

2012

A History of Tourism in Barcelona: Creation and Self-Representation

Lillian Parks Reid
Scripps College

Recommended Citation

Reid, Lillian Parks, "A History of Tourism in Barcelona: Creation and Self-Representation" (2012). *Scripps Senior Theses*. Paper 45.
http://scholarship.claremont.edu/scripps_theses/45

This Open Access Senior Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Scripps Student Scholarship at Scholarship @ Claremont. It has been accepted for inclusion in Scripps Senior Theses by an authorized administrator of Scholarship @ Claremont. For more information, please contact scholarship@cuc.claremont.edu.

**A HISTORY OF TOURISM IN BARCELONA: CREATION AND SELF-
REPRESENTATION**

by

LILLIAN PARKS REID

**SUBMITTED TO SCRIPPS COLLEGE IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT
OF THE DEGREE OF BACHELOR OF ARTS**

**PROFESSOR MARTINS
PROFESSOR PEREZ DE MENDIOLA
PROFESSOR SANJUAN-PASTOR**

APRIL 20, 2012

Table of Contents

| | |
|---|----|
| Introduction: Background and Development of Tourism in Barcelona..... | 3 |
| Chapter 1: The Beginning of a Tourism Industry..... | 10 |
| Chapter 2: The Representation of Barcelona during Political Unrest..... | 25 |
| Chapter 3: Barcelona’s Modern Day Self-Representation..... | 38 |
| Conclusion: A History of Misguided Self-Representation..... | 50 |
| Works Cited..... | 53 |

Introduction: Background and Development of Tourism in Barcelona

Barcelona has a history riddled with political unrest tied to its individuality as a Catalanian city. Barcelona established itself as a powerful trade city as early as the 13th century, and supplied various navigational techniques, and this naval dominance led to “territorial conquests” as well as “the establishment of sophisticated political organizations for Catalonia as well as Barcelona” (Casellas 816). The end of the 14th century brought forth the beginning of political unrest in Catalonia, as well as the first clash between Catalanian rulers and those of other places in Barcelona. Because of an argument “of the succession of Catalan kings, and local political disagreements” the city’s economic power began to diminish (Casellas 817). Though all the kingdoms of Spain were independently controlled, the Catholic kings of Spain damaged the economic strength of Barcelona when several of its important economic individuals were banished from the city because they were either Jewish or Muslim. Once the Castilians took control of the New World, the relationship only got worse between Catalonia and the rest of Spain, when “they were forbidden to be involved in commercial or financial operations in the new land”. In 1714 the Bourbon King, who “initiated a process of reforms that sought to abolish all the city’s ancient privileges”, seized Barcelona, and much of the rest of Spain. This declaration was followed quickly by the Decret de Nova Planta, which “abolished Catalan governmental institutions created in the medieval times” (Casellas 817). This is the first of many occurrences in which Barcelona and Catalonia are expected to cooperate with Spanish controls instead of being independently controlled.

Starting in the second half of the 18th century there was disruption and discordancy in the shaping of the city, as “the Barcelona Council passed a series of

regulations restricting the height and overhang of buildings and setting minimum room dimensions, which were by and large ineffective because of the corruption and inefficiency of the municipal authorities themselves” (Wynn 186). At this time Barcelona was one of the main centers of Spanish industrialization, and for that reason people were flocking to the city from other regions of Spain to try and attain work. The increasing number of immigrants combined with the scattered manner in which buildings were being created led to a huge overcrowding within the city limits, adding to the disorder. Catalonia was already known at this time as a distinctly rebellious and nationalist part of Spain, so State military authorities “opened, widened, and straightened the streets” in an attempt to keep them both clean and orderly (Wynn 186). Though there was a short period of time between 1812 and 1823 in which Barcelona had its own liberal government, an absolutist monarchy was reinstated in 1823 and Barcelonans were left powerless yet again. Despite Barcelona’s lack of independence, the city continued to grow in terms of size and population, and soon it no longer fit within its medieval walls constructed by order of the Bourbon King. It wasn’t until 1854 that the Madrid government, controlled by Queen Isabel II, allowed the walls to be torn down.

For several decades Barcelona survived under different monarchies and regimes, and in 1873 Catalonia declared its independence from Spain (Casellas 820). This politically charged atmosphere was heightened by the fact that there were Liberals, Conservatives, and Idealists contending for the ability to work their way into the government. It was around this time that an anarchist movement began to break out in Barcelona, and it was mostly made up of industrial workers living in the area. Despite these political disagreements, in 1888 the city held a World Exposition, with the intention

of drawing international crowds to the growing city. The discordance between the government and the anarchists grew more and more heated until 1909, and the occurrence of the Tragic Week. The week of bloodshed, which started out as a one-day peaceful strike, was initiated when the government chose to renew military activity in Morocco as well as require working class men from Catalonia to join the war, much to the dislike of most working citizens. The week ended up being one chock-full of violence, with both sides struggling to find competent leaders. The national officials were still focused on the war in Morocco, and therefore did not have the troops to deal with the situation in Catalonia. The anarchist revolutionaries were also struggling to find a leader because they were looking to Radical and Nationalist politicians to lead the way (Ullman).

Anarchist ideals spread even through the 1920s, fueled by the inflation and unemployment filling the city. Catalan politicians were strong within the Catalonian government as well as in Madrid, and the separatist movements that were continually proposed in the capital city were creating “an unsettled social environment” (Casellas 823). This was only emphasized in 1923 when the military governor of Barcelona, Primo de Rivera, took over power in Madrid and outlawed Catalan symbols, language, and political parties. Though this was a hugely controversial and contradictory choice, it did benefit Barcelona economically. Yet again, the population increased dramatically throughout Catalonia, both because of natural growth and an influx of immigrants from other parts of the country, causing the city to need reshaping yet again (Casellas). Given the aforementioned disturbances between Catalan politics and the controlling powers in Madrid, it is not surprising that the 1929 World Fair was decreed to be a purely Spanish event, with no mention of Catalonia.

Following the 1929 World Exposition was more political turbulence within and without Catalonia, and in 1931 the Second Republic took control of the state. The 1929 Fair had left the city with a huge public debt, and the newly reinstated Catalan republican autonomous government had to figure out how to work with this while still expanding the city. In 1934 a museum was opened up featuring art removed from the Catalonian countryside, particularly from churches and chapels, “and displayed for the first time as fine art” (Casellas 824). This appreciation for Catalan artwork, combined with the finally autonomous government both establish and emphasize the citizens’ roots as not simply Spanish, but distinguished as Catalonian. Two years later the Spanish Civil War struck, and the city was physically quite damaged. As a strong, independent, industrial city, Barcelona resisted Franco’s armies, and it wasn’t until the very end of the war that the city was taken. The Catalan nationalism was also expressed as anti-nationalism towards the Spanish nation-state, causing Franco to work against the independence of Catalonia once he had won the war. Therefore, “as a consequence of the victory of General Franco...Catalan political parties, cultural life, and economic expansion [vanished]” (Casellas 824). The battling political parties working from inside the city augmented this lack of control and independence. The anarchist movement that had started decades previously had grown stronger, and anarchical leaders within the city were at a heads with the communist politicians, both vying for control of the area. In May of 1937 this discordance led to five days of violence within the city, now known as the May Days. During this time anarchist and communist powers fought in the streets, apparently unconcerned about the war raging outside the city limits. This paints a perfect picture of the unique political situation in which Barcelona frequently found itself.

