

## Be El Caudillo's Guest: The Franco Regime's Quest for Rehabilitation and Dollars after World War II via the Promotion of U.S. Tourism to Spain

[I]t is essential that the tourist who visits us not only returns here, but that he is converted into the most active propagandist of our nation, increasing in this manner our prestige in the world.<sup>1</sup>

—Preliminary National Tourism Plan, Spanish Ministry of Information and Tourism, 1952

If you are Mr. William X. Jones, the typical American vacationer, political matters will never cross your path. Spain is under a dictatorship, with some of the trimmings, but you can go exactly where you wish, do exactly what you choose, and say exactly what you feel about the government or anything else. There are no shadows to frighten you, as in Yugoslavia or Vienna or in the Soviet Satellites.<sup>2</sup>

—Temple Fielding, *Fielding's Travel Guide to Europe*, 1952

An American motion picture production company has been credited with influencing and encouraging tourism to Spain. "El Cid," the story of Spain's great national hero, is currently being filmed in more than 20 different locations in Spain, and those directly connected with tourism claim it has created added interest in travel to Spain.<sup>3</sup>

—*West Hollywood Tribune*, 1961

Francisco Franco's Spain was an impoverished, inward-focused pariah state at the end of World War II, suspicious of outside influences, castigated for its wartime ties to the Axis powers, on the verge of being drummed out of the United Nations. Two decades later, Spain, still under the autocratic rule of El Caudillo, was a rising European economy and magnet for foreign visitors and investment, a valued American ally against Soviet communism, accepted by both

1. "Anteproyecto de Plan Nacional de Turismo," July 1952, p. 2, section 49.02, box 14415, general heading "Cultura," General Archive of the Civil Administration of the State, Alcalá de Henares, Spain (hereafter General Archive Alcalá).

2. Temple Fielding, *Fielding's Travel Guide to Europe*, 5th ed. (New York, 1952), 607–8.

3. "Hollywood Movie Set New Lure for Spanish Tourist Agencies," *West Hollywood Tribune*, 4/6/61, in "El Cid" clipping file, Margaret Herrick Library of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences (hereafter MHL), Beverly Hills, California.

the United States and the majority of its neighbors as a “normal” Western European state. This transition was partially due to the exigencies of the Cold War—a vestige of once-ascendant European fascism was seen as far less of a threat to regional and global security than the Soviet Union at the height of its power. Still, it would have been entirely plausible for Franco Spain to remain poor and xenophobic and to be merely tolerated by the United States and other Western countries, a regrettable expedient toward an unpleasant regime.

But the Franco regime was determined to find its way fully back to America’s and the West’s good graces; promoting American tourism to Spain, as a major component of a larger Western tourism policy, was a central element of the program the regime devised to improve its circumstances. Using the early postwar pro-tourism policies of other European countries as a starting point for its own machinations, the Spanish government’s overarching goals were to “sell” Franco Spain’s image abroad as a normal Western country and anti-Communist ally, and to bring into Spain desperately needed hard currency and investment. As we will see, the Franco regime was strongly encouraged in the years following World War II’s end to look to American tourism’s potential economic and propaganda benefits to Spain by prominent players within the U.S. travel and tourism industries, including American Express, Hilton Hotels, Trans-World Airlines, and Temple Fielding, the most popular American travel writer in the early postwar period. Additionally, American motion picture producers who sought to make Hollywood films in Spain—foremost among them Samuel Bronston, producer of the epic *El Cid*—came to be seen by the Franco regime as significant assets to Spain’s tourism policies, because of both the widespread distribution of attractive images of Spain and the glamour of Hollywood film production in the country. The result was a potent synergy between American travel, tourism, and entertainment business entrepreneurship and Spanish political-economic ambitions in an altered international relations environment.

The American tourist presence in Spain was always, to be sure, a numerical minority, and the phenomenon of low-spending northern Europeans (the British in particular were notoriously niggardly)<sup>4</sup> who flocked to Spain’s beaches as a respite from cool home climates, archly described by the Spanish writer Mario Gaviria as *España a Go-Go*,<sup>5</sup> would be a critical factor in the loosening of Spanish

4. A. M. Williams, “Mass Tourism and International Tour Companies,” in *Tourism in Spain: Critical Issues*, eds. M. Barke, J. Towner, and M. T. Newton (Wallingford, England, 1996), 125.

5. Mario Gaviria, *España a Go-Go: Turismo Charter y Neocolonialismo del Espacio* (Madrid, 1974). Gaviria decried, for example, tourists focused on “beach-hotel-shopping,” whose infrequent tour excursions encouraged Spanish tour operators to provide them with “degraded subcultural products: bad art, painful flamenco, ridiculous prizes” (pp. 253–54) and noted that such results “have been tolerated and stimulated by the Spanish State through its tourism policies” (p. 14). In 1970, a peak year of U.S. postwar tourism to Spain, 1.03 million Americans arrived, versus 2.6 million Britons and 2.07 million West Germans (the two countries that contributed the largest numbers of tourists to Spain). V. Bote Gómez and M. Thea Sinclair, “Tourist Demand and Supply in Spain,” in Barke, Towner, and Newton, eds., 68.

social strictures in the late 1960s and beyond.<sup>6</sup> Indeed, the northern Europeans' sheer force of numbers would cause Spanish tourism policy eventually to bend, somewhat reluctantly, toward meeting their needs, especially from the late 1960s until Franco's death.<sup>7</sup> But much of the initial impetus for developing Spain's modern foreign tourism infrastructure came from American travel industry exhortations and guidance; Hollywood films depicting and glorifying Spain, and thus increasing its allure as a travel destination, played not only in the United States but in Europe and around the world as well. The record makes clear that up to the late 1960s, the Franco regime saw particular economic and political value in cultivating tourists from the world's richest and most powerful nation.

Implicit in this article and the dissertation from which it is adapted is the issue of how to apportion responsibility and motivation concerning the international dissemination of American popular and mass consumer culture, of which post-World War II U.S. overseas tourism is an example—the United States exports its citizens, mores, and preferences, as well as currency, while the host country “exports” in situ its culture and society to the tourists.<sup>8</sup> As both Christopher

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6. See as well Orvar Löfgren, *On Holiday: A History of Vacationing* (Berkeley, CA, 1999), 172–78, for a discussion of postwar European tourism to Spain and its transformative influence: for example, in the Canary Islands, Swedish tourists drove a wholesale reorientation of employment, housing, food, and infrastructure in villages that had seen little change in decades, if not centuries (pp. 176–78).

7. Ironically, it was the Spanish subsidiary of the American advertising firm Young and Rubicam that oversaw this reorientation. See “Turismo Hacia España 1969” (Young and Rubicam Strategic Proposal); “Propuesta al Ilmo. Sr. Director General de Promoción del Turismo para Designar Agencia de Publicidad para 1.969”; letter from Manuel Fraga Iribarne to Juan Manuel García de Vinuesa, Young and Rubicam España, S.A., dated November 23, 1968, all in box 33933, section 49.07, heading “Cultura,” General Archives Alcalá.

8. For recent examinations of tourism as an element of “international relations,” broadly conceived, see Christopher Stewart Endy, *Cold War Holidays: American Tourism in France* (Chapel Hill, NC, 2004); Brian A. McKenzie, “Creating a Tourist Paradise: The Marshall Plan and France, 1948–1952,” *French Politics, Culture and Society* 21 (Spring 2003); Christine M. Skwiot, “Itineraries of Empire: The Uses of United States Tourism in Cuba and Hawai‘i, 1898–1959” (Ph.D. diss., Rutgers University, 2002); Dennis Merrill, “Negotiating Cold War Paradise: U.S. Tourism, Economic Planning, and Cultural Modernity in Twentieth-Century Puerto Rico,” *Diplomatic History* 25 (Spring 2001). Annabel Jane Wharton, *Building the Cold War: Hilton International Hotels and Modern Architecture* (Chicago, 2001); see, in addition, Dina Michele Berger, “Pyramids by Day, Martinis by Night: The Development and Promotion of Mexico’s Tourism Industry, 1928–1946” (Ph.D. diss., University of Arizona, 2002), which focuses on the Mexican government’s domestic program to build up tourism to Mexico but pays attention to the deliberate targeting of U.S. tourists and the related effort to overturn Mexico’s long-standing image in the United States as “an unruly, backward neighbor” (p. 19), as well as Löfgren, *On Holiday*, which threads a transnational element through its analysis of the tourist/vacation phenomenon.

For historically grounded discussions of international relations encompassing more than traditional state-to-state diplomatic interactions, see in particular Akira Iriye, *Cultural Internationalism and World Order* (Baltimore, 2001); and Akira Iriye, *Global Community: The Role of International Organizations in the Making of the Contemporary World* (Berkeley, CA, 2002); for a more theoretically oriented discussion, see Robert O. Keohane and Joseph S. Nye, *Power and Interdependence*, 3d. ed. (New York, 2001). For the best overarching historical studies to date of what Iriye refers to as “international relations as intercultural relations,” see Victoria de Grazia,

Endy and Brian McKenzie have compellingly demonstrated, the American government has committed financial and bureaucratic resources to the promotion of overseas tourism<sup>9</sup>; this has been true as well concerning Hollywood entertainment and American consumer culture.<sup>10</sup> Nonetheless, we must be careful not to overascribe American cultural promotional responsibility to the government, which has over time offered rhetorical and organizational support to a far greater extent than financial aid; as Walter Hixson notes in relation to the early postwar period, “Both presidents [Harry S. Truman and Dwight D. Eisenhower] . . . launched propaganda and cultural initiatives, but neither afforded such efforts primacy in overall Cold War strategy. . . . At no time from 1945 to 1961 did cultural diplomacy remotely approach in importance—as

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*Irresistible Empire: America's Advance through 20th-Century Europe* (Cambridge, MA, 2005); and Richard H. Pells, *Not Like Us: How Europeans Have Loved, Hated, and Transformed American Culture since World War II* (New York, 1997).

9. Endy, *Cold War Holidays*; and McKenzie, “Creating a Tourist Paradise.” Typical of the sort of promotional help the U.S. government was willing to provide was, for example, the Export-Import Bank’s aid in the financing of foreign hotel projects; in 1964 the organization set forth its policy:

Under appropriate circumstances, the Bank is prepared to extend long term dollar credits to assist in financing purchases in the United States of United States machinery, equipment, materials and related services required in connection with the establishment abroad of modern first-class commercial type or similar tourist facilities in instances where there is real need for the facilities and the required funds are not available from commercial or other private sources. . . . [T]he bank will not consider any hotel project where gambling casinos are proposed at the outset or would ultimately be required to make the hotel financially or otherwise attractive.

Letter from Glenn E. McLaughlin, Vice President, Export-Import Bank of Washington, to Edward S. Prentice, Senior Economist, First National City Bank, “Re: Eximbank Hotel Project Financing,” dated August 21, 1964, in folder “TP 7-3 Tourism 1/1/64,” box 1486, central file 1964-66, Record Group 59, U.S. State Department files (hereafter RG 59), National Archives, College Park, Maryland.

10. The U.S. Departments of Commerce and State have periodically helped the American radio, news information, motion picture, and television industries gain and maintain footholds in foreign markets. For the interwar period, see Emily S. Rosenberg, *Spreading the American Dream: American Economic and Cultural Expansion, 1890-1945* (New York, 1982), ch. 5; Frank Costigliola, *Awkward Dominion: American Political, Economic and Cultural Relations with Europe* (Ithaca, NY, 1984), chs. 5-6; Ian Jarvie, *Hollywood's Overseas Campaign: The North Atlantic Movie Trade, 1920-1950* (Cambridge, England, 1992), chs. 4-5, 9-11; Kristin Thompson, *Exporting Entertainment: America in the World Film Market, 1907-34* (London, 1985), chs. 4-5 (see chapters 1-3 for pre-World War I background); de Grazia, *Irresistible Empire*, introduction, ch. 4. For the post-World War II period, see Jarvie, *Hollywood's Overseas Campaign*, chs. 8, 13; John Trumbour, “‘Death to Hollywood!’: The Politics of Film in the United States, Great Britain, Belgium, and France, 1920-1960” (Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, 1996), ch. 3; Paul Swann, “The Little State Department: Washington and Hollywood’s Rhetoric of the Postwar Audience,” in *Hollywood in Europe: Experiences of a Cultural Hegemony*, eds. David Ellwood and Rob Kroes (Amsterdam, 1994), 176-95; Pells, *Not Like Us*, 273-77; Emile G. McAnany and Kenton T. Wilkinson, “Introduction,” in *Mass Media and Free Trade: NAFTA and the Culture Industries*, eds. Emile G. McAnany and Kenton T. Wilkinson (Austin, TX, 1996), 3, 7; Nestor Garcia Canclini, “North Americans or Latin Americans? The Redefinition of Mexican Identity and the Free Trade Agreements,” in McAnany and Wilkinson, eds., 149-54; de Grazia, *Irresistible Empire*, chs. 7, 9.

measured by the amount of attention and resources devoted to it—the larger Cold War policy of building alliances, amassing military force, and intervening to contain presumed communist insurgencies in the developing world.”<sup>11</sup> Richard Pells’s portrayal of the balance of the 1960s is not appreciably different.<sup>12</sup> We should note as well the lack at any time of an American ministry of culture (the United States is virtually alone among nations in this regard).<sup>13</sup>

In the case of U.S. tourism and Franco Spain, the impetus for development on the American side originated with the private sector, not Washington, and the private sector had its own motivations. Postwar tourism/travel industry figures such as hotelier Conrad Hilton and American Express president Ralph T. Reed were undoubtedly ingenuous in their expressions of solidarity with elements of U.S. foreign policy, but given their manifest commitment to maximizing company earnings, their attempts to garner tangible government support for their enterprises were necessarily motivated primarily by economic before ideological concerns. And as for Samuel Bronston and other Hollywood producers, their motivations for dealing with the Franco regime were almost exclusively fiduciary—Spain offered a cheap and attractive venue for large-scale film making, and in Bronston’s case in particular, an arena in which to build a full-fledged Hollywood studio.

It would go too far to interpret this episode via a classic corporatist reading, with its element of private actors as agents, deputized or not, of official government policy, working on the basis of, in Thomas McCormick’s words, “a collaborative consensus on the imperatives of growth.”<sup>14</sup> But the picture is different

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11. Walter Hixson, *Parting the Curtain: Propaganda, Culture and the Cold War, 1945–1961* (New York, 1997), xii–xiii. It is instructive to note the ratio between even the biggest-ticket culturally related outlays such as the U.S. Defense Department’s picking up more than half of the \$78 million construction cost of the passenger liner USS *United States* in the early 1950s (on the condition of its wartime convertibility into a troop ship carrier; see Endy, *Cold War Holidays*, 36) and budget outlays for defense—the *United States* was launched in 1952; the military budget for FY 1953 was \$44 billion.

