasions, that contaminates the gaze. There is a very interesting piece on this issue by Iria Lombardia, in which she declares she is on an image strike, setting out to spend a certain time without looking at a single image more. And then, you also end up accepting the banality and treating it as a subject and, at other times, you wish a process of amnesia would erase everything you have seen. Fortunately, we don't contain it all; actually, we hardly contain anything.

<sup>IP</sup> The image: use or abuse?

<sup>MP</sup> Use, abuse, diffusive, confusing, inconclusive, intrusive.

I have always used and abused images, just as they have used and abused me. It's just the way I am naturally, and I cannot conceive myself otherwise, since it is an aspect that has been present in my life since I was born, in my studies, in work and in my free time, practically 24 hours a day, even when I dream or meditate. It turns out that now images also have an enormous presence in society in general. What I did in the past with the Mini DV camera, DV cam, Nikon F3, Canon EOS (analogue), or with a Canon mark II and a computer or a laboratory, is now done by everyone with a mobile phone and an app. Sometimes it makes me sad, because once again, not only has the magic been lost in the way we consume images, but also in the way we produce them. And the most chilling thing is that they are posted directly on a

public network so that everyone can be seen by everyone. Then, on a professional level, these images are also used so that people can see what you are doing, and if you are not on the network, you are invisible. I have been obliged to give in to Instagram, when I had already refused to do so. Instagram is also abusive in the sense that those images cease to be the property of the person who posts them. It turns out that you have to be there so that you can be seen, but you give up your ownership. The most worrying thing is that people don't know this, and the majority are leaving their life's memories there, which they will surely want to continue to access forever. If one day Instagram decides to charge us to be able to access that content or those images, it can. Instagram would charge you for the very content you have generated, and which should in principle belong to you. Use and abuse. I am also amazed to see people who photograph everything in their life – I'm here, I'm there – and are letting everyone know where they are at all times. It is a loss of control over their privacy and the information about their lives. I do it too, from time to time, but very occasionally, because I actually like to keep my experiences and what I do to myself or for the people close to me, so that the images continue to touch on the reality. And then, what do all these images tell us? Often, it is good to look at them with a specific purpose placing them in new contexts, because they tell us about today's society, and that is interesting; and if they did not exist, we would not talk about it. Use, and abuse, of course. But also new frontiers for knowledge of the medium.

<sup>1P</sup> Aside from images and their different natures, functions and origins, for years now, we have been living with new methodologies for approaching and thinking of the archive: the archive understood as a space from which to question history, reality, time and again. To what extent have the new conceptions of working with archives influenced you?

<sup>MP</sup> In truth, a great deal. From Bauman and *Liquid Modernity* to Didi-Huberman's book *The Eye of History: When Images Take Positions*. Fontcuberta has written many indispensable theoretical and artistic texts: *Pandora's Camera*, or the latest one, *The Fury of Images*, in which he deals with all these questions of the oversaturation of images, giving multiple examples of artists who have treated these issues. There are a few pages devoted to Penelope Umbrico, a professor I had in New York, that discuss her *Suns from Sunsets from Flickr*, which I had the chance to see at the Pace Gallery, along with other artists who were dealing with the matter of the accumulation of information. Walter Benjamin, both in his book *On Photography* and in *Das Passagen-werk*, in which he accumulates quotes and structures in a panel or constellation breaking with the linear temporality of traditional literature, or in *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*, which deals with issues like the loss of the aura, or the critique of originality and the figure of genius, of which Roland Barthes also speaks in *The Death of the Author*. And then Michel Foucault, who casts suspicion on the archive and speaks of the fragile nature of the document and the surplus structure existing in any society when images or history are visualized and analysed, coining the term 'historical *a priori*'. Jacques Derrida in *Copy, Archive, Signature: A Conversation on Photography*, in which he states that the archive is not only a question of past, but also of future. All of them, more or less contemporary authors who have influenced the way in which we think of images and archives, and whom all the artists who use these practices have read and bear in mind. I keep returning to the quote from Hal Foster:

"Perhaps the paranoid dimension of archival art is the other side of its utopian ambition – its desire to turn belatedness into becomingness, to recoup failed visions in art, literature, philosophy and everyday life



into possible scenarios of alternative kinds of social relations, to transform the no-place of the archive into the no-place of a utopia.”