Once Franco had gained control of the entire country, Barcelona continued attempting to gain its own freedom. The industrial workers' discontent with rationing, low wages, and the economic policies in the region, held regular strikes, none of which had much effect (Payne). It wasn't until the 1950s and 60s that the economy of Spain had begun to recover, and this meant that Barcelona could turn back to maintaining its reputation as an independent and thriving city. Through several more redevelopments of the city, the area was shaped and reshaped, with no semblance of order. This carried on through the death of General Franco, and into the 1980s, and the initiation of plans for Barcelona to host the 1992 Olympics. Given this historical and political background, it is no surprise that the city was covered from head to toe in Catalan flags.

It is with these thoughts in mind that one must consider the ways in which modern day Barcelona portrays itself. Throughout the political history of Barcelona the city has had the intention of becoming a heavily trafficked European tourist city. Starting with the 1888 World Exposition the city planners meant to recreate the city in a way that was reminiscent of other globally recognized cities of the time. Instead of embracing its past with the Bourbon King or its strengths as a trade city, parks, fountains, and statues were built. This conveyed nothing of the history of Barcelona or what made the area unique, but instead made the area feel like just another city. Again with the coming of the 1929 World Fair, monuments were made and the city was reformatted, but nothing was done to express the Catalan strength demonstrated in the Tragic Week, and the political turbulence of Spain at the time was hidden. This constant concealment of what was a rich and unique heritage causes an expression of the city that is bland, and whitewashed to match other heavily traveled cities of the world.

This sentiment has continued on in modern day tourism in Barcelona. Today, the most well-known and photographed things are not those that reflect the legacy of the working class people of Barcelona, or the conglomeration of political attitudes that affected the city both positively and negatively. Instead, people come to see shopping malls and fountains. The works of Antoni Gaudí are among the most visited, and while these are authentic Catalonian in nature, they are seen as spectacles, not as a part of the history of the area. The burnt churches, the riots, and the violence that once took place within the city are nowhere to be found, and have been replaced by commercial and industrial centers. This creates the illusion that these things never happened, taking away from the exceptional city that is Barcelona and making it just another tourist destination.

By doing a study of the modern tourism of Barcelona one can see how the city portrays itself to increase its popularity, and what parts of its history it chooses to ignore. In this paper it is made clear that the turbulent political history of the area is something that the citizens would rather forget, and for that reason it is not explained to visitors nor emphasized in any format. It is also demonstrated that it is only when the city was not aiming to promote itself as a tourist location that the citizens were expressing themselves to the world as the strong, independent people that they were. This seems to be because those in charge of promoting the city believe that what people want to see is not the angry, political history of the city, but instead things that are simple and beautiful.

The political atmosphere in Catalonia has always been heated, both because of the mixture of ideals within the city, as well as the desire of the rest of Spain to curb this independent and nationalist movement. The Central government of Spain often worked against Catalonia, unwilling to allow their distinct culture and political diversity to thrive.

The distinct political parties lying within the city itself have further complicated this relationship. This history defines Barcelona's past, yet it is exactly what has been ignored in modern day tourism.

Chapter 1: The Beginning of a Tourism Industry

At the end of the nineteenth century, Barcelona, Spain, was a Mediterranean city trying to push itself into the limelight of popular European cities. Though it was not the capital of Spain, the city was attempting to portray itself as a city with great impact, as well as the capital of Catalonia. Therefore, when the World Exposition of 1888 came around, it was a great excuse for the city to remodel itself and reestablish itself as a capital city as well as a tourist destination. The mayor of Barcelona at the time was the one who birthed the idea of a world fair, and he intended to use it “as a tool for civic boosterism and international promotion for the city” (Casellas 820). Immediately preceding the World Exposition was the Industrial Revolution in Barcelona, which was full of political unrest as well as various plans to reshape the city. Therefore, once the World Exposition came around, the city was ready for a change. Historically, parks were becoming more and more popular as a means of opening up cities, so La Ciutadella, a military fortress in the middle of the city, was torn down in order to be replaced by a public park, called Citadel Park (Casellas 820). This was the first park ever constructed in the city, and for a long time it was the only one. Not only was it filled with gardens, but various monuments were also constructed throughout it, and indeed throughout the entire city, in order to give it the same feel achieved in famous European cities.

Before the remodeling put in place for the 1888 World Exposition, the city was constructed under the Cerdá Plan, named after Ildefons Cerdá, who had ordered the city to include “housing, industry, markets, social centers...” and more, attempting to globalize the city into a more futuristic location (Wynn 187). Cerdá was one of the first to attempt to organize the city in a more globalized fashion, and truly developed a sense of

urban planning, something that had not previously been done in Barcelona. Urban planning had been employed like this in Paris, but on a different scale. Paris was already known as a central European city, one to see and to be seen in, and the amount of monuments constructed throughout it made it ‘the’ place to be. This was what Barcelona aspired to be. Cerdá had no need to destroy any of what was previously built up in Barcelona, but instead worked around it, making “a grid layout of squares that encloses Barcelona’s Old City”, demonstrating clearly the aforementioned idea of ordering the city (Hughes 279). Though Cerdá attempted to reformat the city in a careful and meticulous way, his plans were promptly ignored, and the city was taken over and disordered.

Before the building of Citadel Park, “parks and gardens were encroached upon or disappeared altogether” and areas that were designed to be markets or schools were taken over for housing (Wynn 187). There were plenty of people that opposed the strict formation Cerdá aimed for, stating that the quadratic shaping of the city was dehumanizing. The futuristic look Cerdá was such a fan of seemed to others to be much too robotic, automatic. Those that opposed the plan wanted to live in a city that was full of life, and the boxy formation to them seemed to detract from the humanity of the city (Hughes 279-284). This clash brings to attention what it is that Barcelona is attempting to be with its reformation. Instead of creating a new city all its own, the decision was to simply mimic those cities that were already thriving. The uniformity Cerdá sought was not fully attained, but the city was reshaped in his idealized grid-like formation, and remained this way until the addition of monuments designed for the 1888 World Exposition.

The choosing of location of Citadel Park, and the 1888 World Exposition was

quite intentional. The park had been under construction beginning in the 1870s, but it was the coming of the World Fair that brought a boost to its development (Parc de la Ciutadella). In order to construct this park, they chose to destroy the old Ciutadella military base, and the walls protecting this area from attackers were torn down. The symbolism of placing the park and Exposition here is not hard to spot. The location can be seen as a symbol of power, and instating such a meaningful area with various monuments on top of it allows the location to carry on its own importance. Barcelona was not the only city creating parks at this time, and several European and American cities were imitating New York City's Central Park. Here, again, we can see that Barcelona is not touting what it already has, but instead replicating what has been successful in other, already famous, cities. The park is not simply an area of grass, but contains several monuments within its area. The arsenal, still standing after the destruction of the military area was converted into the Museum of Modern Art and the Catalan Parliament (Montalbán 79). Additionally, the park features "a waterfall, a reproduction of the Montserrat Mountains, artificial lakes, river trips for boats and ducks", as well as various gardens and ornamented statues (Montalbán 80; Casellas 820). The park, meant to open up the city and provide a public space that was rare at the time, was another way for Barcelona to replicate what it believed would make its city more visitor friendly.