12. Edward R. Murrow, the respected CBS television journalist who was tapped to head the United States Information Agency (USIA) during the Kennedy administration, was, in Pells’s words, little more than “an ornament of the New Frontier, a person of immense prestige but little power.” The prominent scholar Charles Frankel, for several years the Johnson administration’s assistant secretary of state for educational and cultural affairs, met a similar fate. Pells, *Not Like Us*, 88–93.

13. Jessica C. E. Gienow-Hecht, “Shame on US? Academics, Cultural Transfer, and the Cold War: A Critical Review,” *Diplomatic History* 24 (Summer 2000): 466. The recently created position of undersecretary of state for public diplomacy and public affairs marks a modest step in this direction, but it is to date a position in search of a concrete mission, and even Undersecretary-designate Karen Hughes was unimpressed enough by her brief to delay taking up the position for five months in order to see her son through high school graduation. George Packer, “Talk of the Town: Name Calling,” *New Yorker*, August 8 and 15, 2005. Available at [http://www.newyorker.com/talk/content/articles/050808ta\\_talk\\_packer](http://www.newyorker.com/talk/content/articles/050808ta_talk_packer).

14. Thomas McCormick, “Drift or Mastery? A Corporatist Synthesis for American Diplomatic History,” in *The Promise of American History: Progress and Prospects*, eds. Stanley J. Kutler and Stanley N. Katz (Baltimore, 1982); see as well, for example, Rosenberg, *Spreading the American Dream*; and Michael Hogan, “Corporatism: A Positive Appraisal,” *Diplomatic History* 10 (Fall 1986).

when we conceptualize in transnational terms.<sup>15</sup> The American government, as we shall see, maintained a modest interest in Spain's agenda to encourage American tourism in the early post-World War II period as the private sector moved assertively on economic grounds, while the Franco regime itself became intensely focused on the subject and ultimately devoted considerable amounts of time, money, and manpower to its development. Hence the dynamic that drove postwar American tourism to Spain was one in which the U.S. private sector, with a primarily market orientation abetted by a self-interested rhetoric in support of official U.S. policy goals, interacted with the complex imperatives of a foreign government deeply involved in issues surrounding tourism.<sup>16</sup> In sum, we are looking at a combined Hispano-U.S. corporatism.

Moreover, in an era in which the phrase "American cultural imperialism" has moved far beyond academia to become part of the general public discourse around the world,<sup>17</sup> the narrative of Franco Spain's making use of the tools of American mass consumer culture for its own purposes illustrates the negotiated nature of cultural relationships between societies, a negotiation that can occur even when there is a seeming cultural power asymmetry.<sup>18</sup> In a recent *Diplomatic History* book review, the eminent Dutch American studies scholar Rob Kroes asks, "What weight has [international tourism] as a force influencing people's perceptions of other nations and other cultures?" In ruminating on his question, Kroes asserts that "[t]he presence of huge colonies of people representing

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15. While the term "transnational" has been defined in numerous ways, in Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye's classic formulation, transnationalism refers to the activities of non-state entities, including multinational corporations, whose actions transcend national boundaries and encourage international relations marked by "complex interdependence," in which "countries are connected by multiple social and political relationships" and "security and force matter less." See Keohane and Nye, *Power and Interdependence*; and Robert O. Keohane and Joseph S. Nye, eds., *Transnational Relations and World Politics* (Cambridge, MA, 1972).

16. Historian Frank D. McCann has noted a similar paradigm in the post-World War II dealings of Nelson Rockefeller and automobile manufacturer Henry J. Kaiser with Brazil. Although Rockefeller and Kaiser were concerned with fostering global stability as well as with increasing markets for American products, they were, in McCann's words, "ahead of government concerning business's role in the postwar world; they were not working hand in glove with Washington. Indeed, the corporatist model is more descriptive of Rockefeller's and Kaiser's cooperative relations with the Brazilian state." That is, while the American government was minimally involved with Rockefeller's and Kaiser's efforts, the Brazilian government, which had a greater perceived stake in their success, was deeply involved. Frank D. McCann, undated review of Elizabeth A. Cobb, *The Rich Neighbor Policy: Rockefeller and Kaiser in Brazil*, endnote 6. Available at *Estudios interdisciplinarios de America Latina y el Caribe*, [http://www.tau.ac.il/eial/VI\\_1/mccann.htm](http://www.tau.ac.il/eial/VI_1/mccann.htm).

17. It is a phrase I have regularly encountered in conversations with nonacademics of varied socioeconomic backgrounds in Europe, Asia, and Australia, as well as in some quarters in the United States, although since the run-up to the 2003 Iraq War, conversational concern has focused instead on the perception of American imperialism of a more traditional cast.

18. See, for example, Jan Nederveen Pieterse, "Globalization as Hybridization," *International Sociology* 9 (June 1994); Arjun Appadurai, *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization* (Minneapolis, 1996); Roland Robertson, *Social Theory and Global Culture* (London, 1992); Marwan M. Kraidy, "The Global, the Local, and the Hybrid: A Native Ethnography of Glocalization," *Critical Studies in Mass Communication* 16 (December 1999).

democratic Europe in Spain's midst never much affected Franco's hold on the Spanish political system until the day he died."<sup>19</sup> This claim is itself arguable (see the conclusion of this article); but more basically, Professor Kroes, although one of the most perceptive analysts of the interactions between culture and foreign relations, is looking at the subject from the proverbial wrong end of the telescope. The central issue is not how Franco Spain was affected by U.S.-Western tourism (although this is certainly not unimportant—again, see the conclusion below), but rather how the dictatorship viewed and used this tourism as a means to its own ends. Franco Spain, although a country possessing a seemingly weak hand of cultural power relative to that of the United States, sought with considerable success to harness the power of American tourism, Hollywood, and the Madison Avenue advertising that helped fuel these sectors in its attempt to alter American public opinion toward the Spanish government and society. The experience of the Franco regime in its efforts demonstrates that, while the United States may be the world's cultural juggernaut, it has long been open to attempts at manipulation via its own power levers.<sup>20</sup>

THE FRANCO REGIME'S IMAGE PROBLEMS: THE MAKING OF  
A PARIAH STATE

It is outside the compass of this article to attempt to answer the question of what the Franco regime's true intentions were concerning aiding Hitler and the Axis during World War II.<sup>21</sup> On the one hand, Generalissimo Francisco Franco engaged in such high-profile expressions of solidarity with the Axis as signing onto the Anti-Comintern Pact with Italy and Germany in 1939<sup>22</sup>; moving Spain from "neutrality" to "non-belligerence" in lockstep with Mussolini after

19. Rob Kroes, "Feature Review: Tourism and Cold War Diplomacy" [review of Endy, *Cold War Holidays*], *Diplomatic History* 29 (June 2005): 561.

20. This manipulation can range from the relatively benign efforts of Franco Spain to the devastating manifestation of the September 11, 2001, terrorist attack, in which Al Qaeda hijacked not only American airliners but American media as well—the eighteen-minute interval between the first and second crashes into the World Trade Center's Twin Towers guaranteed that coverage of the second impact was going to be broadcast live around the world via CNN, one of the key contemporary mechanisms and symbols of America's global cultural predominance. See Neal M. Rosendorf, "Tech's Effects: Cultural Convergence," *Foreign Service Journal* 78 (November 2001).

21. Paul Preston takes the clear view, in *Franco: A Biography* (New York, 1994), esp. chs. 13–20, that Franco was indeed ready to come into the war on Hitler's side, but that Der Führer was unwilling to meet his price—all of Vichy France-owned Morocco; Stanley G. Payne asserts, in *The Franco Regime 1936–1975* (Madison, WI, 1987), chs. 12–14, that Franco with "his customary prudence and indirection" consistently avoided committing Spain to war via "a policy of cautious opportunism and diplomatic zigzagging" (p. 266). For a consideration of the Franco-Hitler relationship that in essence splits the difference between Preston's and Payne's positions, see Norman J. W. Goda's chapter, "Germany's Conception of Spain's Strategic Importance," in *Spain in an International Context, 1936–1959*, eds. Christian Leitz and David J. Dunthorn (Oxford, 1999), 129–48.

22. Preston, *Franco*, 325.

Germany conquered France in 1940<sup>23</sup>; and sending eighteen thousand Spanish troops to fight in the Soviet Union at the side of the Wehrmacht after Germany commenced Operation Barbarossa.<sup>24</sup> On the other hand, Franco never formally joined the Axis nor entered into hostilities with either the United States or Britain. Indeed, as the war progressed and turned increasingly against the Axis, El Caudillo declared his return to neutrality in 1943, and he backed up his profession with such symbolic flourishes as the replacement of portraits of Hitler and Mussolini with those of Pope Pius XII and Portuguese President (and notably pro-Allied neutral) Antonio Salazar on the desk in the office in which he received Allied ambassadors.<sup>25</sup>

Nonetheless, the crushing victory of the Allies over the Axis left Franco Spain a pariah state, tarred with its odious wartime associations. As the conflict drew to a close, U.S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt wrote to the American ambassador to Spain, "Most certainly we do not forget Spain's official position with and assistance to our Axis enemies at a time when the fortunes of war were less favorable to us. . . . These memories cannot be wiped out by actions more favorable to us now that we are about to achieve our goal of complete victory over those enemies of ours with whom the present Spanish regime identified itself in the past spiritually and by its public expressions and acts." Roosevelt concluded his excoriation with the assertion, "I can see no place in the community of nations for governments founded on fascist principles."<sup>26</sup> This damning letter, which the U.S. government made public in September 1945, was only the beginning of the Franco regime's postwar problems. In March 1946, the United States, Britain, and France issued a joint declaration condemning the Franco regime,<sup>27</sup> followed by a scathing report by the United Nations Security Council subcommittee on the "Spanish question" that provided ample evidence of Franco Spain's wartime pro-Axis activities.<sup>28</sup> In December 1946, the United Nations General Assembly voted to exclude Spain from all UN-dependent bodies and called on its members to withdraw their ambassadors.<sup>29</sup>

23. *Ibid.*, 358–59.

24. *Ibid.*, 437.

25. British Ambassador Samuel Hoare recalled that circa 1940, on those infrequent occasions that Franco received him, signed photos of Adolf Hitler and Benito Mussolini sat prominently on El Caudillo's writing desk; American Ambassador Carlton Hayes noted that by mid-1944, Pope Pius XII and Portuguese President Antonio Salazar had replaced Hitler and Mussolini on Franco's desk. Preston, *Franco*, 360, 522.

26. Letter from President Roosevelt to U.S. Ambassador Norman Armour in Spain, March 10, 1945, quoted in *Foreign Relations of the United States* (hereafter *FRUS*), 1945, vol. V, *Europe* (Washington, DC, 1967), 667.

27. Quoted in Boris N. Liedtke, *Embracing a Dictatorship: U.S. Relations with Spain, 1945–1953* (New York, 1998), 17.

28. United Nations Security Council, "Report of the Subcommittee on the Spanish Question," New York, June 1946.

29. Preston, *Franco*, 562.

However, the postwar international situation was rapidly changing, and with each icy blast of the developing Cold War, Francisco Franco and his past effusions for Hitler came to seem less and less noxious to American policy formulators, when compared to the need to secure the southwestern European flank against the Soviet menace. From 1947 to 1950 the Truman administration slowly tipped away from an initially strong hostility toward Franco, toward a pragmatic policy of accommodation.<sup>30</sup>

The invasion by North Korea of its southern neighbor in June 1950 ended any lingering hesitance within the Truman administration toward developing unalloyed diplomatic and military relations with the Franco regime. Despite Truman's persistent loathing of El Caudillo as a character akin to Hitler and Stalin<sup>31</sup> and Dean Acheson's blunt declaration that it was commonly known that Spain had a fascist government,<sup>32</sup> the State Department concluded late in 1950 that "our immediate objective should be to develop the military potentialities of Spain's strategic geographic position for the common defense . . . [then] we should approach the Spanish Government in order to acquire such facilities as air and naval bases."<sup>33</sup> The new order was formalized by Secretary of State Acheson in January 1951.<sup>34</sup> Negotiations between the United States and Spain would begin later that year which would lead, two years hence, to the Madrid Pact, which gained for the United States air force bases at Torrejon and

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30. To trace the arc of U.S. policy toward the Franco regime between 1946 and 1950, see for example, then-Acting Secretary of State Acheson's cable to the U.S. ambassador to the United Kingdom on April 7, 1947, in which he wrote, "It is clear that Franco and any regime perpetuating his principles must go. Although action involves certain risks, nevertheless it appears to us that the time has come when the US and the UK should agree on a positive policy which would act as an inducement to Span[ish] elements to bring about another form of change themselves and thereby render possible extension of our assistance in creating healthy economic and political conditions in the country." Quote in *FRUS, 1947, vol. III, The British Commonwealth; Europe* (Washington, DC, 1972), 1067; Annex, "U.S. Policy toward Spain," October 24, 1947, attached to memorandum from George F. Kennan to the Secretary and Undersecretary of State, October 24, 1947, in *FRUS, 1947 III:1097*; the Acting Secretary of State (Acheson) to the Embassy in Spain, December 18, 1947, in *FRUS, 1947 III:1096*; "Policy Statement by the Department of State on Spain," July 26, 1948, in *FRUS, 1948, vol. III, Western Europe* (Washington, DC, 1974), 1041-45; Memorandum from the Secretary of State to the U.S. Embassy in Spain, October 31, 1949, in *FRUS, 1949, vol. IV, Western Europe* (Washington, DC, 1975), 762-63; Memorandum by the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (Bradley) to the Secretary of Defense (Johnson), May 3, 1950, in S. Everett Gleason and Frederick Aandahl, eds., *FRUS, 1950, vol. III, Western Europe* (Washington, DC, 1977), 1561; Memorandum by the President to the Secretary of State, June 16, 1950, in *FRUS, 1950 III:1562*.

31. Preston, *Franco*, 597.

32. R. Richard Rubottom and J. Carter Murphy, *Spain and the United States: Since World War II* (New York, 1984), 14.

33. Memorandum by the Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs (Perkins) to the Secretary of State, November 25, 1950, in *FRUS, 1950 III:1578*.

34. "Draft Report by the Secretary of State to the National Security Council," January 15, 1951, in *FRUS, 1951, vol. IV, Europe: Political and Economic Developments, Part 1*, general ed. William Z. Slany (Washington, DC, 1985), 773.

Zaragoza and submarine pens at Rota, and a flow of military and economic aid for the Franco regime.<sup>35</sup>

Still, despite the slow, steady progress Spain was making in the early 1950s vis-à-vis the United States as a result of the Cold War, the highly ideological Franco regime was certain that it was being hammered by the propaganda of its enemies, communism, freemasonry, and Judaism.<sup>36</sup> Moreover, both prior to the modest flow of aid from the Madrid Pact and after it as well, Spain desperately needed hard currency to prop up its tottering economy. Reluctantly at first, and then with deepening ardor, the regime would look to foreign tourists to serve as vessels of propaganda and troughs of dollars, and well-heeled Americans were an especially attractive target group.