And the post-photographic manifesto of Joan Fontcuberta:

“It is no longer a question of producing “works”, but of prescribing meanings. The artist merges with the curator, with the collector, with the educator, with the historian, with the theoretician. All these facets are chameleonically authorial. An ecology of the visual is imposed that will penalize saturation and encourage recycling. The discourses of originality are delegitimized and appropriationist practices are normalized. The author camouflages himself. Alternative models of authorship are reformulated: co-authorship, collaborative creation, interactivity and orphan works. Overcoming tensions between the private and the public. Intimacy as a relic.”

The latest thing I have read is by Didi-Huberman: *The Eye of History: When Images Take Positions*, from which I would highlight the following:

“the image has extended its territory so much that nowadays it is difficult to think without having to ‘orient oneself in the image’ [...]. Never has the image imposed itself so forcefully on our aesthetic, technical, everyday, political, historical universe [...] To what kind of knowledge can the image give rise?”

I use images from my family’s archive, but I cannot limit myself to just that content, given that the Internet speaks to us from the present and I am interested in being able to establish that dialogue between the different temporalities. I do so with text, archival images, images from the

Internet, and other images that I gradually acquire out of interest, particularly from books, Instagram, an archive produced by Casa Planas, an archive collected by Josep Planas, postcards from the collection of Martin Parr. All of them indispensable for treating the subject of tourism with an approach that is historical and present-day. In speaking of today, I can use an image of yesterday, but the image of today is also necessary. When I introduce these Instagram images, for me, they represent a void, that void of saturation. Saturation with images, and saturation with tourists. The saturation caused by viewing panels, and more panels. Also, the colours, the framing are more aseptic, more clinical, less innocent, and behind them there are algorithms that we, the photographers, cannot understand or control. In contrast, the images that come from analogue photography are more innocent, the technical process is comprehensible, just as the mechanisms of the tourism companies that emerged at that time were not yet the opaque giants they are today. And then, there are those images that provide a historical context, or the postcards from Martin Parr’s collection which present us with a global phenomenon. Then there is the question of repetition, like the repetition of the mantra of tourism itself, or the massification of images in a *horror vacui*, with no opportunity for the wall to breathe, or the repetition in many of the images of that banality, of that void; diluted images, with the spectator spending no more than a few seconds on them, or overlooking them altogether.

<sup>1P</sup> I have visited Casa Planas only once. Returning to it in my mind, I remember the anxiety caused by being there, by being conscious of the infinite possibilities that open up: projects, studies, debates about the image and the archive, without a doubt, but also new interpretations of local, national and international history. Knowing that hidden there are the experiences yet to be revealed. Being

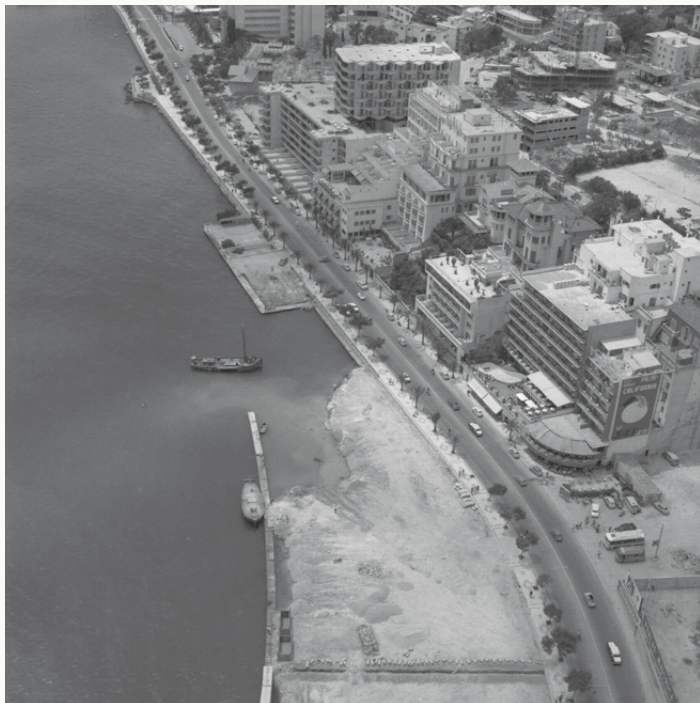
there is witnessing a radical encounter of the present and the past, realising that they are both still alive, but in silence. That in some way, our voice activates theirs. Tell us about the Planas archive...