One of these said monuments is the statue of Christopher Columbus, built for the 1888 World Exposition, constructed in the exact spot where Columbus landed after his excursion to the New World. Through the construction of this monument it is easy to see how Barcelona was attempting to make a name for itself as an important and current city. By recreating Columbus' actions and presence in the city it not only adds an impressive

monument to the skyline, but also highlights the importance of the city for having hosted such a world famous figure. The statue, designed by Rafael Atché, was designed not only to demonstrate where it was that Columbus landed upon his return to Spain, but is also constructed to highlight Columbus' achievements. The figure is standing tall, holding a piece of parchment in his left hand, and pointing to the New World with his right. The statue, standing tall over the city on a 40-meter pillar, announces the importance of the city, and stands as an important landmark of the city.

Another one of these now famous landmarks is the Arc de Triomf, built in the same era as a way to enhance the city. Also built for the 1888 World Exposition, the Arc stands at the end of a pedestrian boulevard and marks the entrance to Citadel Park. The arc is distinct in its placement within the city. Right by Citadel Park, its red brick sticks out amongst the buildings in the area, and its size and placement allow it to be even more noticeable. Standing over a pedestrian street, it is hard for one to avoid it as one walks to or from Citadel Park. The arc is made out of a bright orange brick that allows it to stand out not simply because of its magnificent size, but also because of the contrast the color creates within its surroundings. The arc is adorned with statues and pillars, accenting its already grandiose figure. The arc is meant to symbolize an entrance to the city as well as an entrance to Citadel Park, and represents the strength of the city. At the top of the arc, placed right in the center, is the Barcelona coat of arms flanked on both sides by lions. The coat of arms is representative of the strength of the city, as well as the fact that Citadel Park was constructed on top of the old Ciutadella military base. Unlike the statue of Columbus, which expressed a uniquely Spanish part of history, the Spanish Arc de Triomf shows again Barcelona's wish to emulate Paris. Like the shaping of the city,

Barcelonans chose to copy from another culture instead of creating something of its own.

Additionally, the Plaça Catalunya was created right in the center of the city. The plaza was another structure brought forth previous to the 1888 World Exposition in order to be an impressive sight for those visiting the area. It was centered in the city in a way that made it accessible for all tourists, as well as a good meeting spot. It stands right at the meeting of the city's biggest and most important streets, including La Rambla, and with its fountain and statues is quite easily identifiable. Additionally, several theaters have been constructed in the area over time, giving the region that cultured importance that Barcelona was constantly attempting to achieve. Several cafés and hotels also stood in the area, again emphasizing the centrality and convenience of the plaza. The plaza was such a success that when the 1929 World Fair came around the area was urbanized and modified, and even included the construction of a metro station. This area seems to be more about the usefulness that it provides both citizens and tourists, and less about its representation of Barcelona.

The park, the statue, and the arc, were three things constructed especially for the purpose of pleasing and impressing the public eye. Before the 1888 World Exposition, there was little to no tourism in Barcelona. And in fact, the whole of Spain was economically stagnant during the first half of the 19th century, and it wasn't until the late 1840s that a gradual growth process was set in motion (Casares 1). The Spanish were caught up in a series of wars from 1793 through the 1820s, which hindered their ability to focus on their progress agriculturally and economically (Casares 23). For all intents and purposes Spain as a whole was trapped in a time warp several decades previous, which made it quite paradoxical that Barcelona was building itself up as a global city. Indeed,

tourism was so uncommon throughout Spain as well as in Barcelona, that there were not even enough hotel rooms for the visitors the city intended to host, so the Gran Hotel Internacional was constructed especially for the event, and “removed soon after [the Exposition] closed” (Smith 16). With the coming of worldwide attention, the creating of monuments was not the only thing that the city did in order to promote itself. Along with creating these distinct landmarks, the city boosted its image “through extensive marketing campaigns that relied heavily on the monumental architecture” previously discussed (Smith 16). Therefore, the city itself was turned into not only a more impressive city, but was also used as a way to advertise itself for the upcoming World Exposition. By not advertising the city for its history and what it previously had, but instead using the monuments made especially for the event, Barcelona was not expressing itself as a Spanish city, if not as simply an “urban landscape” with “new monumental spaces” (Smith 16). The city wasn’t known for its tourist market before 1888, but with the hope of world fame looming it was time for Barcelona to promote itself in hopes of creating a name for the city as not only a tourist hot spot, but also as a capital city.

In addition to the aforementioned monuments being constructed all over the city, the city was embellished in various other ways in order to increase its appeal. Electric lighting was added to Las Ramblas and the Gran Via, two of the main streets in the city. Antoni Gaudi designed lamps in Plaça Reial, and gardens other than Citadel Park were designed all over the city. The event was advertised throughout the continent, and most public areas featured posters boasting the grandeur of the event. The Exposition “opened for thirty-five weeks in 1888” but economically it was not seen as a great success (Casellas 821). The city, already in debt, was put even further under by the amount of

resources it took to fund the event and create all the impressive monuments it praised. All in all, the World Fair was not entirely beneficial for the city or for its citizens. Though it put Barcelona on the map as an important and influential European city, it did so in a way that expressed little of what made Barcelona unique. By making a park in the style of Central Park, a fountain copying the Trevi Fountain, and urban planning to replicate Paris, the city was not shaped in a way that made it unique and Spanish, but simply to be yet another big city.

The city was once again reformatted in 1929, with the coming of yet another World Fair. The city was falling under economic crisis, and the influx of immigrants combined with the lack of money within the city meant that there was severe overcrowding as well as social and political unrest. “Between 1920 and 1930, Barcelona’s population rose to 41 percent of the total population of Catalonia and reached one million inhabitants” (Casellas 823). This growth was heavily influenced because of the announcement of the 1929 World Exposition and the resulting incursion of immigrants seeking work. Through the political unrest taking place in the entire country, the 1929 World Exposition was meant to assure the world that Spain was stable and united. The current military governor, Primo de Rivera, encouraged the event, but was quite forceful about the fact that the World Exposition was meant to demonstrate the unity of all of Spain, and was not meant to advertise Catalonia nor Barcelona specifically. “The 1929 Expo was an attempt to reassure an international audience that Spain was a modern nation suitable for tourist visitation” and to try and erase rumors of political inconsistencies and unrest (Smith 19). Again, the Exposition was advertised throughout Europe, and the fact that the country was at peace was heavily emphasized. This

exposition, like the previous one, was intended to enhance and augment travels to and from Barcelona, and promote the fact that it was a tourist location.