#### ROOTS OF POSTWAR SPANISH TOURISM

Before the early 1900s, Spain was one of the less-frequented countries in Europe for tourism, lagging far behind such magnets as Italy, France, and Switzerland.<sup>37</sup> A modest flow of upper middle class tourists, mainly from northern European countries after World War I, encouraged some Spanish infrastructure development, including roads and railways.<sup>38</sup> Spain had been a tourist destination for a small number of Americans prior to the 1936–1939 civil war. Although there were no recorded statistics, it was estimated that between three and four thousand Americans visited Spain yearly, primarily via cruises that docked in Spanish ports.<sup>39</sup>

35. Antonio Marquina Barrio, *España en la Política de Seguridad Occidental: 1939–1986* (Madrid, 1986), 375–571; Rubottom and Murphy, *Spain and the United States*, 22–34; Liedtke, *Embracing a Dictatorship*, 108–213.

36. On the Franco regime's ongoing fear of Jews, Communists, and Freemasons, see Preston, *Franco*, 323–24, 455–56, 597–98, as well as "Borrador Previo para un Estudio Sobre Fines y Medios de la Propaganda de España en el Exterior," dated August 1960, 12, in box 28353, section 49.06, heading "Cultura," General Archive Alcalá. To be sure, the Franco regime may have faced a bit less of a problem to surmount than they believed to be so. According to Gallup polling data (which was not nearly as accurate as would later be the case), 76 percent of Americans supported the Loyalist Republicans in 1938, and in 1945 an equal number opposed UN membership for Spain; but by 1950, respondents were in favor by a more than two-to-one margin of letting Spain join NATO. George H. Gallup, *The Gallup Poll: Public Opinion 1935–1971* (New York, 1972), 1:132, 519–20; 2:938. On the other hand, however, as late as 1963, the American embassy in Spain would state flatly that "[p]ublic opinion and US policy since the very inception of the Franco regime has prevented there ever being close political ties." It was this resilient antipathy, perceived as much by the U.S. government as by the Spaniards, that the Franco regime sought consistently to overcome. Airgram, American Embassy Madrid to U.S. Department of State, "Spain's International Objectives," dated February 1, 1963, in folder, "Pol 1 Gen. Policy Sp," box 4044, RG 59, National Archives, College Park, Maryland.

37. M. Barke and J. Towner, "Exploring the History of Leisure and Tourism in Spain," in Barke, Towner, and Newton, eds., 4–15.

38. *Ibid.*, 15–16.

39. American Express Report from M. L. Widmer, Assistant to Vice President, London to Lynde Selden, Executive Vice President, New York, "Spain 1940," dated February 17, 1940, 16, Spain File, American Express Archive, New York (hereafter AEA).

However, the civil war wreaked havoc on much of the country's traditional tourist infrastructure and put in place a secretive police state that took a profoundly ambivalent position toward tourists. The Franco regime appointed a cabinet-level head of the Spanish State Tourist Department, Luis Bolín, in 1938, even before the Nationalists had gained control of all of Spain.<sup>40</sup> Bolín, an experienced propagandist, promptly instituted tours of war routes in Spanish territory that had been secured by the Nationalists; these tours attracted an indeterminate number, perhaps reaching into the thousands, of evidently largely pro-Francoist western Europeans eager to visit still-smoldering battlefields in a country still in the midst of civil conflict.<sup>41</sup> But the tours were tightly controlled and scripted,<sup>42</sup> and in general, foreign visitors to Spain were obliged to register with local police upon their arrival in cities and towns, with all tourists additionally required to obtain an exit visa before leaving the country.<sup>43</sup> Moreover, Spain's fratricidal paroxysm had left nightmarish conditions in its wake. Max Widmer, an American Express Company executive sent to Spain in 1940 to survey the country (more on this below), recorded the following Dante-esque tableau in Madrid: "Probably the saddest sight is that of the 'University City,' situated on the outskirts. Not one building is left, merely a few bare walls. In fact, the entire district is one huge mass of ruins. Bones and portions of skeletons lie exposed, and in one derelict building I saw the burnt remains of a 'Red' now used by children as a toy—a nauseous spectacle!"<sup>44</sup>

Still, during World War II, the Secretariat General of Tourism formulated plans extending credit financing to build hotels, plans for conserving parks, beaches, and historical treasures, and improving transportation networks.<sup>45</sup> But the plans had an air of unreality to them. There were few foreign tourists to Spain, and the vast majority of Spaniards were too impoverished to avail themselves of the country's leisure attractions. Moreover, there was no money in Spain's coffers to make infrastructure repairs and improvements. Spinning plans did keep the Tourism Secretariat functioning, however, which would prove to be a long-term benefit to Spain. Nonetheless, Spain might long have remained a largely closed country if a combination of circumstance and choice did not push

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40. Barke and Towner, "Exploring the History of Leisure and Tourism in Spain," 16.

41. Sandie Holguín, "'National Spain Invites You': Battlefield Tourism during the Spanish Civil War," *American Historical Review* 10, no. 5 (December 2005): 1399–1426.

42. *Ibid.*, 1417 and *passim*.

43. Widmer to Selden, "Spain 1940," 40, AEA.

44. Widmer to Selden, "Spain 1940," 45, AEA.

45. "Propuesta 19 Dic., 1941"; "Orden del Ministerio de Hacienda de 27 de Marzo de 1942, por la que se autoriza a el Banco de Crédito Industrial para la concesión de préstamos a la industria hotelera, de acuerdo con la Dirección General del Turismo"; "Orden de la Presidencia del Gobierno de 13 de Mayo de 1942, por la que se aprueba el Reglamento para el Servicio de Crédito Hotelero," all attached to letter from Luís A. Bolín, Secretary General of Tourism, to the Minister of Information and Tourism, August 28, 1951, in *Procedencia Cultura*, box 14415, section 49.01, General Archive Alcalá.

the regime into a situation in which it desperately desired unrestricted tourism's potential political and economic benefits.

Although a will to autarky and a strain of xenophobia were persistent elements of the Franco regime's mentality in the years immediately following the end of World War II, the new political and economic reality in the war's aftermath encouraged a reevaluation by the Spanish government of the value of tourism. Spain needed both friends and money; large-scale foreign tourism had the potential to provide both, and an influx of Americans, citizens of the world's dominant power and by far the wealthiest travelers in the early postwar years,<sup>46</sup> offered particular value. However, the Franco regime did not simply snap instantaneously out of its suspicion and dogma to embrace a pragmatic solution. Rather, the regime was importuned during a propitious period by a number of American travel enterprises seeking, for various reasons, to expand their operations into Spain. And no enterprise was more importunate, or more important to Spain's full-scale touristic development, than the American Express Company.

#### AMERICAN EXPRESS

The American Express Company had first considered the idea of opening a tourist service office in Spain in 1915. An initial study concluded optimistically that "[w]ith an office in Barcelona, we would be in a strategic position with respect to Spanish business, not only with North America and the European traffic, but also with respect to Buenos Aires and the Philippines."<sup>47</sup> After years of negotiations and delays, Amex's Spanish office finally opened in April 1921. However, the undertaking was ill starred. The Spanish Cortes, none too receptive to foreign business operations in Spain, had in 1920 enacted a law on American capital which the government brandished to tax the Barcelona office on the basis of American Express's U.S., as opposed to local, earnings. In the wake of fruitless negotiations with the right-wing regime of Miguel Primo de Rivera, American Express shuttered its Spanish office in 1924.<sup>48</sup>

A 1929 feasibility study concerning reopening the Spanish office gloomily forecast a ten thousand dollar annual deficit.<sup>49</sup> In 1933, despite Amex executive Lynde Seldon's enthusiasm for Spain's tourist potential, garnered after he motored throughout the country, another reopening proposal was quashed—

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46. Eric W. Stoetznner, "More Travel Dollars for You," limited circulation pamphlet, undated (c. 1952), in box 16076, section 49.03, general heading "Cultura," General Archive Alcalá.

47. American Express Company internal report from Harry Gee, General Manager, Foreign Department, to G. C. Taylor, President, November 18, 1916, quoted in "Memorandum: Proposed Office—Spain: History of Original Office at Barcelona," October 20, 1949, 1, Spain file, AEA.

48. Memorandum, "Proposed Office—Spain," October 20, 1949, 2–10; "History of European Division: American Express Co. [undated, likely c. 1951]," Spain File, AEA.

49. Memorandum, "Proposed Office—Spain," October 20, 1949, 10, Spain File, AEA.

now a seventeen thousand dollar annual deficit was predicted. From 1936 through 1939 the Spanish Civil War put paid to any further consideration of an American Express office in Spain.

However, with the advent of World War II threatening to crimp corporate earnings, in 1940 American Express took a fresh look at Spain as a potential office venue. After all, the country was neutral in the European conflict and hence one of the few possible European destinations for American tourists that was not an active war zone. Moreover, logic seemingly dictated that the new Nationalist regime, having expended considerable blood and treasure, would be in need of the company's services. Seldon, now American Express's executive vice president, sent his assistant Max Widmer to Spain to survey the terrain. As noted above, Widmer found a burnt-out husk of a country, the self-mutilated victim of its three-year internecine conflict. The combination of autarkic suspicion of foreign capital and travelers and the catastrophic physical condition of the country led Widmer to offer a grim prognosis: "It is probable that many people planning to visit Spain will change their minds when informed of the numerous inconveniences pertaining to travel in that country at the present time. This is, in itself, a deterrent to our ambition to establish an American Express office there. Thus, despite every endeavour [sic] and careful calculation, I have come to the conclusion that we could not operate in Spain without considerable sacrifice."<sup>50</sup>

Widmer found it both puzzling and vexing that the Spaniards had no concept of advertising abroad in order to bring in tourists. To the Spanish authorities' assertions that they planned to open several overseas government information offices, Widmer patiently explained that it would be far less costly, and provide many more venues, to let American Express act as Spain's tourism agent. Moreover, Widmer "also alluded to the fact that such Government Information Offices are regarded by the public as subjective propaganda offices, whereas a more objective representation is achieved by the link-up of an institution like the American Express with such advertising."<sup>51</sup> But the Franco regime was not even remotely ready in 1940 to relinquish control of the reins of propaganda.

Nonetheless, despite Spain's dilapidated state and lack of enthusiasm for facilitating American Express's operations, Widmer saw a faint ray of hope for business at some subsequent point. "I do not entirely exclude the possibility," he averred, "of our entering Spain in the distant future, provided she learns the value of advertising abroad her tourist attractions, finances this advertisement effort and also ensures the support of interested influential parties such as the American Express."<sup>52</sup> Widmer's tepid optimism would turn out to be prescient—it merely took the destruction of nazism and the advent of the Cold

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50. Widmer to Seldon, "Spain 1940," 37, AEA.

51. Widmer to Seldon, "Spain 1940," 34, AEA.

52. Widmer to Seldon, "Spain 1940," 33, AEA.

War to bring about the necessary correlation of circumstances that would facilitate a rapprochement between Amex and Spain.

It also took a visionary leader, at least concerning the potential scope of American overseas tourism, at the helm of American Express. Ralph Thomas Reed was named president of Amex in 1944, just months before the D-Day invasion that would liberate Western Europe from the Nazis—and put hundreds of thousands of American troops on the Continent who might be interested in returning at some future point under safer circumstances. Reed was a seemingly unlikely visionary—he had pulled himself up from an impoverished childhood in Philadelphia, through the University of Pennsylvania’s Wharton Business School, to become American Express’s comptroller, the company’s number one “bean-counter,” an unglamorous but crucial pursuit.<sup>53</sup> But when Reed traded his green eyeshade for the president’s suite, he rapidly began making grand plans for the coming postwar era. Soon after the Normandy invasion, Reed held a senior company conference in which he and other executives concurred that the conflict’s end was likely to spark a major overseas travel boom, as had been the case after World War I. Improved and indeed battle-tested transoceanic transport technology was only going to make the boom all the greater than the one two decades earlier. And Amex was going to be in the forefront, pushing the boom and profiting from it.<sup>54</sup>

Moreover, Reed was canny in evangelizing about American tourism abroad as a means of furthering U.S. efforts to aid in postwar reconstruction and of generally furthering American policy goals. In September 1947, three months after U.S. Secretary of State George Marshall unveiled at Harvard University’s commencement the European reconstruction plan that bears his name, Reed ordered the production of a detailed brochure “for presentation to our Government with a view to stimulating some action on their part in the development of foreign travel as a means of getting dollars into foreign hands and thus aiding the economic situation,” which of course would also get dollars into Amex’s hands.<sup>55</sup> The core document was produced in house, after which American Express enlisted the Madison Avenue advertising firm of Kelly Nason Associates to polish, embellish, and distribute the brochure (Kelly Nason would become Franco Spain’s American public relations representative several years later).

Reed vetted the project at every juncture. Once it was completed, he oversaw the delivery of over two hundred copies of the resulting document, entitled “The Quickest Way to Help Foreign Countries Earn American Dollars,” to a prestigious target audience. This group included senior American government officials, such as President Truman, Secretary Marshall, the speaker of the

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53. Peter Z. Grossman, *American Express: The Unofficial History of the Men Who Built the Great Financial Empire* (New York, 1987), 241–45.

54. *Ibid.*, 249.

55. Memorandum from G. J. Gilmore and R. B. White to R. T. Reed, “U.S. Tourist Travel,” September 25, 1947, AEA.

House of Representatives, and thirty-eight members of the Senate Foreign Relations and House Foreign Affairs Committees, as well as nongovernmental recipients, including the major press services and the ambassadors of Marshall Plan recipient countries.<sup>56</sup>

Reed's brochure proclaimed, "With world recovery dependent upon American dollars, the United States must find ways to help other nations earn American dollars as quickly as possible. . . . [T]here are special reasons why the encouragement of Travel Abroad [sic] by dollar-spending Americans should receive immediate consideration—not only by foreign governments—but by the Government of the United States. Travel abroad has proved itself to be the *most* important source of Dollar Credits to Foreign Nations in the Past [sic]."<sup>57</sup> The brochure noted that such factors as pent-up demand, the new affluence of average Americans, "world-conscious" veterans, and more paid vacations made it a near certainty that American overseas tourism could skyrocket over the next decade, with help from the U.S. and foreign governments.<sup>58</sup> This help needed to encompass advertising and promotion by foreign governments and their agencies; stable and favorable exchange rates for tourists; the elimination of red tape; a larger import allowance for returning travelers; and more, and less expensive, transport options. Reflecting Reed's stated beliefs, the brochure concluded that travel abroad is "a social, political and economic force . . . not only a powerful instrument for helping foreign nations gain needed dollars . . . but that also through such travel Americans will gain a better understanding of the role in which destiny has placed them."<sup>59</sup>

This combination of profit motive and proclaimed internationalism led Reed early in 1949 to reopen the issue of reestablishing American Express's operations in Spain.<sup>60</sup> Reed appointed a committee of senior executives to explore the

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56. Amex Memorandum from B.E. White, Vice President and General Manager, to R. T. Reed, "U.S. Tourist Travel," October 31, 1947, 3, AEA.