<sup>MP</sup> The Planas Archive. What can one say? It has bewitched me for several reasons, because it is an archive of images, because it is an archive, because of the collection, because it is a family archive and I feel it is part of my genes, because of the act of accumulation. This archive appeared in my life long after I completed my studies in audio-visual communication. When I discovered it, my father forbade me from entering because of that idea that photographic archives are never profitable. And he was right, at that time, I kept finding articles in the newspapers about “what to do with photographic archives”. The Planas Archive contains millions of images that narrate part of the history of the Balearic Islands during the 1950s, ‘60s, ‘70s and part of the ‘80s. Most of them are pictures produced by the Casa Planas photography firm that my grandfather established in 1949, when he opened his first shop in Calle Colón; he later came to have more than 15 establishments all over the island. My grandfather introduced the concept of industrial photography, in colour; he had a monopoly on postcards, and I have read that he was the first European photographer to have a helicopter in order to take photographs from the sky. In the images, one can see the evolution of the urban development of the islands, particularly in the coastal areas of those times, and also in Palma. Above all, those images speak of the birth and evolution of the Balearic tourist boom. My grandfather travelled to Germany by train and brought industrial laboratories from there. One day, I found some photographs of when he went to Munich, and I saw the same installations which I later found in the basement of Casa Planas, where the laboratories were located, five decades later, demolished by time and gnawed by rats. My grandfather gave a



Marina Planas, *Playa de Palma*, without date. Variable dimensions © Fons Planas, Marina Planas, 2020





Marina Planas, *Extension of the esplanade of Palma pier*,  
without date. Variable dimensions © Fons Planas,  
Marina Planas, 2020



Marina Planas, *S'Hort del Rei*, without date. Variable  
dimensions © Fons Planas, Marina Planas, 2020



Marina Planas, *Puerto de Alcudia*, 1966. 10 × 15 cm  
© Fons Planas, Marina Planas, 2020



Marina Planas, *Bermudas Hotel, Palmanova*. 1964.  
15 × 22 cm © Fons Planas, Marina Planas, 2020





Marina Planas, *Vacation city. Font de sa Cala*, 1970.  
15 × 22 cm © Fons Planas, Marina Planas, 2020

lot of attention to technique, he used medium and large-format *Hasselblads* for landscape photography, postcards and hotel advertising. The negatives that our family safeguards are of extremely high quality, as there was also a room for making huge enlargements and murals. In addition to landscapes and hotel advertisements, he also took many photos of celebrities who came to the islands, covers for stills: Lana Turner, Joan Fontaine, Chaplin, and also Miró, Camilo José Cela, Franco, Fraga and the king of Spain on different occasions. He was a correspondent for RNE-TV1 for a few years.

Aside from Casa Planas' own production, my grandfather was a collector and accumulator of objects related to the world of images: postcards and pictures, thousands of different models of cameras, collections of photography magazines, postcards and images acquired from other archives. His obsessions were postcards, images of landscapes, pictures that showed cameras, numerous photographs of political figures –you can find original photographs of Nazi marches, of Hitler, of Mussolini, of the victory day of the Falangists in Palma de Mallorca, and also part of Carles Durán's collection. Carles Durán had an archive of images that was very important in Catalonia, and it was going to be lost. Ignasi Aballí and Joan Fontcuberta, who directed the association of visual artists at the time, claimed that it was important for the archive not to disappear and called for their acquisition by the authorities. Eventually, Carlos Duran sold it to Kodak. Years later, Kodak returned it to the Catalan Autonomous Government without asking for anything in exchange. My grandfather purchased part of that archive, and it is in the collection. Curiously, nobody in the family knows this story any longer; at one of the residencies, I invited Joan Fontcuberta and it was he who told me the story.