Again, the city needed to be reformatted. Not only to include the tourists sought out by the 1929 World Exposition, but also to accommodate the enormous increase of immigrants in the area. Still intending to be a modernist capital, the city had to reshape and augment itself in a popularized fashion. The country was so intent on advertising itself and the event it even created the Patronato Nacional del Turismo (the National Patronage of Tourism) in 1928, as well as the Society for the Attraction of Foreigners, in order to promote the hopefully world-known event. The Patronato Nacional del Turismo created posters to be put all over the continent, calling Barcelona “The Capital of the Mediterranean” (Smith 19; 38). The Exposition was placed on the Montjuic Hillside, previously just a smattering of shanties. Like Citadel Park, the Montjuic hillside has a military past, and was reformatted specifically for the World Exposition. This emphasized the political aspect of the World Fair, demonstrating the Spanish government’s search for power and establishment over the city by choosing such a provocative piece of land. Also like Barcelona’s first World Exposition in 1888, the second was initiated with the construction of various monuments meant to impress the public. The National Palace was placed as the centerpiece for the entire exposition, and was the central pavilion for the event (Parc de la Ciutadella). With the Magic Fountain in the middle, the pavilion was a sight to be seen, really demonstrating magnificence on the mountainside. The Exposition did not only give cause for the building of such obvious monuments, but also gave way to the Spanish Village, or Poble Espanyol. This village was setup as a typical Spanish village, going against the current Barcelonan trend of

modernism. It consists of various different Spanish styles of housing, and though they could be seen as dated, they were a popular part of the 1929 World Fair. These houses could again be seen as a call to unite all of Spain, and by hearkening towards the past it portrayed to tourists an idea of unification of past and present. Instead of promoting itself for the political strengths and challenges that Catalonia was currently going through that made the area strong, the village was hearkening back to the Spanish colonial era. By doing so, the Central government enhanced the notion that Spain was in fact at peace.

This World Fair contrasts starkly with the first, when Barcelona was allowed to embrace its creativity and modernity as a city exceptional to the rest of Spain, as well as Europe. This time around, the rejuvenation of the city was meant to express the ‘united’ feelings of the whole of Spain. The presence of the 1929 World Exposition affected Barcelona greatly, as well as the country as a whole. The construction alone allowed for a lot of labor, just as the first World Expo had done. It lasted eight months, and though the city’s debt went up yet again, “it had a successful attendance thanks to the fact that it was the first World Fair to take place in Europe after the First World War” (Casellas 823). Again, the World Fair reformatted the city, but in a way that caused it to conform to something else instead of making Barcelona an exceptional tourist destination. This time, however, it was not other big cities that it was conforming to, but instead the rest of Spain.

World Fairs were not the only cause of distinct city reformatting, nor were they ever universal in their attempts to clean up and show off the city. The notorious El Raval district of Barcelona has gone through various attempts to change its poor reputation throughout the ages. The neighborhood, bound by various tourist areas, has been known

since the middle ages as a place rife with poverty and sexuality. The area was hidden by various sets of walls put up around the neighborhood to try and conceal the scandalous happenings on the other side. The tangled mess of narrow streets and broken down hoses that filled the area emphasized the stark contrast between the metropolitan, modernist ideals of the rest of the city and the poverty of El Raval. The area first became overcrowded with the move towards industrialization. With the increasing amount of factories popping up all over the city, and particularly in El Raval, lead to a huge increase of foreign workers infiltrating Barcelona, and most of them ended up living in El Raval both because of the low cost and the fact that it was near where most work was available. By the time the 1888 and 1929 World Expositions came to Barcelona, el Raval had lost most of its industrial ties and was predominantly thought of as the neighborhood of immigrants. By just after the second Exposition it was crowded past the point of comfort.

Because of the diminishing presence of industrialism in the city and the neighborhood, El Raval became even more well known for the beggars and prostitutes that littered the crowded sidewalks, cafes, and restaurants. Despite the presence of the working class, the bad reputation the neighborhood carried attracted runaways, thieves, and the poor; causing even more crowding as well as augmenting the negative image it already held. Though the infamy of the Barrio Chino was only increasing as time went on, towards the middle of the 19th century this fame started attracting authors from all over the world because of its mysterious aura. The distinct presence of brothels in this red light district of the city attracted those that were curious about the sensuality of the area. Artists were and are drawn to the area because of “the Barrio Chino’s international reputation [resting] on the illusion of sensual intensity within a culture governed by

passion” (Resina 97). Indeed, the change from the title El Raval to Barrio Chino occurred “to heighten the air of mystery and romance in the zone” (McDonogh 176). The presence of tourism through the Barrio Chino affected the city not just because of yet another influx of travelers, but because it created so much literary analysis of the city. Suddenly, there was an abundance of writing about the city as seen from the eyes of an outsider. Again, Barcelona was being depicted as something other than its natural Spanish heritage. Whereas the first World Fair expressed Barcelona through monuments specific to other cities, and the second expressed it as a generalized part of Spain, it was now being described by its supposed seedy underbelly. The “Raval became known in Barcelona and throughout Europe as a redlight district” which “attracted writers and reformers to the barrio much more than the working class families and shopkeepers who primarily populated the area” (McDonogh 176). This misrepresentation of the city recalls the previous monumentalization of Barcelona in that Barcelonans were comparing the area to Montmartre in Paris, Whitechapel in London, and even Harlem in New York (McDonogh 176). Somehow the city has yet again been unable to create an image of its own unique city, but is instead described as something imitating other, better known cities of the world.

Throughout the history of the reshaping of Barcelona, El Raval stood in the center of the city, representing poverty, the working class, sexuality, and rebellion. As the city was built up around it, El Raval remained mostly the same. It was shut out by walls, but kept central, emphasized by the construction of Las Ramblas, the main pedestrian walkway in downtown Barcelona. It has at once been a meaningful part of Barcelona as well as “marginal to the city, in the sense of standing outside social, economic, and

political power even to determine its own future” (McDonogh 182). Because of its murky history and constant infamy, it is easy to see how the presence of El Raval or El Barrio Chino had a grand effect on the city of Barcelona. Because of the misrepresentation provided by novelists and adventurers, the city was yet again shaped more by what other cities have done, and not by what is truly present within Barcelona.

There are also many monuments spread throughout the city that were not created for either World Exposition. World famous architect Antoni Gaudi created the yet-to-be finished Sagrada Familia basilica, though he was in fact the second architect on the job, who came aboard about a year after the project was initiated in 1882. Due to the fact that Barcelona was ceaselessly in debt, the cathedral took much longer than planned to be created because the funding was based on primarily public donations. In 1926, when Gaudi passed away, the cathedral was still only about a quarter of the way through its construction (Minder). The building has hundreds of rooms and a multiplicity of spires, extending into the sky in a looming and monumental way. Like the monuments created for the World Expositions, La Sagrada Familia was a creation that called to people across the world as something to come see. Yet again Barcelona was working towards enhancing the overall image it shared with the world in order to increase its fame and the awareness of it as a tourist city.