57. "The Quickest Way to Help Foreign Countries Earn American Dollars," American Express limited circulation publication, 1947, 2-3, copy on file at AEA.

58. *Ibid.*, 9-13.

59. *Ibid.*, 20-29. A sequel to this publication was produced by American Express in 1954, which noted that annual American overseas tourism expenditures had almost doubled in the intervening years, and that tourism had realized a goal of the previous publication by becoming Europe's number one source of earned dollars. "Travel Dollars: Their Growing Impact upon the Economy of the Free World," American Express limited circulation publication, 1954, 9 and passim, copy on file at AEA.

Reed would come to refer to American overseas tourism as "Point Five—The economic power of the U.S. consumer directed to overseas nations through tourism," a reference to President Harry Truman's four-point foreign-policy program, which he had announced in his 1949 inaugural address. The best-known element of Truman's plan was Point Four, "a bold new program for making the benefits of our scientific advances and industrial progress available for the improvement and growth of underdeveloped areas." See "Host with the Most," *Time*, April 9, 1956, 91. For Point Four, see Walter LaFeber, *America, Russia and the Cold War, 1945-2000*, 9th ed. (Boston, 2002), 86-87; for the text of the speech see Harry S. Truman, Inaugural Address, 1949. Available at <http://www.trumanlibrary.org/calendar/viewpapers.php?pid=1030>.

60. Letter from Harry A. Hill to R. T. Reed, September 8, 1949, Spain file, AEA.

Spanish question. Harry Hill, the manager of American Express's flagship Continental office at 11 Rue Scribe in Paris, was named point man. The first order of business was ascertaining the U.S. government's position on Amex's doing business with the Franco regime. As of November 1949, the State Department was not forthcoming on the subject, as there was still considerable negative sentiment toward Franco within the department. During a Spain committee meeting that month, Amex executives found themselves in the position of reading tea leaves. The committee had written to the State Department asking for a clear statement as to whether Amex would have its support—but thus far State, still grappling with the Spanish question, had not replied. One member asserted with evident chagrin that “they would probably not state their stand in writing, and that in all likelihood, the only way to get a statement of policy would be to visit Washington and discuss the problem with the Spanish Desk.”<sup>61</sup>

Fortunately, American Express's developing plans coincided with the State Department's subsequent unannounced decision in mid-1950 to seek normalized relations with the Franco regime, and thus Hill made a month-long foray to Spain in May of 1950. He found what seemed to him in many ways a very different country, both materially and atmospherically, from the one Max Widmer had encountered a decade earlier. Unlike Widmer, who reported in 1940 that in Madrid “military patrols are to be seen on duty all over the city with rifles slung around their shoulders,”<sup>62</sup> Hill stated flatly, “I went to Spain, looking for a police state. There was no sign that such a state existed. . . . We saw policemen around, but not more than we would see in other countries.”<sup>63</sup> Indeed, Madrid had been transformed, at least at first glance, over the preceding decade as the city was dug slowly and laboriously out of the rubble of the civil war. In 1940 Max Widmer, the charnel house horrors of University City aside, averred that “in the city itself life is depressing, for the population is utterly impoverished, and this lends a general atmosphere of hopeless neglect to a city once so wonderful.”<sup>64</sup> Harry Hill, on the other hand, declared, “Madrid as a city impressed us as being both clean and beautiful. It is a modern city with large avenues, beautiful parks and lovely buildings.”<sup>65</sup>

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61. Amex Memorandum, “Committee Meeting Re Proposed Office—Spain,” November 10, 1949, Spain file, AEA.

62. Widmer to Selden, “Spain 1940,” 43–44.

63. “Report on Survey Trip of Spain Made by Walter Rundle & Harry Hill,” attached to letter from H. A. Hill, Vice President and General Manager, American Express Office, Paris to Frank B. Harding, Vice President, New York, May 13, 1950, Spain file, AEA. This report is at variance with the recollections of tourists to Spain during the early postwar years that “[t]he Civil Guard were ever-present observers of the movements of visitors.” Barke and Towner, “Exploring the History of Leisure and Tourism in Spain,” 17–18.

64. Widmer to Selden, “Spain 1940,” 43.

65. “Report on Survey Trip of Spain Made by Walter Rundle & Harry Hill,” 7. On the other hand, as late as 1957 an executive of Kelly Nason Associates, an American advertising agency utilized by the Spaniards for tourism promotion in the United States (see below in text for more on this subject) reported to the Spanish director general of tourism conditions reminiscent of a Mosaic plague: “There seems to be a very real problem with flies in Spain,

Perhaps the most important evident change Hill encountered in Spain was a changed attitude toward American tourism and how to procure it on the part of the Franco regime. Max Widmer fulminated in his 1940 report that "the Spaniard possesses a notoriously dilatory nature, is inert and has no more initiative than an echo; this coupled with his strong nationalist outlook precludes his profiting by the experience of foreign enterprise." He singled out Luis Bolín, the Spanish secretary general of tourism, in this regard, declaring in frustration, "I seized every opportunity in conversation with Mr. Bolín and other prominent personages . . . to emphasise [sic] the advantage to Spain of co-operation with the world-wide organisation [sic] of the American Express," but to no avail. Widmer had concluded that "[u]nfortunately, this is not a propitious moment to secure such contracts in Spain."<sup>66</sup> But 1950 found a Secretary-General Bolín willing to discuss Amex's key reservations to opening a Spanish office: the taxation scheme that had driven the company out of Spain in the 1920s, and the preposterous dollar-peseta exchange rate that allegedly pushed even the Spanish government into black marketing its own currency.<sup>67</sup> The changed international political climate and its concomitant exigencies for Spain, as well as a modest upturn in the number of affluent, hard currency-carrying American tourists who were entering the country,<sup>68</sup> had brought the Franco regime to the point that it could grasp the value of American Express's imprimatur. Moreover, the regime could see that in the half-decade since World War II's end, American tourists to Europe had been traveling by the thousands to Britain, France, and Italy, pouring huge amounts of money into their economies.<sup>69</sup>

There were still hurdles to be overcome, as the American Express Committee on Spain reported in the aftermath of Hill's fact-finding trip:

There is still uncertainty as to political developments in Spain in the immediate future. The country has not yet been admitted to membership in the United Nations. It is not an E.C.A. [Economic Cooperation Administration,

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particularly in the southern provinces. They are a serious nuisance, particularly while eating, to say nothing of their unsanitary aspect. . . . At Torremolinos . . . the number and persistence of the flies makes eating outdoors so disagreeable as to be almost impossible." Memorandum of Gabriel Garcia-Loygorri from Homer McK. Reese, dated November 11, 1957, "Trip through Southern and Eastern Spain," dated November 11, 1957, box 16079, section 49.03, general heading "Cultura," General Archive Alcalá. A more public light was shone on the persistence of Spanish poverty in the 1950s by, among other sources, *Newsweek* magazine, which in its March 23, 1956, issue featured a photo essay, "Spain Today," that documented "crumbling villages and forgotten back streets," displaying for American readers squalid conditions that seemed frozen in place for centuries.

66. Widmer to Selden, "Spain 1940," 33-34.

67. "Report on Survey Trip of Spain Made by Walter Rundle & Harry Hill," 10-12.

68. *Ibid.*, 4.

69. See Ernest Walter Wimble, *European Recovery, 1948-1951: A Report Prepared for the Oslo Conference of the International Union of Official Travel Organisations* (London, 1948); Ernest Walter Wimble, *Tourism and European Recovery* (Paris, 1951); Ernest Walter Wimble, *Tourism in Europe: A Study Proposed by the Tourism Committee in the Organisation for European Economic Co-Operation*, annual series 1953-61 (Paris, 1953-61).

which administered the Marshall Plan] country. A treaty of Commerce and Friendship with the United States has not yet been negotiated. The future attitude of the Spanish Government towards foreign concerns operating in Spain is not known. While there is a reference in [Hill's] report to the Spanish Government welcoming the American Express into Spain, we trace no *official* [sic] pronouncement to this effect and the only "Spokesman" on the subject seems to be Mr. Bolín who we know personally is anxious to help us. . . . Because of these uncertainties, caution seems advisable before getting too deeply involved in the Spanish picture.<sup>70</sup>

But Ralph Reed was impatient to move ahead, and in September 1950 he gave orders for American Express to proceed with the opening of an exclusive office in Madrid. After several more months of hashing out the tax and currency conversion issues with the Franco regime,<sup>71</sup> and with the renormalization of U.S.-Spanish diplomatic relations formalized in December 1950,<sup>72</sup> the American Express office in Madrid was opened on March 10, 1951.<sup>73</sup> To cement Amex's position in Spain, Reed journeyed to Madrid for a meeting with El Caudillo himself. He announced after the meeting, "Generalissimo Franco welcomed American Express to Spain and assured me of his personal interest in the development of tourism in Spain. He hoped that tourists from the U.S. will come in increasing numbers."<sup>74</sup> As we will see in a subsequent section of this article, Reed was not exaggerating Francisco Franco's newfound ardor for American tourism to Spain.

A key benefaction by American Express upon the Franco regime was a top-notch American public relations firm. The Spanish had set up a modest information office in New York in 1949,<sup>75</sup> but it was languishing. Amex now put the Spanish together with the Madison Avenue Kelly Nason, Inc. agency, and an orchestrated advertising campaign quickly came together. The first magazine advertisements concocted by Kelly Nason were modest in size (about a fifth of an 8.5 by 11-inch page), but strategically placed in publications such as *Time* magazine. They suggested, "Holiday in enchanted Spain: land of infinite beauty and striking contrasts; of fabulous art and colorful folklore; of inexpensive and bountiful pleasure; and above all, of festive gaiety and charm." Rather than directing tourists to the Spanish information office, the advertisements encouraged them to contact the American Express Travel Service in New York and

70. Amex Memorandum, "Proposed Office—Spain," June 1, 1950, Spain file, AEA.

71. See, for example, "Minutes of Meeting of Committee for Spain with Dr. Luis A. Bolín and Mr. H. A. Hill," October 2, 1950, Spain file, AEA.

72. Preston, *Franco*, 600–602.

73. Memorandum from Ralph T. Reed to "All Offices of the American Express Company, Inc. and Subsidiaries around the World," March 12, 1951, Spain file, AEA.

74. Quoted in *Going Places* (American Express Company Magazine), June 1951, 6, *Going Places* file, AEA.

75. Letter from Harry A. Hill, Vice President and General Manager, American Express Office, Paris, to R. T. Reed, September 8, 1949, Spain file, AEA.

elsewhere.<sup>76</sup> Nason's advertising campaign would become increasingly elaborate as the 1950s wore on: as early as 1952, for example, advertisements in *Time* and other publications were sometimes virtually full page in size.<sup>77</sup> But bigger ads would be only the tip of the Kelly Nason Spanish public relations iceberg, as we shall see below.

#### THE FRANCO REGIME: TOURISM CONVERTS

American Express's efforts to operate in Spain had broken an ideological logjam for the Franco regime. The upturn in the number of tourists coming into Spain was dramatic, a clear showcase for Spain and a rebuttal to her enemies, and lucrative to boot. In 1950 about twenty-five thousand Americans traveled to Spain; in 1951, through November, the number was almost forty-two thousand.<sup>78</sup> The Franco regime, now properly motivated to try to maximize its foreign tourist appeal, started making serious plans.

In 1952 the regime commissioned a 100-plus page "Preliminary National Tourism Plan." The document made clear the Spanish government's combined political and economic preoccupations. On the very first page, the authors declare that attention has been focused on Spain, in part, by an anti-Franco Communist propaganda "of extraordinary efficacy," but that "la propaganda roja" has had an unintended effect: it "has stimulated the curiosity of many, who visit our country anxious to find out whether its situations or objective realities are like the external polemics. The reality demonstrated to these considerable contingents of tourists . . . today constitutes the most valuable spokesman of Hispanophile propaganda."<sup>79</sup> After breathlessly noting the hard currency that foreign tourism had brought into Spain in 1951, including almost nine million dollars from American visitors, the largest single currency source,<sup>80</sup> the report returned to the political benefits:

Equally, [we should consider] the multiplier effect of an efficient, well oriented official propaganda that adequately exalts our national values in all aspects, attracting the outsider toward our nation, retaining him here and avoiding deceptions and inconveniences, in order to intelligently direct his journey . . . it is essential that the tourist who visits us not only returns here,

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76. *Time*, April 10, 1950. For original preparatory artwork and copy by Kelly Nason, see materials located in section 49.03, box 14413—"Kelly Nason," general heading "Cultura," General Archive Alcalá.

77. Advertisement: "The Picture Is Bright for *Your* Vacation in Sunny Spain," *Time*, April 21, 1952, 58.

78. "Voice of Spain Broadcast, New Year's Eve, 1951: text of Mr. R. H. Henry's speech on program," attached to letter from Richard A. Henry, Manager, American Express Office, Madrid, to F. B. Harding, President [sic—actually vice president], American Express, January 4, 1952, Spain file, AEA.

79. "Anteproyecto de Plan Nacional de Turismo," July 1952, 2, section 49.02, box 14415, general heading "Cultura," General Archive Alcalá.

80. *Ibid.*, 4.

but that he is converted into the most active propagandist of our nation, increasing in this manner our prestige in the world.<sup>81</sup>

The preliminary report then offered detailed plans for improving transportation networks, accommodations, entry and exit procedures, and government bureaucratic procedures in order to bring tourists into Spain, show them the truth about the Franco regime, and separate them from their money.<sup>82</sup>

The finalized “National Plan for Tourism” completed the following year made the intertwining of political and economic imperatives even more explicit. “It must be emphasized . . . the enormous increase registered in the course of a year in the number of American tourists, a number which may be as much as 105%.” The plan’s authors waxed rhapsodic over the implications of this increase: “This constant increase of tourists produces great benefits to our nation, the most valuable being, first and foremost, direct knowledge of the reality [of Spain], without the distortion of tendentious propaganda. [S]uch an augmenting of tourist traffic demonstrates, in a reliable manner, that the tourists who have visited us constitute our best propaganda for the dissemination through the whole world how much they have been able to see and appreciate personally in our hospitable and welcoming nation.” And then the plan brought money—an enormous quantity to the hard currency-starved Franco regime—into the picture: “Aside from this effect of an eminently political character, tourism contributes an economic benefit of exceptional volume . . . in the past year of 1952 the amount reached APPROXIMATELY ONE BILLION SIX HUNDRED MILLION PESETAS IN FOREIGN EXCHANGE” [emphasis in original].<sup>83</sup>

The Franco regime was sold, permanently, on the virtues of tourism, particularly of the lucrative American persuasion. It is a measure of how self-evident the benefits came to be perceived that the regime’s embrace of tourism as a panacea occurred while the Ministry of Information and Tourism (MIT), created in 1951 to exercise ultimate oversight over the area,<sup>84</sup> was firmly under the leadership of a notoriously far-right wing minister, Gabriel Arias Salgado. Benjamin Welles, the *New York Times* correspondent (and son of the one-time diplomat Sumner Welles) who was posted for years in Spain, would later declare of the long-time minister of information and tourism, “After Franco, no man bears greater responsibility for the stultification of Spanish culture, for the despair of Spain’s intellectuals, for the indifference of Spanish youth, or for Spain’s poor image in the world. From 1937 to 1962, Arias Salgado epitomized the intellectual garroting of his countrymen’s minds.”<sup>85</sup> In an infamous pro-

81. *Ibid.*, July 1952, 5.