In any case, the collection is very extensive, the largest on the Balearic Islands and, I am told, one of the most

significant on a national level, particularly with respect to the subject of tourism. Finally, regarding the collection and that obsessive collector's urge that Freud spoke of so much, when I discovered this archive, I realised that the urge to archive and accumulate is a gene. I myself had by then accumulated many, many experimental films, as well as literature on photography and books, and more books. And there is the archive, the accumulation of a life lasting 90 years, dedicated entirely to photography. What will become of those who come afterwards...?

<sup>IP</sup> As you were telling us, your grandfather was a visionary in this regard, laying the groundwork for what is ultimately a model. Creating an imagery about a reality that did not yet exist. And in this sense, we might say that the archive has a distinct footprint that allows to reflect on tourism or on its creation. Tell us about that...

It's curious, because my grandfather always explained that when he bought the helicopter, he hired it out to the Civil Guard at the weekends. This is very significant, because if he was able to buy a helicopter, it was thanks to his earnings from advertising and the postcards for hotels. So, a local person dedicated to images to do with tourism was making higher profits than the state itself, enabling him to have a helicopter. That is food for thought.

I have always thought that in Mallorca, technical innovation in photography came owing to tourism whereas, in general, technical innovations are developed with military ends and for the purpose of war, as Harun Farocki says in *Images of the World and the Inscription of War*. This is also food for thought.

The truth is that it is an archive of millions of images for millions of tourists, or rather, millions of postcards for millions of tourists. My grandfather worked hand in hand

with the Tourism Board to strengthen Mallorca as a tourist destination at the end of the developmentalist period and opening-up of Franco's regime. The island was opening its doors to Europe and the only thing it had to offer was sun and the beach. In these images, you can see a period of economic and social development which explains where most of the countries of southern Europe and the Mediterranean find themselves today: in a monopoly of tourism.

In a country where the industrial revolution practically had not taken place, completely rural, illiterate, and at a time when holidays were becoming a universal right, there was a pristine, low-cost region yet to be exploited and an exponential market niche. And these images show how Mallorca was the guinea pig for what would later be reproduced in more distance places like Asia or Latin America. They show that boom and the growth of tourism. The image of "tourist number one million" or the advertising shots for "tourist day" were created at Casa Planas. There is no archive like it for explaining the evolution of this phenomenon over those decades.

<sup>IP</sup> What do you think some of the postcards are telling us?

<sup>MP</sup> In his book *Lógicas turísticas de la fotografía* [*Touristic Logics of Photography*], Vega tells us that in postcards, every image is a brand, a place, a signposted landmark, scenery to be contemplated. Postcards create a course, a route, a circuit that is inserted into the imagination of the tourist like a mental map.

Thus, the reality of tourism functions as an idealised reality, in which everything is displayed for the contemplation of the visitor and the place is exhibited purely as a set, the perfect presentation of all of its gimmicks. Postcards are the same demonstration of the illusory, apparent and artificial character of the universe of tourism.

In other postcards that can be seen in this exhibition, the models that appear in the images are one of the best recent examples of the objectification of the female nude and of the reduction of women to simple objects of desire, promoted at the heart of the predominant heterosexual male culture that opted for the figure of a charming, beautiful young woman, always smiling and obsequious, turned into a sexual artefact. Women, and by extension their bodies, were yet another product of the modern consumer society and an advertisement for certain scenarios of tourist pleasure.

All of these postcards tell us that sex has ended up turning into a destination and a travel region: consequently, the depictions of the female body –and only in recent years, also of the male body– can be read as a text that tells us how we should make use of the place.

The tourist industry creates differentiated configurations of the space characterised, among other aspects, by the type of urban development in the territory, by the development of certain architectural typologies and by specific building models, and this also repeatedly appears in the postcards.