Antoni Gaudi was a very successful architect of his time, and La Sagrada Familia was not the only structure he created that shocked the world. His Casa Mila, also known as La Pedrera, is still a constantly frequented part of the city. Placed on a street corner, the apartment building looks like honeycomb, a sand castle, or some ocean coral. Gaudi designed the building with religious intonations, including an inscribed rosary prayer and

various statues of the Virgin Mary. Gaudi's creations throughout the city not only caused fame for him, but also for the city as a whole. However, the construction of the building was not appreciated initially. The city reacted negatively to the size of the building, which went beyond building codes, as features of the building were taller than city height standards. At the end of its construction, the various Virgin Marys were excluded, and though Gaudi considered quitting the project once the building was made less religious, in the end he stuck with the project through to the end. It is hard not to see this rigidity of building and creativity as yet another way in which something uniquely Barcelonan could not be expressed. Gaudí being a Catalan man, this was a chance for the city to truly do something entirely individual. However, as previously mentioned, this creativity was frowned upon, and adjusted to fit more within the lines of the norm of society.

Further down the street is yet another Gaudi creation, the Gaudi House, built in 1877, which is now a popular museum for Gaudi creations. The house, called Casa Batlló, is easily distinguishable from the outside just like all other Gaudi creations. The front is coated in mosaic tiles, causing a shimmering light to reflect all up and down the pedestrian walkway. The unique curvature of the roof and outside walls of the building cause those all around to recognize the house as something special, and something that needs to be seen. The marvel does not stop at the façade of the house, the entire interior is designed to impress as well. The walls are tiled much like the insides, and the consistent blue coloring yet again gives the sensation of being underwater. As one explores from one room to another, one notices the circular windows, the sloping walls and ceilings, and sees something truly unique. The aforementioned Gaudí creations demonstrate a unique monumentalization that was not represented in either World Fair. These designs,

made in a modernist fashion by a Catalan man finally express an exceptional side of Barcelona that has not been copied or replicated from another location.

Modern day Barcelona reflects much of the monumentalization inflicted upon it during the various reformations of the city in the passing of time. As previously discussed, few of the attractions constructed for either World Fair, or any time thereafter, were truly made in Barcelonan theme in order to express Barcelonan culture. The area, which in the 19th century was lacking in hotels and tourism hotspots, is now rife with both, old and new, attracting visitors worldwide. To walk down the main pedestrian walkway, Las Ramblas, is to revisit the way it was created centuries ago, when tourism was first being created, and clashing with the dirty world of El Raval next door. To get to Citadel Park one must pass through the Arc de Triomf, now placed on a metro stop, where pedestrians come and go frequently. Once past the Arc, one gravitates towards the center of Citadel Park, which features a fountain and a lake that work as focal points for the park as a whole. The fountain, known as the Cascada, is now ornately adorned with gold statues that attract attention from all over the park, and was loosely based of the Trevi Fountain in Rome. Dragon fountains guard the semi-circular pond, giving the feeling that the fountain is something to be protected. This is emphasized by the impressive number of statues located towards the back of the display. Past the tiers of dragons stands a lush, green hill decorated with rearing winged horses, and cherubs standing under a majestic arch. Neptune stands tall to one side, and people are able to climb all the way up to the top of the arch to get a view from the top of the Cascada. Atop the arch stand four shiny gold horses pulling a carriage. The brilliant effect of the shiny metal standing in the blue sky pulls off an effect of grandeur that was sought after in the

1888 World Exposition and still holds strong today. Though this fountain is quite unique, we see again the pattern of Barcelona imitating popular trends from already well known cities in order to boost its own recognition. Standing directly across from the Cascada is an expansive lake, which, though not as majestic as the fountain, is equally dramatic. Surrounding by greenery, the lake is a popular site for romantic endeavors, and the water is full of wildlife like ducks and fish. The manmade lake is an attraction in itself because of the feeling of nature it brings to the park, which at the time of its construction was unusual within the crowded city. All these monuments, though impressive, could hardly be considered unique, as several of them were modeled after constructions already in existence in global cities that Barcelona wished to emulate.

Barcelona as a city is unique in that it was not a city that expanded naturally, but was instead constantly reformatted to fit the purposes of advertising itself as visit-worthy. The large city was not well known in the 1800s, and because it wanted promote itself as a city worthy of being globally recognized, it was constantly redeveloped to emulate those cities that it wanted to become. By enhancing the looks of the city with the monuments within Citadel Park as well as the park itself, all of Gaudi's work, the Spanish Village, as well as many other monuments, it is easy to see that the city was purposefully being changed and amended to appeal to the masses instead of in a way that reflected the land in which it existed.

Chapter 2: The Representation of Barcelona during Political Unrest

With the end of the 1929 World Fair in Barcelona the country was headed toward tumultuous times. In 1909, well before the second World Fair in Barcelona, the city was struck hard by what is now referred to as “The Tragic Week”. The city, known for its industrialism, was hit when a textile factory in the city was shutdown, which meant the firing of 800 workers. This shut down was followed up by violent riots spread throughout the Barcelona, caused by the renewal of military activity in Morocco (Ullman). Following the Tragic Week was more upheaval, and citizens were choosing sides up until 1931 and the initiation of the Franquist Regime. Though the Regime in general was known as a very stable authoritarian regime, they first had to get through the Civil War, which broke out in 1936 between the Franco Nationalists and the rebels of the Republic. When the Civil War ended in 1939, the Franco Regime had won, and the state was under his control up until 1975. During these years Franco maintained full control over all aspects of political control, and even though he had a cabinet of people of varying political views, he made decision specifically so that every group would continue to work for him (Payne). When Francisco Franco passed away in 1975, the king that he had assigned, Juan Carlos, chose to go against the politics of the Franco Regime and reinstated a democratic government (Share 560). From 1975 on the country had to reestablish itself as a democratic state, recreate its trade systems with other countries, and prove itself as united to the outside world. That’s why, when the Olympics were set to be held in Barcelona in 1982, the Catalonian area felt intense pressure to rebuild itself as a city worth being seen.

The Tragic Week was jam packed with bloody battles between the current Spanish army and the working class people of Barcelona's industrial zones. Following suit, workers from various other cities in the country also revolted, and these riots featured many of the people that would later fight for Anarchy in the area. By 1910 Barcelona had just fewer than 10,000 less inhabitants than Madrid, and as a city with a major seaport it was more in contact with the rest of Europe than the capital city. The economic strength of the city came from not only the port, but also the textile industry, which was predominantly cotton, as well as a limited amount of agriculture in the rural areas. The size of Barcelona and its suburbs meant that streetcars were extremely useful throughout the city as a means of transportation for workers. People from rural areas of Catalonia were increasingly moving to the city, though there was no housing or work for them, in order to escape life in the country (Ullman).

The huge availability of laborers did not mean peace in the factories, and though there were plenty of usable bodies, laborers were expected to work ten hours a day for little money. In 1902 laborers united in what is known as the General Strike, hoping to help themselves and others by demanding that they only be expected to work eight hours a day so that more people could be employed. The strike, which was mostly peaceful and only lasted one workweek, did not result in a change for laborers, but it did symbolize an extreme solidarity between workers throughout the city. Strikes like these were present throughout the decade in Barcelona, augmented by unrest not only within the laborers and their unions, but also within the Catalan government. Liberals, Conservatives, and Idealists were simultaneously vying for control over the area, all seeking different powers for themselves. The idealists, such as the Lliga Regionalista, were seeking independence

for Catalonia from the rest of the country, hoping to make Barcelona its capital city.

Throughout these governmental adjustments and disagreements the laborers stuck together, forming trade unions, which focused on class struggle and avoided any sort of political party affiliations (Ullman).