82. *Ibid.*, *passim*.

83. “PLAN NACIONAL DE TURISMO,” dated 1953, in box 14417, section 49.02, general heading “Cultura,” General Archive Alcalá.

84. Preston, *Franco*, 614.

85. Benjamin Welles, *Spain: The Gentle Anarchy* (New York, 1965), 88.

nouncement, Arias Salgado, whose rabid devotion to Franco was matched only by his fanatical brand of Catholicism, declared that his job as minister was "saving souls."<sup>86</sup> But the Franco regime's conversion to wholehearted support for tourism outweighed Arias Salgado's religious preoccupations, and he was a canny enough political survivor (he served as chief of propaganda for almost three decades) to adapt his views to those of Franco.<sup>87</sup> If El Caudillo saw value in bringing Americans to Spain, then Gabriel Arias Salgado was going to support him, or at least not get in the way.

#### TWA AND HILTON IN SPAIN

In the wake of American Express's successful entry into the Spanish market, significant U.S. travel business interests entered into partnership with Spain. In particular, Trans-World Airlines and Hilton Hotels developed relationships with the Franco regime that provided a crucial boost to Spain's efforts to draw in American travelers. TWA and the Spanish Secretariat General of Tourism partnered to split the cost of full-page magazine advertisements in American magazines such as *Time*. An early ad proclaimed,

TWA . . . your skyway to gay, romantic SPAIN.

For a memorably *different* vacation this year, follow the smart travel trend to Spain . . . where gracious, modern comforts enhance your enjoyment of sun-mellowed, old-world charm.

Your trip is a skylark from the beginning when you fly via world-proved TWA Constellation . . . direct from New York to gay Madrid in less than a day. . . . And, in Spain, your dollar buys values you'll hardly believe.<sup>88</sup>

But the tourism collaboration between TWA and the Franco regime went beyond sharing advertising costs. For example, in mid-1954, TWA's director general in Spain informed the Spanish tourism authorities that "the great interest that today exists in the United States to visit Spain has induced our Los Angeles office to prepare an extraordinary campaign to exhort the North American public to visit the great Spanish nation." Elaborate displays featuring armor, posters of bullfighters, models of Christopher Columbus's ships, and examples of Spanish traditional dress were exhibited in TWA offices throughout the United States.<sup>89</sup> In another TWA-Franco regime collaboration, the two cosponsored the trip to Madrid of an American journalist who recorded the

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86. Jose Maria Garcia Escudero, *Primera Apertura: Diario de un Director General* (Barcelona, 1978), 35.

87. Welles, *Spain: The Gentle Anarchy*, 88.

88. *Time*, June 2, 1952, 44.

89. Letter from F. E. Howell, Director General TWA Spain, to Don Mariano de Urzáiz, Spanish Director General of Tourism, August 11, 1954 (Spanish-language), with accompanying photograph, section 49.03, box 16079, general heading "Cultura," General Archive Alcalá.

Spanish exploits of the ersatz “Howell family” for the widely syndicated Sunday newspaper supplement *Parade Magazine*.<sup>90</sup>

By 1957, TWA could report to the director general of tourism, “You may be interested to know that our flights are now coming in from the States absolutely full and we are augmenting our service June 1st to 8 flights per week including 5 tourist Constellation flights and 3 of the large Super-G planes which carry tourist, first-class and sleeper accommodation. We are optimistic and believe, if no unforeseen circumstances interfere, we shall have a wonderful year from now on.”<sup>91</sup>

Conrad Hilton bestowed a singular benefaction on the Franco regime with his decision to locate in Madrid the first Hilton Hotel in Europe. Hilton was vociferous in proclaiming his anti-Communist sentiments, and like Ralph T. Reed at American Express, he evangelized American overseas tourism as a powerful aid to U.S. foreign-policy objectives. As Hilton put it in a speech to the Commonwealth Club of San Francisco in 1956,

Let me say right here, that we operate hotels abroad for the same reason we operate them in this country: to make money for our stockholders. . . . But I assure you that if money were all we were after, we could make it right here in this country with a few less headaches. However, we feel that if we really believe in what we are all saying about Liberty, about Communism, about Happiness, that we, as a nation, must exercise our great strength and power for good and against evil—if we really believe this—it is up to each of us, our organizations and our industries, to contribute to this objective with all the resources at our command.<sup>92</sup>

But behind his ideological rhetoric, Hilton had another, eminently practical incentive. The U.S. government provided the hotelier with reason to believe it would back his development plans. The Economic Cooperation Administration contacted Hilton Hotels in late 1949 and early 1950 to announce that the ECA was “very anxious to increase first class accommodations in several of the capitals of Europe,” and to that end the organization was willing to provide both loan guarantees and modest dollar amounts to encourage construction.<sup>93</sup>

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90. Letter from Frank Howell, TWA Madrid Office, to Don Mariano de Urzaiz, Spanish Director General of Tourism, April 26, 1957, section 49.03, box 16079, general heading “Cultura,” General Archive Alcalá.

91. *Ibid.*

92. “Excerpt from an Address, ‘Hotels and Statesmanship,’ by Conrad N. Hilton, Delivered at a Meeting of the Commonwealth Club of San Francisco, May 11, 1956,” in John Desmond Glover, Edmund P. Learned, and Arthur B. Moss, “Hilton Hotels Corporation: Cases on Business Policy and Administration,” vol. 1 (unpublished Harvard Business School Case Study, 1958), section BP 569, 25.

93. Memorandum from Theodore J. Pozzy, Chief, Travel Development Section, to Paul Hyde Bonner, Special Assistant to Chief, ECA Special Mission to Italy, August 30, 1950, in *Duplicates of Materials Concerning Hilton Hotels Corporation’s International Development, 1950–1958* (limited circulation document), from the Conrad N. Hilton Collection, Conrad Hilton Archive and Library, Conrad N. Hilton College of Hotel and Restaurant Management, Uni-

Hilton would subsequently claim, with more than a touch of geostrategic pomposity, that “[w]e began our foreign project by spotting two hotels at the two ends of Europe, Spain and Turkey. In this, it will surprise you to know, we are frankly following the Communist pattern. You find in the writings of Lenin that his objective was to take Russia in the North, Spain in the South, and then close the pincers over Europe.”<sup>94</sup> In fact, it was rather more fortuitous that the first European Hilton Hotel opened in Madrid. In 1950 and early 1951, Hilton Hotels Corporation was scouting locations and engaging in preliminary negotiations for properties in Rome, London, Athens, and Istanbul; indeed, it seemed early on that deals concerning Istanbul and Rome were most likely to be completed first.<sup>95</sup> As it turned out, however, while Hilton Hotels would be built in all the cities during the course of the 1950s, unexpected snags pushed back the opening dates. A key difficulty was the transfer of authority over tourism-related issues from the Economic Cooperation Administration to the newly created Mutual Security Agency in July 1952—the MSA abruptly cut off financial support for travel development, with the explanation “because in Europe, as you know, our major resources are now being concentrated more in the defense support field.”<sup>96</sup>

Now Spain's ineligibility for Marshall Plan funding was, for once, to have a salutary effect. A group of Spanish investors had put together a building consortium that completed about two thirds of the construction of a luxury hotel in Madrid when Hilton began seriously looking into its options in Spain. Once Conrad Hilton approved a management partnership with the Spaniards, the balance of construction went exceptionally smoothly.<sup>97</sup> The only bump along the way was the Franco regime's nervousness about granting an exclusive concession to Hilton Hotels to allow the repatriation of hard currency earnings—they were worried about the precedent they were setting for other businesses, for whom strict limits on currency repatriation were in force.<sup>98</sup> But the Franco regime understood quite well the benefits of having a Hilton Hotel in the Spanish capital, and they accommodated the company concerning finances.

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versity of Houston, Texas (hereafter Hilton Archive). My thanks to Professor Christine Skwiot for providing me with copies of Hilton Archives documents.

94. Conrad Hilton speech, “Hotels and Statesmanship,” in Glover, Learned, and Moss, 25.

95. See, for example, letter from John W. Houser, Vice President and General Manager, Hilton Hotels International, to Conrad N. Hilton, August 27, 1950; Letter from John W. Houser to Conrad N. Hilton, September 20, 1950; Telegram from Conrad N. Hilton to William Irwin, November 22, 1950, all in *Duplicates of Materials Concerning Hilton Hotels Corporation's International Development, 1950–1958*, Hilton Archive.

96. Undated copy of letter from W. John Kenney, Deputy Director for Mutual Security, MSA, to Conrad N. Hilton, attached to letter from John W. Houser, Executive Vice President, Hilton Hotels International, to Olive Wakeman, Executive Secretary to Conrad N. Hilton, July 11, 1952, in box 3, heading “Hilton International,” Hilton Archive.

97. Whitney Bolton, *The Silver Spade: The Conrad Hilton Story* (New York, 1954), 118; Letter from John W. Houser in Madrid to Conrad N. Hilton, January 27, 1952, in box 5, heading “Hilton International,” Hilton Archive.

98. Letter from Houser to Hilton, January 27, 1952, Hilton Archive.

And thus, with a surfeit of fanfare, the Castellana Hilton was inaugurated on July 14, 1953. Conrad Hilton brought two plane-loads of American celebrities to Madrid for the opening ceremonies, including actress Mary Martin, currently the toast of Broadway, movie star Gary Cooper, who ironically had portrayed the anti-Franco guerrilla Robert Jordan in the film *For Whom the Bell Tolls* a decade earlier, and actress-talk show hostess Jinx Falkenberg, who was Barcelonan by birth. The mayor of Madrid hosted an official reception for the gathered celebrities and dignitaries, after which the bishop of Madrid solemnly blessed the new hotel.<sup>99</sup> Speaking in Spanish, which he had learned as a boy in New Mexico, Conrad Hilton addressed an unqualified apology for the Franco regime to the assembled gathering, declaring,

The Western World owes a debt of gratitude to Spain and her people for many things over the centuries. But in my mind, in this lovely summer of 1953, she stands on a glorious pedestal of the twentieth century for being the only nation in the world which has defeated Communism. Russia was already swallowed up by this monstrous thing, so was Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Poland. Bulgaria, Romania and Yugoslavia all fell with ease . . . the pincers were to close over all of Europe. The world should be tremendously grateful to Spain for the great sacrifice she made in hitting back so hard that the Communist time-table has been upset ever since.<sup>100</sup>

Hilton was so proud of his encomium to Franquismo that he had it reprinted verbatim in a hagiographic biography he commissioned, *The Silver Spade*, which could be found for several years in every Hilton Hotel room, right next to the Gideon Bible.

Media coverage of the Castellana Hilton's opening, which included a *Time* photo spread on Gary Cooper trying his hand in the bullring,<sup>101</sup> combined with prominent full-page, full-color magazine advertisements to draw large numbers of Americans to the hotel. Reassured by the Hilton name and ad copy declaring that "[e]ach of its rooms and suites has a telephone and radio . . . many have a terrace and air-conditioning and all are handsomely furnished,"<sup>102</sup> American tourists flocked to the Castellana Hilton, which brought more than one million dollars in hard currency into Spain in its first year of operation, as well as many thousands of pounds, francs, and other hard currencies.<sup>103</sup> In the late 1950s and early 1960s, the Castellana Hilton would have its magnetism to American tourists further enhanced when it became the home base of choice for Hollywood film production in Spain.<sup>104</sup>

99. Itinerary, "Opening Festivities at Castellana Hilton," Spain file, AEA.

100. Quoted in Bolton, *The Silver Spade*, 123.

101. "Old Cowhand," *Time*, July 27, 1953, 17.

102. Advertisement, *Time*, July 13, 1953 (published in *Time* throughout July).

103. "The Hilton Hotel Organization," typed document dated February 1959, in box 4, heading "Hilton International," Hilton Archive.

104. See below in this article.

AMERICAN MOTION PICTURE PRODUCTION IN SPAIN:  
EARLY STAGES

Motion pictures that attractively depicted Spain and its touristic charms, whether domestically or foreign produced, were a logical integral element of the effort to gain American and other Western travelers. Hollywood was then as now the great global image transmitter, and American motion picture production in Spain would play a major role in the Franco regime's efforts to bring in tourists from the United States and elsewhere. However, the Ministry of Information and Tourism was congenitally suspicious of Hollywood—as late as 1960, internal MIT documents were warning that the American motion picture studios “were the sector most easily penetrated by Judaism and communism,” and that the regime had to be very wary in its dealings with them as a result.<sup>105</sup> MIT's initial interest in Hollywood after World War II as a means of spreading propaganda was in using the Motion Picture Export Association of America (MPEA), the international distribution organization composed of most of the major U.S. film corporations, as a means of financing Spanish films, disseminating them in the United States and worldwide via the unparalleled U.S. film distribution system. However, the officially sanctioned Spanish film output throughout the 1950s possessed little-to-no commercial potential in the eyes of the MPEA.<sup>106</sup>

But even as it became clear that Spanish-produced films would have little opportunity to be seen in the United States or Western Europe, a number of American filmmakers in the mid-1950s cast their eyes upon Spain as a cheap potential film production venue, as part of a larger trend toward what became known as “runaway production” of Hollywood motion pictures in offshore locations (Britain and Italy would gain the lion's share of this production). The Ministry of Information and Tourism's leeriness toward Hollywood was gradually overcome by a combination of the pressing need to maximize the flow of foreign tourists into Spain and the strenuous efforts by American motion picture producers to develop amicable and mutually profitable relations with the Spanish authorities.

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105. “Borrador Previo para un Estudio Sobre Fines y Medios de la Propaganda de España en el Exterior,” 12.