Essentially, what the postcards offer us is a document of those journeys and a universal image of the tourist resort.

Tourist space is conceived –and so these postcards depict it– as an uninterrupted backdrop, an endless set on which the different actors and extras of the tourist dramatization cross their paths and coexist, reproducing the roles written out in a well-established script, in a display of scenes typical of the area seasoned with music and dancing to keep the tourists entertained, for an illusory, fictitious representation of happiness.

<sup>IP</sup> What role do images play in all this?

<sup>MP</sup> Images has always been associated with tourism, from the creation of the premonitory fiction about the trip to the

sale of travel cameras and storing away memories of those moments of happiness, and the postcard as a souvenir, a memento, a means of communication, an advert and an identifier of the places that should be visited. Today, selfies taken in emblematic places are the same photos as those that were shown on postcards. The images have determined what place must be visited and which monuments, meals or traditions comprise a specific civilisation or culture, always remaining within the Eurocentric preconceived ideas and clichés. If we bear in mind the origin of postcards that, in reality, came about with the commercialization of what was the anthropological photography of the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century, we see how those photographs established typologies of certain cultures, reducing everything to specific aspects from the perspective of the colonising male. Those images later turned into postcards developing a different kind of colonialism, establishing new power structures dominated by the world powers in what would become the tourism industry.

And then came the advertising image to attract the tourists, of course. We can consider the example of how the image has been used to manipulate the masses throughout history, from religious iconography to posters in the era of the cold war, etc. etc. The latest thing is neurotourism, to which I have devoted a series of texts and images on the panel. Different neurological tests are performed to see how brains react to stimuli through the display of pleasant images. When the neurological response is analysed, it is possible to select the images that give rise to the most agreeable reactions in the spectator, and these are the images they bombard us with on a daily basis in order to incite us to travel.

<sup>IP</sup> Returning to the line of thought that allows us to reflect on the nature of images and their uses, the Planas Archive contains extremely diverse

images. You told us that your grandfather photographed the image of Mallorca to be exported, but I remember that, on the day we visited the collection, there were also local events such as fashion shoes and weddings, or political figures, both on holiday and on official visits. What difference is there between some of the photographs and the postcards? What is the approach?

<sup>MP</sup> There are images produced by the company itself, which are serial images designed for sales and promotion of the island during the decades of the first and second tourist boom. And then there are others that I have searched for with the hashtags #mallorca #mallorcatourism #tourism #mallorcaisdead #balaericislands #palma #masstorism #ruralmallorca, and these belong more to the fourth and fifth tourist boom, they are more present-day. There are also a lot of photographs of a more political sort, to contextualise the historical moment when all these changes took place, some of them taken by my grandfather, like those of Franco, and others that are part of his collection, bought I do not know exactly where, but belonging to an official archive from Italy as they are stamped on the back, showing Mussolini. There is a very effective one of the Paseo Marítimo [seafront promenade] in Palma, where you can see the construction of a hotel which belonged to RIU for many years, and opposite there is a military parade. You see those two worlds which were in opposition to one another, yet one appeared precisely because of the existence of the other. There are postcards from other collections to speak of the phenomenon more globally, and other images which I took from Google in order to talk more about the problem of the environment or the sexualisation of women.

<sup>IP</sup> In relation to the above, if we think of a public or private use, do you believe that in some cases,

the values are inverted? Is it possible to point out the beginning of the overexposure before the Internet boom?

Today, to speak of the public and the private is almost a utopia. Women appear in some postcards. In some cases they were models –I know this because of the conversations I have had with my grandfather– but many of the women who appear in the foreground and who promote a hotel or Mallorca as a destination, were quite simply there, and my grandfather would place them differently for a better composition. They were anonymous tourists and their image became a postcard and travelled to other countries. A private experience was becoming a public fact observed by the thousands of tourists who purchased or looked at the postcard, and then they were also seen by whoever received that postcard. And there are those on Instagram as well. Photos of tourists around the world that can be observed and re-used by the entire world. Whoever appears in the photo loses their right to privacy by posting that photograph, and anyone may use them. This goes even further. The private sphere is increasingly a relic, as Joan Fontcuberta says.