This all came to a head in 1909, when yet another General Strike was held, which turned into what is now known as the Tragic Week. The strike began on Monday, July 26th, when strike leaders filled the streets at four in the morning, urging workers not to go to work for just one day. The intention was to hold a peaceful strike in order to end the Spanish hostilities in Morocco. Most laborers declined, and various organizers of the strike were arrested. This did not deter them, however, and at the 8 am recess hour more strikers gathered outside the factories, this time convincing many more people to abandon their posts. During the day the strike grew, and by afternoon most shopkeepers and factory owners had closed up, either to protect their property or because they sympathized with the workers. The strike was not held only in the city of Barcelona, but also in the suburbs, the most successful town being Pueblo Nuevo. Though the citizens of various cities in Catalonia had all initiated the strike together, outside of Barcelona there was little success. By the next day, the supposedly peaceful, one day strike was turning into something much larger. Though there was still little support outside of Barcelona, the railways had been destroyed so no help could come in for the government, isolating the city, and the lack of news meant that the strikers inside the city were unaware of how little support they had. As the second day wore on, the strikers turned less and less peaceful, and soon convents, schools, and other appealing or well-known buildings throughout the suburbs were being burned. What had started as a simple strike was now

being referred to as a social revolution, and the streets of Barcelona and its outlying towns were being filled with fistfights and gunfire as the day went on (Ullman).

By Wednesday, the revolution was spreading to other major cities in Catalonia, and both sides were struggling to come up with strong leadership. Not only did the government not have any effective authority, but also national officials were still focusing more on the war in Morocco than in stamping out the revolution in Catalonia. The revolutionaries were also struggling to find a confident leader, mostly due to the fact that the Rebels were trying hard to gain leaderships from various Radical and Nationalist politicians. By that evening, the final round of convent burnings had been concluded in Barcelona, though surrounding cities were still in flames. By this time, more and more of the surrounding areas were taking part in the rebellion, and soon convents and schools were being burned in towns that had up until that point remained untouched (Ullman). The city of Barcelona had been repressed by Thursday afternoon, but the surrounding cities and towns continued in the bloodbath until they were defeated both by news of Barcelona's failure and by the constant influx of government troops. Though this was marked as the end of the rebellion, the fighting was not entirely over in Barcelona. Friday was marked by a smattering of sniper attempts, but mostly filled with silence. Word was that most leaders of the revolution had escaped into France, and daily affairs were being restored in the now mostly quiet Barcelona. By Saturday the city was undergoing full repairs, and the streets were now filled with pedestrians and soldiers, as opposed to the fights that had flooded them for the last few days. The last of the shots rang out on Saturday morning, when no more than 60 rebels attempted to take on a much greater

amount of soldiers, and by Sunday, August 1st not a shot rang out across the city (Ullman).

The Tragic Week, which had turned from a single day of peaceful demonstrations into six days of bloodshed, was finally over. All in all, it had a great effect on the representative government in Barcelona, as well as the educational system and the labor movement. The plethora of political parties living within Catalonia had been constantly butting heads even preceding the Tragic Week, and continued to greatly affect the area through the Spanish Civil War. The inconsistency of controlling powers within the region lead to a constant discontent within one political group or another, and it was because of the decision to go to war with Morocco that led to the occurrences in the Tragic Week. The effects of the fighting were not only reflected in the high death toll, but also in a lack of unity within the region, and a lack of political reforms. It was unsupported by the rest of the country, and the heavy nationalistic tendencies of the rebels led to a negative image for citizens in the rest of Spain. Overall, the battling shed a negative light on the obvious disorganization and discontent in Barcelona, something that would not be amended until well after the end of the Civil War.

It is clear that the people of Barcelona during the time of the Tragic Week were focused solely on their personal and political pride, and had set aside their concerns at making Barcelona a tourist destination of Europe. Though this gave a negative impression to the rest of the world on account of the violence, it was a time for Barcelona to truly express itself as what it represented. The statues and monuments created for the first World Fair represent pieces of other globally known cities, and did nothing to show Barcelona's individuality or strength. Though the occurrences of the Tragic Week were

brutal, they helped demonstrate the power the citizens held, as well as unify workers. It had the opposite effect in terms of tourism, but it was an instance in which the city was shown to the world as what it truly could be.

It was soon after this that plans for the second World Fair in Barcelona were hatched, and with that the city let its political go of its political unrest in order to yet again make a name for itself as a main European city. Outside of the monumentalization of the city previously mentioned, the city did a lot to develop itself as a more functional and modern city. Several plans were made to try and decongest the city, as well as connect it to all other parts of Catalonia, making it into the commercial center of the entire region (Wynn 190). Though these plans were not entirely carried out, the city did reconfigure itself in other ways, “including the implementation of a new ‘Haussmannesque’ boulevard”, in order to “replace medieval zones with more sanitised and navigable spaces” (Smith 18). Haussmann being the main designer of the organization of Paris, it is easy to see, like in 1888 and 1929, how Barcelona attempted to emulate other popular European cities in order to promote itself.

The Spanish Civil War began on July 17, 1936, when a group of right-wing generals staged a coup against the Second Spanish Republic. The rising failed in four of the six major cities—Madrid, Barcelona, Valencia and Bilbao” (Payne 101). In Barcelona, “the revolt never had much chance of success. The organized revolutionary groups were so large compared to the military, and the support of the police so uncertain” that the nationalist rebels could not compete (Payne 101). It is clear that Barcelona was confident in its strength as a leftist society, and the people of this urban, industrial city stood together to keep Franco’s armies out. One of the most notable details of the impact

on Barcelona during the Spanish Civil War was that it carried on with its notions of Catalan nationalism that it promoted well before the coming of the Second Spanish Republic. Therefore, the anti-separatist feeling that was inspired by the uprising was simultaneously anti-Catalan in feeling (Raguer). In fact, “In Spain mobilized nationalism was inverted—expressed through the intense regional nationalism of Catalans...directed against the Spanish nation-state (Payne 66). This distinct separation between Catalonia and the rest of Spain is the same that was reflected in the first World Fair produced by Barcelona in 1888, but instead of it being the government strength in Madrid that attempted to quash this individuality, it was now challenged by a Civil War.

During the Civil War the economy in the entirety of Spain was greatly manipulated by both sides. Because the industrious zones of the country were spread throughout various areas, Franco maintained control of certain aspects of the economy and trade, while the rebels held power over others. The biggest cities of the country, such as Barcelona, were, at the beginning of the war, still maintained control over the industries manufacturing things in these cities. In addition, the rebels were in control of both the olive crops as well as most of the grain being produced. Through control of the crops as well as the cotton textiles and other industries within the city of Barcelona, the region was able to take care of itself and prevent infiltration from the Nationalists.