106. MIT-sanctioned Spanish films such as *Cristobel Colon* and *Bienvenido Mr. Marshall* were laced with heavy-handed propaganda, such as a scene in the latter film depicting the village priest's nightmare, in which he is set upon by hooded Church officials who transmogrify into Ku Klux Klansmen with “USA” emblazoned on their white robes as raucous jazz music plays on the soundtrack. This was decidedly not a prescription for success with American audiences. Indeed, echoing the MPEA's views, a report by the American embassy in Madrid stated bluntly that the “principal dilemma of the Spanish motion picture industry is the low quality of production. . . . There are many producers but moderate output, and the quality runs a poor second in the competitive race with foreign films.” Report from American Embassy, Madrid, to U.S. Department of State, “The Motion Picture Industry in Spain,” February 8, 1960, 4, in folder 852.44/2-2660, box 2583, RG 59, National Archives, College Park, Maryland.

Prominent Hollywood filmmakers, including Robert Rossen and Stanley Kramer, would produce several high-profile, big-budget motion pictures such as *Alexander the Great* (1955) and *The Pride and the Passion* (1957) with the cooperation of MIT and making clear the use of Spanish locations in publicity literature concerning the films.<sup>107</sup> Coverage such as that by the *New York Times* offered up Spain's touristic assets and pointedly directed potential travelers to the hallowed grounds where filming was taking place: "The clear Spanish air and sunshine provide such excellent photographic conditions that Rossen decided to shoot more exterior scenes than he had originally planned. . . . As this is written the company is on location on a hill pasture overlooking El Molar (known to the company as El Big Back Tooth), a village thirty miles from Madrid."<sup>108</sup> *Life* magazine did a full-page photo article on the *Alexander the Great* production, prominently featuring its Spanish locale.<sup>109</sup>

Stanley Kramer Productions and United Artists had a clear sense of the Franco regime's vigorous efforts to promote tourism to Spain, and they sought to capitalize on this whenever possible during the making of *The Pride and the Passion*. In a memorandum written by the production's publicity agency in late 1955, during the preproduction period, they zeroed in on the issue from the start:

Tourism[:] Now is the time to get the Spanish government interested in putting up some dough for a year-long campaign, tying in our title, "The Pride and the Passion," with their promotional activities. Spain is growing as a tourist center and contacts should be established immediately in New York and Washington, to be followed through in Madrid; a tremendous international campaign and budget to be put forth by the Spanish government. A whole series of corollary ideas to "The Pride and the Passion" could be developed, such as "The sunshine and the snow," "The mountains and the plains," "The cities and the vineyards," etc., etc.<sup>110</sup>

Although Kramer was one of Hollywood's most noted liberals—during his two-decade long career he made, among other "message" films, *High Noon*, *Judgment at Nuremberg*, *On the Beach*, and *Guess Who's Coming for Dinner*—

107. As United Artists trumpeted in a full-page advertisement in the February 25, 1955, issue of *Variety*, "on February 17th, 1955 there was placed before the CinemaScope cameras at the Sevilla Studio, Madrid, the production of Robert Rossen's 'Alexander the Great.' Shooting will continue later in Manzanares, El Molar, Rascafria, Segovia and Malaga in Spain." Advertisement, *Variety*, February 25, 1955, in "Alexander the Great" clipping file, MHL.

108. "'Alexander' Band: International Troupe Films Rossen's 'Alexander the Great' in Spain," *New York Times*, April 24, 1955, in "Alexander the Great" clipping file, MHL.

109. "Film's Campaign Boon for Spain," *Life*, November 14, 1955, in "Alexander the Great" clipping file, MHL.

110. Memorandum from the Beck-Blowitz Agency to United Artists, "Report on 'The Pride and the Passion,'" September 30, 1955, in folder, "Publicity: Blowitz-Markel," box 14, Stanley Kramer Collection, UCLA Special Collections, Young Library, University of California at Los Angeles.

whatever private reservations he may have had about Francisco Franco did not prevent him from establishing a cordial personal relationship with the Spanish dictator or providing his regime with a major public relations coup.<sup>111</sup>

These early efforts by Hollywood producers to forge relationships with the Franco regime and exploit the regime's desire to gin up American and other Western tourism broke down barriers and prejudices on the Spaniards' part, and they would pave the way for the far more thoroughgoing efforts of Hollywood producer Samuel Bronston several years later. In the meantime, they represented another brick in the developing Spanish foreign tourism infrastructure.

#### TEMPLE FIELDING: DEAN OF AMERICAN TRAVEL WRITERS

The Franco regime had yet another potent asset in its efforts to bring in American tourists: Temple Fielding, the most prominent American travel writer of the early postwar era. Virtually from its inception in 1946, the *Fielding's Guide to Europe* series made its author "the most widely consulted travel writer in history" up to that time.<sup>112</sup> Fielding was a key figure in the development of American mass overseas tourism after World War II. His imprimatur was enough to direct thousands of American tourists to virtually any location he chose; he was the recipient of numerous honors from European governments grateful for the millions of dollars of hard currency he funneled their way.<sup>113</sup> The Danes, for example, felt so indebted to Fielding for his effusive descriptions of their country that in 1950 they granted him an order of merit that included a house, maid, and monthly allowance in perpetuity.<sup>114</sup> Fortunately for the Franco regime, Fielding's predilection was to fairly rhapsodize about Spain and encourage Americans in the strongest possible terms to travel there. Sensibly realizing Fielding's value, the Ministry of Information and Tourism cultivated a warm ongoing relationship with the master travel guide author.

Temple Fielding was a colorful figure from an august background. A direct descendent of *Tom Jones* author Henry Fielding, his grandfather was the famed naturalist William Temple Hornaday, a cofounder of the National Zoo in Washington, DC and the founder and longtime director of the New York Zoological

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111. The U.S. embassy in Madrid reported, "The Caudillo has received [Stanley] Kramer on a couple of occasions. . . . It has been due to General Franco's interest that four thousand of the Spanish Army are going to stage a cavalry charge in the picture. The cavalry charge will cost the company only a hundred pesetas (\$2) per man per week—no charge for the horses! . . . It would cost more than two dollars in Hollywood to get a pedestrian to cross the street." Memorandum of conversation, "Making of Film in Spain by Sidney [sic] Kramer Productions," March 7, 1956, in folder, 852.452/3-756, box 4621, RG 59, National Archives, College Park, Maryland.

112. John McPhee, "Templex," in *A Roomful of Hovings and Other Profiles* (New York, 1968), 203.

113. *Ibid.*, 203-4.

114. *Ibid.*, 244-45. The Danes were spurred in their generosity by a survey conducted by their minister of tourism, who discovered that fully 50 percent of the American tourists in Denmark were entering the country carrying a copy of *Fielding's Guide*.

Society.<sup>115</sup> Fielding had been an O.S.S. agent in Europe and North Africa during World War II; most notably, he spent several months in late 1944 disseminating so-called black propaganda behind Nazi lines in Yugoslavia with Tito and his partisans. For his espionage efforts he received a military commendation that stated, “Through his leadership and other perilous efforts, he was officially credited with more than thirty thousand voluntary enemy surrenders during the Allied military campaign in the Balkan Theater.”<sup>116</sup> A first-rate prose stylist and a bit of an eccentric—he was given to drawing tiny cartoon faces to accompany his signature—Fielding began authoring his eponymous travel guide series in 1948.

Despite occasional protestations to the contrary, Fielding’s *Travel Guide* series was laced with political polemics. A fierce anticommunism was layered in with his tart observations concerning where to get a decent meal, how to avoid being suckered by local racketeers, and where to find women of easy virtue. In the 1950 edition, for example, Fielding wrote of Yugoslavia, “I want to see the waterfalls without an OZNA secret police agent breathing down my neck, to see the countryside without That Man’s picture on every other building, to sit in a café without hearing from the waiter how they took away his son the week before. Tito says that he has split with Moscow, that America is now his friend, and that he welcomes American tourists—who ‘can wander where they please.’ For me, I think I’ll wait a while.”<sup>117</sup> And that was his most temperate pronouncement on a Communist regime. More typical was his declaration, “To get into Rumania these days you need an ice pick, mineral oil, three brigades of 240 mm. Howitzers, Phaeton’s chariot, a barrel of aspirin, and Jason’s cloak of invisibility. Don’t try to go otherwise, because you won’t succeed.”<sup>118</sup>

In contrast, Fielding was exceedingly fond of Spain and inclined from the outset to temporize about the Franco regime. In 1950 he averred, “Spain is a political paradox: A strong, inflexible, centralized authority governing a nation of stubborn individualists. As a man, you can’t push a Spaniard around; you can flog him, cajole him, toss him in jail, or give him pink champagne for breakfast—and he’ll *still* go his own way, on his own sweet time.”<sup>119</sup> Thus to Fielding, at this point, the Franco regime was not a benign dictatorship—and by way of contrast, he did indeed describe Antonio Salazar’s autocratic rule in Portugal as “perhaps the most benevolent suzerainty in the world”<sup>120</sup>—but it was not so onerous as to crush the Spanish populace’s spirit.

In the aftermath of his decision in 1951 to make Mallorca his home base for his yearly Continental research peregrinations, Fielding’s tone began to shift

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115. *Ibid.*, 229.

116. *Ibid.*, 213.

117. Temple Fielding, *Fielding’s 1950 Travel Guide to Europe* (New York, 1950), 549. (OZNA: Serbo Croat acronym for “Department of the Protection of the People,” the Yugoslavian security agency/secret police under Tito.)

118. *Ibid.*, 474.

119. *Ibid.*, 478.

120. *Ibid.*, 450.

away from somewhat negatively tilted equivocation about Franco. He stated in the 1952 edition of his *Guide* that the barrage of anti-Franco articles in the American press, on the one hand, and the posters urging "Come See Beautiful Spain," on the other, raise the sixty-four dollar question for the harassed American tourist: "In view of the internal situation in Spain, should I go and will I enjoy it? My answer is 'Yes,' without qualification or reservation."<sup>121</sup>

Fielding sought to reassure the apprehensive tourist from Topeka who had visions of being thrown into a jail cell in Madrid on trumped-up charges:

If you are Mr. William X. Jones, the typical American vacationer, political matters will never cross your path. Spain is under a dictatorship, with some of the trimmings, but you can go exactly where you wish, do exactly what you choose, and say exactly what you feel about the government or anything else. There are no shadows to frighten you, as in Yugoslavia or Vienna or in the Soviet Satellites; you'll never be followed, stopped or even questioned while you are a guest in Spain.<sup>122</sup>

But this did not mark the limit of Fielding's capacity to offer aid and comfort to El Caudillo. The 1953 Madrid Pact inspired Fielding to provide a full-throated defense of Spain's strategic importance to the United States and a political apologia for the Franco regime, to denounce American anti-Francoites as Communist dupes, and in the process both disclose and offer a mea culpa for his own earlier leftist sentiments:

The defense agreement between the United States and Spain, signed in September, 1953, which gives Spain technicians, machinery, rolling stock, and grand-scale tools for peacetime, as well as modern armaments, and which gives the U.S. probably the most vital air and naval bases in our world-wide-defense network, is just the shot in the arm which both patients needed. . . .

From repeated visits to every corner of the country since 1946, and from 2+ years of residence in my own Mallorquin villa, I should have a fair idea of what is going on [in Spain]. U.S. Communists, gullible "liberals," and naïve innocents who waved banners for the Soviet-directed Lincoln Brigade (I was one who did) have built up a picture that is utterly false.

Fielding momentarily offered up a less than laudatory note, declaring, "I feel that General Franco has been wrong in many things and that his government should be criticized for major mistakes." However, he immediately vitiated this tepid disapprobation:

But too many armchair critics either ignore or forget a pair of historical facts: (1) the present regime had to make an invasion from Africa to wrest the land from the Communists, backed by the Soviet Union, *which already had control,*

121. Fielding, *Fielding's Travel Guide to Europe*, 5th ed., 607–8.

122. *Ibid.*

[sic] and (2) from unbelievable devastation and more men killed in battle than in the U.S. Civil War, it has built a firmer and better-balanced nation than some others into which we've poured millions—without 5 cents of outside help until recently.

Fielding went on to claim in the next breath, rather less than ingenuously, "I'm not carrying the torch for Spain or any country except my own; politics per se have no place in this book."<sup>123</sup>

None of this was lost on the Franco regime, first and foremost because Fielding helpfully mailed to the Ministry of Information and Tourism a copy of the chapter on Spain that contained the preceding quote.<sup>124</sup> The Directorate General of Tourism subsequently made a point of extending every possible courtesy to Fielding as he conducted his yearly research tour around Spain, including providing him with a departmental official to act as his chauffeur.<sup>125</sup> While Fielding would in subsequent editions of his guide tone down his rhetoric somewhat,<sup>126</sup> the regime could not have hoped for greater ongoing expressions of support from such a prominent travel author. Millions of American tourists clutching their *Fielding's Guide* as they prepared to enter Spain were not only assured by the author of the country's sightseeing riches; they were inculcated with a vision of a Spain that was developing economically, a critical American ally, and not at all some surviving vestige of the Axis.

#### CONSOLIDATING SPAIN'S TOURISM PROGRAM

The Spaniards made the most of the tourism-enhancing assets that had been bestowed on them. Indeed, under the close tutelage of American Express and Kelly Nason, the Franco regime's own tourism endeavors in the United States rapidly became professional and effective. The Ministry of Information and Tourism's outpost in Manhattan, opened in 1949, was pointedly named the

123. Temple Fielding, *Fielding's Travel Guide to Europe: 1954-55 Edition* (New York, 1954), 634-35.

124. Letter from Temple Fielding to Don Mariano Urzáiz y Silva, Director General, Spanish Tourist Department, August 17, 1954, in box 16076, section 49.03, general heading "Cultura," General Archive Alcalá.

125. Letter from Temple Fielding to Sr. D. Gabriel G. Loygorri, Secretary General, Spanish State Tourist Department, December 20, 1954, in box 16076, section 49.03, general heading "Cultura," General Archives Alcalá. Fielding claimed that he and his research partner wife "never introduce ourselves anywhere until the check has been paid or the work has been done. We're strictly Mr. and Mrs. Joe Smith, routine American tourists (which we are!) who apparently speak nothing but English, who are typically easygoing and who often appear to be baffled (which we also are!)." Temple Fielding, *Fielding's Travel Guide to Europe, 1959-60 Edition* (New York, 1959), vii-viii. But Fielding's claim is undermined somewhat by his hearty thanks to the Spanish secretary general for tourism for "the most friendly and valuable cooperation of you and your colleagues and associates" as he made his research rounds. "In every Turismo office, parador and albergue [government-run lodgings] I visited," he wrote, "I was given the highest degree of assistance and made to feel very much at home." Fielding to Loygorri, December 20, 1954 (see above in citation).