<sup>IP</sup> It is interesting to consider, for an example, that the early technological advances are first used by the military and defence services, by armies. This leads me to those local interchanges –I am referring to the helicopter– between police forces and tourism photography. Thinking of that helicopter leads me to a drone. Tell us about the title of the exhibition...

<sup>MP</sup> It all comes from the idea that in the Balearic Islands, the photographic medium evolved for the purposes of tourism and not for military purposes, as it normally did. I think it is a title-in-progress, I might change it. Right now, I am



thinking about something like “The grudge of tourism images”. But I would still give it some more thought. As I would to the panel.

<sup>IP</sup> Yes, but with respect to the ideas that emerge from this project, we can analyse how something that may be incidental leads us to a present-day issue. It is evident that war is understood as a phenomenon of massive destruction; but we should perhaps accept that tourism has also been a destructive phenomenon, particularly as a result of certain –not all– dynamics that have prevailed in both national and local governments. It depends on the strategies that are implemented. There are different types of tourism, but some are closely linked to poor political and economic management. Cities like Venice, Barcelona or Palma are threatened by the impact of tourism. When the residents of an area lose their normal relationship with it, the area also loses. When the residents are pushed out by rental increases, when they must go to the outskirts of the town to fill their refrigerator because in the centre, everything on offer is only for the tourists; in sum, when the identity of the area is annihilated, we lose history, memory, life. In what way may tourism be seen as a war?

<sup>MP</sup> In our day and age, tourism has given rise to many conflicts, and increasingly creates more difficulties for the residents of the area and has environmental consequences that are becoming irreversible. On the panel, which is comprised of 660 images and 660 texts, I take the reading of *Global Touristification*, as the principal reference, along with others; my objective is to address all the points of tensions. To sum up, there is a discussion of the neoliberal policies that have enabled the expansion of multinationals

which possess more stronger and less transparent forms of power that operate over and above states. I also talk about how this happened because the states have granted those big corporations the terms favourable to the expansion of their businesses, as is the case of the appearance of low-cost companies, for instance. And also of how the financial institutions have provided them credit and have increasingly greater control over multinationals, emphasizing that opaqueness and the consequences this has had on the rights of the workers of these companies. The gender gap, or the exploitation of women. The case of Thailand, for example, where the infrastructures created for prostitution during the Vietnam war were repurposed as sex tourism businesses. Or, similarly, the surplus of the planes left over after World War Two, which were repurposed as planes for tourism. How town planning that implements policies with the interests of private investors in mind, concerning both mega resorts and second homes and, with the arrival of Airbnb, even residential areas in big cities. In fact, public spaces like beaches or footpaths have been made private, depriving residents of their lawful right of access. I talk a great deal about accumulation through dispossession. And also about the social response the phenomenon has produced, at first owing to environmental issues and later, owing to oversaturation or difficulty of access to housing for the working classes. About land speculation and the real property bubble generated by the phenomenon of tourism, which give rise to gentrification in cities. There is also a part devoted to climate change and the environment. Tourism creates many conflicts and the subject is ripe for a great deal of historical, political, environmental, economic, social and philosophical reflection...

What is clear is that, if this archive is not looked at and thought about, all that we have are the texts that consider this question. Neglecting this archive would not only be an abuse with respect to memory, but also to the environment

and all of the issues it treats. It would also be a forgetting of our history. So many images that should be remembered have been forgotten, so many libraries have been burned, archives lost. I always give the example of Bill Gates, who bought 17 million images from the *Bettmann* and *United Press International* archives, now in a bunker of an anti-aircraft shelter in Pennsylvania. He bought them when nobody wanted them and now there are lawsuits against him because they should be public access archives. But they are owned by him. Oblivion and neglect are anti-democratic.

<sup>IP</sup> Could we say that every image is political?

<sup>MP</sup> Yes, we can.

*War approaches  
to Tourism: all inclusive*  
Marina Planas

From 21st February  
to 10th May 2020

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