Barcelona was able to keep itself united and afloat for quite a while in a collectivization of industrial workers as well as peasants not only in the city, but also throughout Catalonia. At the initiation of the military coup in July 1936, several armories in Madrid and Barcelona were robbed, so pedestrians in the cities and outskirts were armed to protect themselves. Though technically Catalonia was still under the power of

the bourgeois government, the true power was held by the collectives and committees of pedestrians throughout the area who were working their hardest to keep the industries and agriculture surviving (Chomsky). Though Barcelona had not fallen to Franco's military powers, there was a social revolution going on within the city, and a strong anarchist movement controlled this revolution. The collectives in the war industry of Catalonia were hugely successful, proving how unified the workers were. The aforementioned collectives turned into workers unions that the anti-Franco, communist government wanted to quash, not allowing them to have any power. In order to take down these collectives, the communist government, along with the National Confederation of Labor (CNT), ensured that the farmers and workers were not provided the materials they needed to grow their harvests or do their work, so the collectives were not able to keep working independently of the state (Chomsky). By the end of 1936, these collectives and the feeling of anarchism had been abolished, and the city government and military had been taken over by the Communist party. This included the reestablishment of a conventional army, as well as an attempt to return to the kinds of economic and social systems that existed before the revolution. This led Barcelona to be considered, from an outside perspective, one of the freest cities from Franco's control, as well as one of the most peaceful and organized.

Though Catalonia was generally free from the Central government, as well as quite distanced from the war, the CNT and Communist parties were very divided as to what to do with the area, and how to control it. The communist control of the city restricted bartering, yet attempted to help the peasants in the region, and also rid the city of the policies it had been using for provisioning (Chomsky). For the most part, the city had lost

the taste for revolution that had been spiked by the military coup, and the city was returning to normal, including its past distinction between rich and poor (Orwell 111). In May of 1937, what little peace that had reigned in Barcelona between the communists and the anarchists came to a head with five days of civil violence now referred to as the May Days. On May 3 of 1937 the Communist party attacked a telephone building currently being controlled by anarchists. The claim was that they were dissatisfied with the anarchists running it, and unsettled by the fact that anarchists were either not dispatching calls or monitoring them and listening in. This battle went on for 5 days, until the anarchists finally conceded to a compromise, which ultimately led to more control for the communist government over the labor organizations in Catalonia. Though the region was seemingly unconcerned with the war raging in the rest of the country, it is clear that the city was affected mostly by the internal war between two opposing sides of the Republican force. Franco himself preferred to avoid large civilian areas such as Barcelona as much as possible, and though as the years went on Barcelona remained under leftist control, Franco chose to limit the number of raids on the city (Payne 220). It wasn't until the beginning of 1939 that Catalonia was finally taken by Franco's troops.

After the Civil War Franco was in control of the country during what is now known as one of "the most stable and 'successful' authoritarian regimes in history" (Share 549). It lasted almost 40 years, and Franco was the sole, controlling power for all but two years of it (Share 550). Before the war Barcelona had been building towards becoming the 'new Paris' of Europe, attempting time and again to attract people to the region of Catalonia, and to express itself as a Catalan state. Unfortunately for Barcelona's tourism industry, "From the very beginning, the political violence that attended the struggle in

Spain attracted widespread publicity and revulsion, not because it was more severe than in other revolutionary civil wars but simply because it was the first to be widely publicized, and took place in a western country at that” (Payne 210). The war had done quite a bit of damage to Spain and its people, not only because of the tens of thousands of gruesome deaths, but also in terms of its reputation throughout the world. This was not yet to be amended, however, because the end of the Spanish Civil War was quickly followed by the outbreak of World War II. Franco, having been supported by both Mussolini and Hitler, was ideologically aligned with the Germans, but hesitant to involve his country in another war. Though Spanish people volunteered and fought for both the Axis powers and the Allies, Spain officially declared itself as neutral. However, Franco was unofficially sided with Hitler throughout the war, and it wasn’t until the end that he granted the Allied powers access to Spanish ports. Franco’s true neutral actions came too late, and Franco was punished with a lack of trust from either the Axis or Allied powers as the war came to a close in 1945.

All in all, World War II had left the world with a bitter taste in its mouth towards Spain as a whole, and the country itself was left to fix itself under Franco’s command. Though Franco was still in command, strikes were a continuous part of the politics of the country, particularly in Catalonia. Through the 1940s and 50s industrial workers in Catalonia were discontented with the economic policy of syndicates the government had instated. It wasn’t just laborers that were unhappy with the living conditions, and, “In Barcelona, discontent with continuation of rationing and low wages first found expression in a boycott of public transport to protest a new fare increase, and then quickly mushroomed into a mass industrial strike...this became the largest single industrial action

in the regime's history" (Payne 415). Though these strikes continued through the end of the 1950s, they had little impact.

Franco had yet to improve the attitudes of the rest of the world towards Spain, and, "in 1964 the regime hired the publicity firm of McCann-Erickson to improve its image in the United States" (Payne 530). It seemed that Franco and Barcelona at least had in common that they intended to sell the area in order to attract others to it. This led to a campaign in the 1960s transmitting the slogan "Spain is different", intended to encourage images of siestas and bullfights in an attempt to draw people in. The economy in Spain had not recovered since the end of WWII, and though Barcelona remained one of the chief industrial centers through the 1970s, there continued to be strikes for the rights of the laborers. Leaders in Barcelona, though appointed by Franco, had leftist leanings, and often sided with and protected their citizens. Prominent liberals were added to the council of the Conde de Barcelona, and activists within the clergy were known to assist industrial workers in their activism. Therefore, when Franco passed away in 1975, Barcelona had already distinguished itself as separate from Franco's Spanish State, and fit right in with the democratic and constitutional monarchy that was subsequently instated.

Because of the tumultuous times spread throughout Spain, the city of Barcelona had worried little about its attempts at becoming a chic European city, and more about its ability to keep itself independent and afloat. However, by the 1960s things had begun to level out, and though Franco was still in control of the state, the city of Barcelona was doing what it could to mend itself. The "Barcelona Council followed a policy of investment in road infrastructure and basic services in collusion with the larger economic concerns" which "came to have a very real effect on the development of the city after

1960” (Wynn 195). This restructuring attempted to both provide the minimum necessities of an urban system as well as encourage a transformation of the city from industrial to metropolitan. Though the city did not have a World Fair as an excuse for its citywide changes, it is easy to see how this restructuring mimicked those of both 1888 and 1929, in its willingness to transform the city in a way that would attract people to it. It is clear that the primary concern of the city starting in the 1930s was politics, with good reason.

Because of this, most the growth of the city from the 50s through the 70s is mostly due to private developments, with no real call for order. The chaos within the government both inside Barcelona and out has led to “piecemeal speculative activities by both private and public entities alike, that have only served to multiply the problems of congestion and lack of satisfactory infrastructure” (Wynn 198). Through this one can see that during the end of the Franco regime the city was attempting to reformat itself and create something attractive, but the chaotic scene the government found itself in prevented any sort of remediation.