126. See, for example, Fielding, *Fielding's Travel Guide to Europe, 1959-60 Edition*, 729-30.

Spanish Tourist Office, although behind the scenes it was of course a propaganda node as much as a traveler's resource. By 1952 there were similar offices in Chicago and San Francisco; in 1957 an office was opened in Dallas, Texas.<sup>127</sup> As early as 1952, Nason's print advertisements in the United States were as likely to direct travelers to contact the tourist offices as they were to tout American Express or TWA.<sup>128</sup>

The American advertising firm and the Spanish Tourist Office worked hand in glove both to generate coverage of Spain in the U.S. media and to monitor coverage as well. For example, in just one month, from mid-April to mid-May 1956, Nason was working on a host of public relations activities, including liaison efforts with the wide-circulation magazines *House and Garden*, *Sports Illustrated*, *Time*, and *Look* in the preparation of articles concerning Spain, as well as releasing a slew of publicity releases—the major story that month was the honeymoon of Monaco's Prince Rainier and the newly crowned Princess Grace in Mallorca—and photographs for books such as the Scribner's-published textbook *Building Our Western Civilization*.<sup>129</sup> Additionally, Kelly Nason and the Tourist Office both solicited and vetted advertising schemes for American products, such as Van Heusen shirts. In this case, for example, the public relations firm negotiated the following terms with the famed haberdasher:

The Spanish State Tourist Department is prepared to provide accommodations, meals and an automobile with driver for five persons for three or four days next September and is also willing to provide the services of a photographer from the Spanish State Tourist Department to make the color photographs you will require. . . . In exchange for this hospitality and cooperation, we shall expect that Spain will be prominently mentioned in each advertisement . . . and that the scene in the photograph will be identified. We shall also expect that Spain is included in your window displays and in other merchandising and publicity in connection with the promotion.<sup>130</sup>

Furthermore, the Kelly Nason-Tourism Office team kept a close eye on all mention of Spain, positive or negative, in the U.S. media. In January 1955, for example, the Tourism office forwarded to the Ministry of Information and Tourism over one hundred clippings culled from American newspapers and

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127. Fielding, *Fielding's Travel Guide to Europe*, 5th ed. (1952–53), 614; Press release by Homer McK. Reese, Spanish Tourism Office: "Travel News from Spain," stamped January 2, 1957, in box 16079, section 49.03, general heading "Cultura," General Archive Alcala.

128. Advertisement, "The Picture Is Bright for *Your* Vacation in Sunny Spain," *Time*, April 21, 1952, 58.

129. Memorandum from Howell E. Rees, Kelly Nason, to Mariano de Urzáiz y Silva, Director General, Spanish State Tourism Department, "Re: U.S. Publicity," April 15–May 15, 1956, in box 16079, section 49.03, general heading "Cultura," General Archive Alcala.

130. Letter from Howell E. Rees, Kelly Nason, to Christine Edwards, Grey Advertising Agency Inc., February 27, 1956, in box 16079, section 49.03, general heading "Cultura," General Archive Alcala.

magazines over the previous several weeks.<sup>131</sup> No clue concerning Spain's image was too insignificant to be considered—in 1956, for example, José Coll, the director of the New York Tourist Office, sent an evidence-laden letter to the director general of tourism “in order to demonstrate the increasing interest that Spanish tourism is reaching in the United States.” His evidence? “[A] page from a comic book published by no less than Walt Disney, and in one of the panels a pair of chipmunks [Chip and Dale, to be precise] encounter a poster that reads, ‘See Spain!’” The New York-based official explained to his superior, “Although the [cartoon itself] has no importance, it is important in that it proclaims the popularity of our tourism.”<sup>132</sup> Coll had a valid point—if Spanish tourism was showing up in Disney cartoons, then it was clearly seeping into every corner of American popular culture.

From 1952 onward, American publishers repeatedly approached the Franco regime with solicitations to participate in synergistic advertising to complement tourism supplements or special sections devoted to Spain. For example, in 1953, the *Saturday Review* contacted then-Director General of Tourism Mariano de Urzáiz y Silva, the Duke of Luna, to announce that the magazine's travel editor, Horace Sutton, would be shortly arriving in Spain to do research for a forthcoming issue devoted to the Mediterranean region. “The major article in this issue,” averred William D. Patterson, *Saturday Review's* associate publisher, “will be a report on the Spanish tourist picture by Mr. Sutton who is making his first trip to Spain, a trip to which he has been looking forward with a great deal of eagerness.” Lest the director general experience a frisson of anxiety over the arrival of the notably liberal Sutton (who wrote as well for *The Nation*), Patterson added reassuringly, “I have thoroughly indoctrinated him on my favorite country.” He requested “any courtesy that you and your associates can show Mr. Sutton in order that he may best see Spain during his visit,” after which Patterson got down to the real business at hand: “[T]his is an issue of the *Saturday Review* in which Spain should participate. A variety of interests promoting travel to Spain already plan to advertise—tours, steamship lines, hotels, etc.—and certainly strong leadership and support should be forthcoming from Spain itself.”<sup>133</sup> One wonders whether the Duque felt the *Saturday Review* was brandishing Sutton as a left-leaning cudgel in a shakedown.

131. Letter from Annie D. Cordova, Secretary, Spanish Tourism Office, New York, to Mariano de Urzáiz y Silva, Director General, State Tourism Department, January 4, 1955, in box 16079, section 49.03, general heading “Cultura,” General Archive Alcalá.

132. Letter from José M. Coll to Don Mariano de Urzáiz, Director General del Turismo, January 23, 1956, in box 16083, section 49.03, general heading “Cultura,” General Archive Alcalá.

133. Letter from William D. Patterson, Associate Publisher, *Saturday Review*, to Mariano de Urzáiz y Silva, Director General, State Tourism Department, dated September 15, 1953, in box 16076, section 49.03, general heading “Cultura,” General Archive Alcalá. Other entreaties during the 1950s came from, for example, the *Army Times* Publishing Company, the *New York Herald Tribune*, and *Holiday*. See same source. For Horace Sutton, see Endy, *Cold War Holidays*, 33, 134.

To be sure, there were gaffes as well as gifts for Spanish tourism in the American media. For example, an expensive full-page advertisement in *Time* in October 1955 proclaimed, "You Really Get More Than Ever Before in Spain"<sup>134</sup>—immediately following this news article:

#### The Wall of Flesh

One of the modern reforms instituted by Spain's short-lived democratic republic was the outlawry of prostitution. When Dictator Franco seized power, he reinstated prostitution, set a minimum age of 23 for admission to the profession [and] charged the police with responsibility for seeing that prostitutes were registered and had regular medical checkups. But Franco's police, tough on politicals, are lax with prostitutes: only 13,000 cardholders are on the books, but an estimated 100,000, many of them under 23, ply their trade freely. In many of the most elegant bars and cafés of Madrid, there are now so many women for hire that respectable *caballeros* no longer take their wives or fiancées to such places after 7 p.m. Spain has frightening venereal disease rate: some 200,000 cases annually in public dispensaries, an unknown number treated privately or not at all.<sup>135</sup>

Perhaps it was pure coincidence that the two appeared together. But it was less than fortuitous, to say the least, that *Time's* editors juxtaposed an article concerning the prostitutes of Madrid and the clap with advertising copy that promised, "You'll like the friendly, charming Spanish people—you'll appreciate the economy of the country! Bargains are plentiful—in shops, hotels, tours. In fact, you'll be amazed and delighted to see how little it costs to have the time of your life!"<sup>136</sup> But fortunately for the Franco regime, glitches such as this were infrequent, and in any event they did not stop Americans from coming to Spain in ever-increasing numbers.

The Ministry of Information and Tourism was keenly aware of the value of American tourism to the Spanish economy, both from their 1952–1953 tourism plan studies and from a study, "More U.S. Travel Dollars for You," by the *New York Times* director of foreign advertising that the newspaper had sent to the ministry, as well as to other governments throughout Western Europe. In encouraging the European states to increase their U.S. advertising expenditures, the *Times* study extolled the virtues of the American tourist:

He has two particular qualities that make him worth all the trouble you can afford to get him as your customer. The first is that he usually does more than travel and sightsee. He is a buyer. No American tourist is considered a success when he arrives back home unless he is laden with gifts for those less lucky . . . those who could not go to Europe and remained at home. . . .

134. Advertisement, *Time*, October 24, 1955, 32.

135. "The Wall of Flesh," *Time*, October 24, 1955, 29.

136. Advertisement, *Time*, October 24, 1955, 32.

The second factor is directly related to this point. The American tourist spends more than any other tourist. Let me illustrate by citing the official Swiss figures. Here they are: Last year, foreign tourists spent a total of 8,000,000 days in Switzerland. American tourists accounted for only 7 per cent of this 8,000,000 total. On the other hand, American tourists imported 18% of the foreign currency brought into Switzerland by tourists. Measured in dollars and cents, this means that the American tourist spent about 2 1/2 times more . . . and let me repeat that—the American tourist spent 2 1/2 times more than the average tourist from other countries.<sup>137</sup>

In a bid to hone Spain's attractiveness as a destination for Americans and their purses, the Ministry of Information and Tourism undertook a series of studies of American tourists and the U.S. tourist industry during the mid and late 1950s. They were aided in their efforts by the American government via the Commerce Department. Of signal importance were research trips to the United States by Spanish tourism officials in order to conduct onsite observations. The group that visited the United States during the summer of 1957 followed a Commerce-directed itinerary that took them to such American tourist meccas as New York, Washington, DC, Williamsburg, Miami Beach, and Niagara Falls.<sup>138</sup> The Spaniards were staggered by the level of sophistication and efficiency they found in the American tourism industry. In the research group's final report to the Ministry of Information and Tourism, they offered a detailed appraisal of the Americans' tourism efforts, including a "Study of the Tourist Environment in the United States and of the Modern Techniques and Methods of Promotion Utilized in Said Country"; "American Tourist Transport—Automobile"; "The American Automobile Association"; "Railroads"; "Air Transport"; "Maritime Transport"; "Hotels, Motels, and Self Service"; and "National Parks." They also included reports on the Department of Commerce and the U.S. Information Agency.<sup>139</sup> In its conclusions the report extolled the overall state of the American tourism industry, with a particular emphasis on the extraordinary development of the U.S. motel in conjunction with automobile-based vacations, which had no corollary in railway-oriented Europe. The report's authors breathlessly described the singular proclivity for travel of American tourists, which, as they claimed, "is inculcated from the time of grammar school." Moreover, on a slightly subversive note, they hinted (albeit obliquely) that the largely privately run and decentralized nature of the U.S. tourist industry is responsible for its outstanding successes—which seemed to ever-so-gently imply that the

137. Eric W. Stoetzner, "More Travel Dollars for You."

138. "INFORME FINAL DE LA VISITA DEL GRUPO DE TECNICOS ESPAÑOLES DE TURISMO A LOS ESTADOS UNIDOS DE AMERICA DESDE EL 26 DE JULIO AL 6 DE SEPTIEMBRE DE 1.957," dated February 1958, in box 14411, section 49.02, general heading "Cultura," General Archive Alcalá.

139. *Ibid.*

American model was superior to that of the centralized, government-run Spanish tourist bureaucracy.<sup>140</sup>

#### HOLLYWOOD IN MADRID: THE BRONSTON YEARS AND TOURISM

The American film producer Samuel Bronston arguably provided the capstone to Spain's tourism/image-rebuilding program as he took Hollywood-Franco regime collaboration to a singularly high level in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Following in the footsteps of Stanley Kramer and other American filmmakers, Bronston produced his large-scale *John Paul Jones* in various locations around Spain in 1958, including the royal palace in Madrid. In the aftermath of this production, Bronston and the Ministry of Information and Tourism decided that an ongoing relationship would be mutually advantageous. Armed with the full financial backing of Pierre du Pont III, scion of the prominent American family (ultimately to the tune of \$35 million by 1964—or about \$207 million in 2003 dollars<sup>141</sup>), Bronston made the fateful decision in 1959 to move his entire production operation to Spain, setting up the Estudios Samuel Bronston in Madrid. Over the next five years he produced such high-profile epic motion pictures as *King of Kings*, *55 Days at Peking*, *Fall of the Roman Empire*, and, most notably, *El Cid*. Bronston's production activities, which he always stressed in all his promotional literature were centered in Spain, were an ongoing spur to tourism. In part this was because of the large-scale location shooting around the country, as noted in news coverage at the time:

The far-reaching effects of Hollywood are being felt in a different field these days. An American motion picture production company has been credited with influencing and encouraging tourism to Spain. "El Cid," the story of Spain's great national hero, is currently being filmed in more than 20 different locations in Spain, and those directly connected with tourism claim it has created added interest in travel to Spain.

What started as a casual trickle of tourist interest has built into a steady stream of inquiries, requests and bookings to Spain by students, historians, and tourists from all over Europe and the United States.

Hundreds of cars and buses roll down the highways daily, carrying interested visitors to the current location site of Samuel Bronston's multi-million dollar picture "El Cid" . . . for glimpses of unmatched scenic splendor and the unique attraction of the in-the-flesh Charlton Heston and Sophia Loren playing the leading roles.

Tourist services in Europe, as well as in the United States, report a welcome increase in the number of people who arrive daily to marvel.<sup>142</sup>

140. Ibid.

141. Value conversion performed at John J. McCusker, "Comparing the Purchasing Power of Money in the United States (or Colonies) from 1665 to Any Other Year Including the Present," Economic History Services, 2004. Available at <http://www.eh.net/hmit/ppowerusd/>.

142. "Hollywood Movie Set New Lure for Spanish Tourist Agencies." (See note 3.)

*Variety*, the flagship American entertainment business newspaper, added, “Film producer Samuel Bronston has done for Spain’s Orange Blossom Coast what travel groups and government tourism in Barcelona and Valencia have been aiming to do for years—to kick up a tourist storm during sun-kissed winter months. Within a matter of days [after filming began], thousands of tourists began trekking to Pensicola for the biggest free show any film producer ever unintentionally provided, to create a traffic and migrant population problem no one in the Bronston Organization had foreseen. . . . [M]obs of fans dogged the footsteps of Charlton Heston, who plays *El Cid*, throughout the shooting day.”<sup>143</sup>

Additionally, Bronston’s permanent facilities contained such wonders as full-scale recreations of Beijing’s Forbidden City and the Roman Forum, which would draw large numbers of gawkers, including, on one occasion, Wallis Simpson, the Duchess of Windsor, who glimpsed the Forbidden City in the distance while riding a train toward Madrid, recognized it from a sojourn there in the 1920s, and arranged a personal tour of the gargantuan set.<sup>144</sup> Finally, Bronston’s permanent operation was the main spur to what became known as “Hollywood in Madrid,” where tourists stood a fair chance of rubbing shoulders with movie stars at venues such as the Castellana Hilton and the Jockey Club restaurant.<sup>145</sup>

The net result of these factors was that the Franco regime could not bolster Bronston enough, whether through providing thousands of Spanish army troops to serve as extras for only two dollars per day, horses included, or allowing Bronston and those attached to his organization to bring in large quantities of foreign consumer and other goods that were ordinarily restricted, or holding regular meetings at the Ministry of Information and Tourism to discuss issues of common interest.<sup>146</sup> The Franco regime went so far as to certify that *El Cid* was officially a motion picture in the “Spanish National Interest,” one of only two films up to that time awarded the classification, and which brought with it a substantial subsidy from MIT.<sup>147</sup> Bronston himself would be awarded the Order

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143. “‘El Cid’ Battle Scenes Prove Biggest Come-On for Spain’s Orange Coast,” *Variety*, 3/22/61, in “Samuel Bronston” clipping file, subject clipping file archive, *Variety* Editorial Offices, Beverly Hills, California. My thanks to Paul G. Nagle of the William Morris Agency, Beverly Hills, California, for aiding me in gaining access to documents from this collection, which is generally not open to the public.

144. Author interview with Paul Lazarus, former senior vice president of Samuel Bronston Productions, Santa Barbara, California, 1996.

145. Author interviews with Don Antonio Recoder (representative in Spain of the Motion Picture Export Association of America), Madrid, Spain, and with Philip Yordan, senior script supervisor for Samuel Bronston Productions and coscreenwriter of *El Cid*, San Diego, California, both 1996.

146. Author interviews with Leon Patlach, former treasurer of Samuel Bronston Productions, Easton, Pennsylvania, and with Charlton Heston, star of *El Cid* and *55 Days at Peking*, Los Angeles, California, both in 1996.

147. Proclamation by the Minister of Information and Tourism, 1/30/62, in box 327, “El Cid” file, Archive of the Spanish Ministry of Culture, Madrid.

of Isabel la Católica in 1963 in recognition of his accomplishments on Spain's behalf.

THE FRANCO REGIME'S TOURISM EFFORTS:  
INCREASINGLY ASSURED

The Franco regime would continue to call periodically on the U.S. government for tourism advice in the 1960s. For example, at the end of 1963, the Spanish government holding company, the National Institute of Industry (INI), requested the aid of the American embassy in Madrid "in identifying American consulting companies which might assist in the formation of the INI's new company, Empresa Nacional de Turismo." The new enterprise was to be tasked with "the purchase of land and its conversion to tourist settlements in several areas of continental Spain, the Balearic and Canary Islands. It will also construct tourist facilities, which it will eventually sell to the general public."<sup>148</sup> It should be underlined that, as in virtually all such official dealings, the initiative lay with the Spaniards, not with Washington; we should note as well that the request was in fact for contacts with the private-sector American tourism industry, not for government advisers.

In fact, as the Franco regime became increasingly adroit in its approach to tourism, the Spaniards could bypass the U.S. government completely even in openly official regime efforts within the United States itself. This was manifested dramatically over the visit by Dr. Manuel Fraga Iribarne, the new Spanish minister of information and tourism, to the 1964 New York World's Fair, which the Franco regime had initially scorned as too expensive but ultimately participated in with a seven million dollar investment.<sup>149</sup> Fraga, a leading member of the liberalizing *aperturistas* within the Spanish government bureaucracy (many of them members of the Catholic organization *Opus Dei*) had succeeded the ultra-right winger Arias Salgado in 1962.<sup>150</sup> Unlike Arias Salgado, who evinced

148. Airgram from Henry L. Pitts, Commercial Attaché, American Embassy Madrid, to U.S. Department of State, January 13, 1964, in folder "TP 8: Fairs and Exhibs. Sp," box 1532, RG 59, National Archives, College Park, Maryland.

149. "Joint Weeka" report from American Embassy Madrid to U.S. Department of State, dated April 10, 1964, 5, folder, "Pol 2-1 Sp," box 2661, RG 59, National Archives, College Park, Maryland.

150. The American embassy in Madrid described Fraga, soon after he assumed his ministerial post, as "one of the fastest talking, fastest thinking, most energetic of Spanish officials. His lucidity and his apparent forthrightness and good intentions are impressive. It may be that when he gets his housecleaning done, the Ministry of Information and Tourism will indeed undertake some very significant new actions and attitudes . . . and the chances of its happening seem much better than at any other time in recent years." Additionally, the embassy reported, quite erroneously as it turned out, "As for tourism, it is rumored that that aspect of his responsibilities may be transferred to the Ministry of Commerce, and in our opinion that would be a sensible move." Memorandum of Conversation between U.S. Ambassador Woodward et al., and Manuel Fraga Iribarne, including cover page, dated July 27, 1962, number 752.13/7-2762, box 1811, Central Decimal File 1960-63, RG 59, National Archives, College Park, Maryland. Such a move might indeed have been sensible, but Fraga had no intention of relinquishing his control over a function that he saw as both economically and politically crucial

little personal interest in tourism, Fraga made the continued promotion of tourism to Spain a centerpiece of his policies, and in October 1964 he came to Gotham for five days to mark “Spanish Week” in the city and the “Day of Spain” at the Fair’s Spanish Pavilion. During his appearance at Flushing Meadows, Fraga proclaimed that “the glory of *this* October 12 [Columbus Day] is that the United States has discovered Spain, rather than the other way around.” As the American embassy in Madrid reported, Fraga’s activities “formed an important part of the effort of Spain this year to capture Columbus Day from the Italians.”<sup>151</sup>

Manuel Fraga Iribarne sought in a thoroughgoing way to maximize the potential synergies implicit in his brief as minister of information and tourism. To Fraga, American films made in Spain, Spanish films distributed by Hollywood, and American tourism were all integral and interrelated elements in creating a positive image for Spain in the United States and abroad. Fraga pushed to make the links between Hollywood production in Spain and tourism as explicit as possible—indeed, in 1965 he would attempt to force all foreign movies made in Spain to list prominently in their credits exactly where in Spain they were made, a move which the producers of films such as *Doctor Zhivago* opposed on the grounds that they would spoil the illusion of authenticity of films not actually set in Spain. As *Variety* reported, *Doctor Zhivago* and such other films as *The Centurians* and *The Battle of the Bulge* (both World War II-themed)

were either rolling or in blueprint when the government decreed automatic title credit for all Spanish locations and film studios utilized. An unassuming decree, it escaped immediate attention of the very people who have bent backwards to make Spain a base of operations. When the implications were realized there were cries of protest. Why bracket spectator attention on Soria when the background is Russia, or Segovia for the Ardennes or Malaga for Indo-China? . . . The law is a crafty one, yielding Spain a giant haul of free tourist propaganda.<sup>152</sup>

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to the regime’s health. The embassy no doubt was disappointed by Fraga’s continued hold on the tourism reins; that would have been added to a degree of disillusionment staffers evinced by 1965 over the minister’s unflinching defense of the Franco regime’s repressive press laws to a Danish newspaper, in which he “showed himself to somewhat less than a liberal.” The reporting official concluded that while “Fraga has a certain ability and ease in coping with obviously pointed questions . . . [a]nyone acquainted with the Spanish scene is unlikely to have been fooled by his specious replies.” Airgram report, American Embassy Madrid to U.S. State Department, “Minister of Information and Tourism Is Interviewed by Danish Correspondent,” dated April 9, 1965, in folder, “Pol 2 Sp 1/1/65,” box 2660, RG 59, National Archives, College Park, Maryland. Remarkable political survivor that he proved to be, Fraga has, as of this writing, just retired as the long-time president of Galicia.

151. “Joint Weeka” report from American Embassy Madrid to U.S. Department of State, October 16, 1964, 4–5, folder, “Pol 2-1 Sp,” box 2661, RG 59, National Archives, College Park, Maryland.

152. “Foreign Producers Pep Spain,” *Variety*, 5/19/65, in “Spain—Motion Picture Industry” clipping file, MHL.

While Fraga ultimately withdrew the edict, it is noteworthy that a promotional documentary on *Doctor Zhivago*, which aired on American television, repeatedly stressed the Spanish shooting locations, as did the glossy, widely distributed promotional booklet.<sup>153</sup> Through the end of his tenure in 1969 as minister of information and tourism, Fraga would continue his endeavors to maintain and increase the synergy between foreign film production in Spain and tourism.

The Spaniards were flying so high by the mid-1960s that the U.S. government would find itself reduced to a symbolic walk-on role in one of the Franco regime's efforts to develop the political aspect of its international tourism enterprise. In 1966, Spain hosted the "First Spanish-Portuguese-American-Philippine Tourism Assembly" specifically with an eye toward advancing the cause of Hispanidad, or solidarity among Hispano- and Lusophone nations under the guidance of Spain. Countries throughout the Latin world were represented. As the director of the U.S. Commerce Department's United States Travel Service reported, "Spain offered her assistance and touristic 'know-how' to her Latin 'sons' and is obviously desirous of regaining leadership in Latin America and the Philippines." The American delegation, accorded observer status, "had neither voice nor vote during the proceedings and this was carefully pointed out to them." While from a substantive perspective this was a waste of American time, the bemused Commerce Department official concluded that "from a political or public relations point of view it would be highly advantageous for the United States to participate or be represented if and when a Second Assembly is held."<sup>154</sup> The dynamic between the United States and Spain over tourism policy had reached the point where the latter could portray itself before the Latin world as the leader and its erstwhile mentor as the follower. It was a remarkable turnaround for a country which a mere two decades earlier had been fundamentally clueless, both economically and politically, and wary about running a modern international tourism enterprise.

#### CONCLUSION

As Temple Fielding noted in the 1965 edition of his *Guide*, "In only 13 years, the annual number of visitors to Spain has jumped elevenfold—1 million in 1951

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153. Fraga backed away from the ruling in response to the outpouring of opposition in Hollywood. See untitled article, *Variety*, 8/4/65, in same location as previous cite. But it is clear his gesture was based in part on "Doctor Zhivago" associate producer Stan Goldsmith's ability to point to reams of publicity for the film that stressed its use of Spanish locations and studios. See previous cite, as well as, for example, the "Doctor Zhivago" souvenir book; "'Zhivago' Started in Spain," *Los Angeles Times*, 1/2/65; and "'Doctor Zhivago' Moves to Spain," *New York Times*, 2/28/65, all in "Doctor Zhivago" clipping file, MHL.

154. "Report of the United States Delegation to the Primera Asamblea Hispano-Luso-Americano-Filipina de Turismo, Madrid Spain, 18-23 April 1966," submitted by John W. Black, Chairman of the Delegation, May 13, 1966, to the Secretary of State, in folder "TP 7-3 Tourism 1/1/66," box 1486, Central File 1964-66, RG 59, National Archives, College Park, Maryland.

to nearly 11 million last year—with 600,000 Americans in the pack.”<sup>155</sup> Fielding’s efforts, along with those of American Express, TWA, Hilton Hotels, and Samuel Bronston and other Hollywood filmmakers, combined with the Franco regime’s post-World War II steep learning curve to make Spain into one of the top four European tourist destinations for Americans (following Britain, France, and Italy). The regime brought in millions of desperately needed dollars while giving Spain a chance to contradict the propaganda roja that was ostensibly brainwashing the Yanquis and others in the West.

The U.S. government played a supporting role throughout; the fundamental interaction was between elements of the American private sector involved in the travel, tourism, and entertainment industries, who were motivated first and foremost by the pursuit of earnings, and the Spanish government, with its combination of political and economic preoccupations. It was corporatism with a twist: American business enterprises working hand in glove not with their own government, but with that of another country. Moreover, the episode demonstrates that U.S. popular and mass consumer culture, critical elements of what political scientist Joseph Nye has termed America’s “soft power”—the power to persuade, as opposed to coerce<sup>156</sup>—have not been simply at the United States’ disposal vis-à-vis other countries; they have been available for others to attempt to use to further their policies vis-à-vis the United States.

However, the Franco regime’s efforts were not cost free for a government that had long pushed a socially arch-conservative national agenda. Especially during the long period in which the fiercely devout Catholic and Falangist Gabriel Arias Salgado was at its helm, the Ministry of Information and Tourism was deeply concerned about foreign tourism’s potential to bring prurience and spiritual pollution to Spain. As one Catalonian motion picture director later described his frustrations about trying to film in Spain during the 1950s, “Our Ministry . . . functioned as two ministries that contradicted each other. One that was vigilant and one that stimulated tourism. The one . . . prohibited bikinis on the screen and the other was encouraging tourism that brought bikinis. Thus one would be asking oneself, ‘Which of the two should I follow?’”<sup>157</sup>

Ultimately, the Franco regime decided that bikinis and all they represented in the way of loosening domestic social and political strictures was an acceptable price to pay for foreign political rehabilitation and economic recovery, which in turn helped enable the survival of the regime until Generalissimo Franco’s death in 1975. As the American consulate in Seville noted in a report to the State Department in 1964,

155. Temple Fielding, *Fielding’s Travel Guide to Europe, 1965 Edition* (New York, 1965), 541.

156. For the most recent and in-depth discussion of soft power and its applications, see Joseph S. Nye, Jr., *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics* (New York, 2004).

157. Carlos F. Heredero, *Las Huellas del Tiempo: Cine Español, 1951–1961* (Valencia, 1993), 29.

Foreigners, especially Western Europeans and Americans, have “discovered” Spain, and because of tourism, . . . many foreigners are learning that political and social conditions in Spain are not what they have been led to believe. This is a freer country and the people are better off than they had imagined. In other words, their impression of Spain and its government has improved as a result of their visit. In time, the cumulative effect of such impressions might be reflected significantly in the press and in government circles in the countries from which they come.<sup>158</sup>

However, the same report declared that “foreign tourists are bringing a new dimension to living and new ideas. . . . Vested interests do not like this development, while the common man is rather bewildered. Nevertheless, a ferment is at work because of the influx of tourists from foreign lands.”<sup>159</sup> The Americans had supplied much of the international tourist industry know-how and big-spending visitors, the Western Europeans most of the bikinis, and the Spaniards a welcoming abrazo; the “ferment” that helped persuade U.S. and Western European tourists to think well of Franco Spain also helped the evolution of socially and politically subversive trends in Spain. The ultimate and obvious irony is that the same policy of manipulating the levers of American and Western European consumer and popular culture that helped the regime to endure until El Caudillo's demise contributed to the fatal undermining of the severe traditionalism central to Franquismo, and to the emergence by 1978 of a Spain that was an embryonic democratic, truly “normal” European state.<sup>160</sup>

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158. Airgram from American Consul, Seville, to U.S. Department of State, “Analysis of Current Political Situation in Andalucia and Extremadura,” August 26, 1964, in folder “Pol 2 Sp 3/20/64,” box 2660, RG 59, National Archives, College Park, Maryland.

159. *Ibid.*

160. It is a historical outcome worth contemplating by American foreign-policy formulators today, as they look south to Cuba and seek to shape U.S. policy toward the last of the Caudillos.