Overall, the attempts at gaining tourism to the city of Barcelona were few and far between during these troubled times. This era, however, is when one can see what Barcelona truly stood for. It cannot be properly be represented by statues or fountains, but by the actions of its people. The actions of the proletariat during the Tragic Week were brutal, and certainly not to be encouraged. However, as a part of history, it demonstrates the strength of the Barcelona, and their ability to stand up and unite as a people and do what is right. It is also accurately representative in that it distinguished between the Spanish government, the working class Barcelonans, and the bourgeoisie. All these separations were present throughout the 1888 and 1929 reconstructions of the city, yet

were ignored in order to provide a more universal and easy feel to the city. During the Tragic Week, as well as during the Spanish Civil War, factions of the city stood together and did what they thought was best in order to protect themselves and their lives. This is the kind of strength that was not exemplified through the imitation of various other cities in order to attain world fame. It is seen instead in the city's ability to fight against the army for a full week before falling to them, simply to gain rights for workers. It is seen in Barcelona's ability to fend off Franco's nationalist armies despite the unrest going on within the city itself between the anarchists and socialists. These are the things that have truly created an influential city, and these are the things that have not been monumentalized in the city one sees today.

Chapter 3: Barcelona's Modern Day Self-Representation

Spain spent years attempting to regain a political democracy and equality throughout the country, something that had not existed since the 1930s or earlier. Therefore, when 1986 came around and the country won the bid for the 1992 Olympics to come to Barcelona, the city and the country had an extreme amount to gain from the possible fame. When it was declared that the Olympics would indeed come to Barcelona, it was decided that the city would undergo a transformation unlike anything the region had attempted since the 1929 World Fair. The economy was still recovering from decades of dictatorship, and unemployment was at an all-time high. Barcelona used the coming of the Olympics not only to reconstruct the city to be functional for few weeks during which people would flock to the city, but also to create something new for the future.

Additionally, the Olympics were used as a way to provide work for thousands that had none, almost halving the unemployment rate during the games themselves. These new jobs were created through all sorts of urban transformation, and “the city received substantial financial aid from the central government to prepare the infrastructure needed to host the Olympics in 1992, and realized major expressways, two new communications towers, Olympic stadia, and a comprehensive improvement of the built environment” (McNeill 247). An international survey conducted by the producers of the opening ceremonies showed that “there existed remarkably few image associations (outside of Europe) with Barcelona”, “there was absolutely no recognition of Catalonia outside of Western Europe” and that what people knew internationally about Spain “were largely limited to tourist-oriented stereotypes” (Moragas, Rivenburgh & Garcia 4). Therefore, for Barcelona, the goal of the 1992 Olympics was to present the world with a united,

competent city, devoid of the stereotypes of ‘siestas’ and bull fights that had foreigners assigned to Spain as a whole. Instead, the city presented itself as a productive, composed, and well put-together global city.

The most notable way to see the successes of the urbanization and reformation of the city is through the worldwide press, both written and televised. The press focused on the renovations the city had gone through in order to become the city it was in 1992.

Barcelona had been considered outdated for many years on account of the setbacks it had suffered during the Franco regime and the subsequent economic hardships, and therefore the whole world was waiting to see how the city was able to transform itself for the Games. Various newspapers referred to it as a transformation, metamorphosis, or renaissance, and noted the ways in which the city was catching up to the rest of modern Europe (Guevara, Cóllez & Romaní 5). Several also acknowledged the way the city used the Olympics as a way to revamp the city not just temporarily, but in a way that allowed for the city to keep using those adjustments. There were minor complaints, at the costliness of the city as a whole as well as the pickpocketing, but those were few and far between. The games were a boost for the Barcelonan economy and allowed the city to be “presented as the centre of an important metropolitan area with over 4 million inhabitants and as the capital of one of the most powerful regions in Europe” (Guevara, Cóllez & Romaní 12).

At the beginning of the games, Barcelona and Catalonia were not internationally known outside of the stereotypes of Spain as a whole. Therefore, the challenge was to paint a picture of Barcelona both as the capital of Catalonia as well as a cohesive part of the Spanish state. The city has always lived in a conglomeration of identities, as Spanish,

as Catalanian, and as Barcelonan, and the distinguishing between these three had not always been simple. The Olympic planners therefore intended to portray “a passionate and democratic Spain”, “a politically and culturally distinct Catalonia”, and a “modern, yet historic Barcelona” in order to show just what made the city not at all stereotypically Spanish (Moragas, Rivenburgh & Garcia 5-6). In order to portray Spain as passionate and cultural the city focused on artists that already had international recognition, such as Dalí or Picasso, and their styles were used decoratively throughout the city. This artistic touch added the sort of passion that the planners had been attempting to portray. The Catalanian aspect of the region was reflected with assistance from the citizens of Barcelona. Catalan was made one of the official languages of the Games (along with English, Spanish, and French) and the President of Spain himself spoke both Catalan and Spanish at the Opening Ceremony. But it was the presentation of Catalan flags spread throughout the city that truly encompassed the feeling that Barcelona was something more than just another Spanish city. It was the consensus of journalists and television reporters worldwide that Catalonia was expressed “as a country with its own culture, language, and identity” and though some held fears that this distinct Catalan-ness would lead to political unrest, that the distinction “was a cultural presence, not a political one” (Guevara, Còller & Romaní 7; Moragas, Rivenburgh & Garcia 14). Finally, the Olympic planners hoped to portray Barcelona as modern, and yet historic. This required an emphasis on Barcelona’s past in a way that would not highlight frightening or negative aspects of Spain’s history. Naturally, the history of the World Fairs of 1888 and 1929 were ripe for comment, as they had brought about the same sort of economic construction that the Olympics were doing. This current rebuilding of the city described in combination with its past

reconstructions allowed “that Barcelona be perceived as a thriving, cosmopolitan city ready for the next century, but also a city built upon centuries of colorful history” (Moragas , Rivenburgh & Garcia 6). This created the modern and cultured feel that the Olympic planners had been attempting.

By the end of the 1992 Olympics in Barcelona, the city had created a reputation for itself that far surpassed the previous conceptions the world had had about the region. Since the end of the Franco regime, the entire country had struggled to find a way out of the reputation and economic downturn it had been left in. The Olympics, just as the World Fairs of 1888 and 1929, were a reason for Barcelona to be reconstructed in order to show the world what it was capable of. This recreation of the city was not meant simply for the sake of the citizens, but mostly in order to portray the area a certain way to those watching from abroad. All in all, the Olympics allowed Barcelona to better itself in terms of economic success, as well as in its worldwide popularity, effectively wiping away the negative stereotypes it carried over from years of dictatorship.

After the 1992 Olympics had ended, the city wished to ensure that people still viewed Barcelona as one of the top European destinations. The economy saw a huge boost in the economy because of the jobs created by the Olympics, in terms of the unemployment rate as well as an increase in the housing market and the construction industry. This positive trending continued in subsequent years, with the exception of 1993, despite the recession the rest of Western Europe had been suffering through. Though the city found itself in public debt immediately after the Olympics, every year since 1993 “has seen new growth records on all indicators: employment, investment, income, attractiveness” and more (Brunet 8). The city managed not only to improve itself for the Games, but also to take

this upward turn and run with it. As a response to the Olympic games, “between 1986 and 2000, Barcelona’s hotel capacity increased threefold” and “the number of visitors from abroad visiting the city doubled, reaching a total of 3.5 million visitors per year” (Brunet 9). Not only were there more international visitors to the city, but also European businesses established themselves much more readily in the area, and between 1992 and 2002 six new shopping centers opened up on ex-industrial land in Barcelona (McNeill 247). This demonstrates the dramatic turn of the city from a working, industrial area, to one for commercialism, tourism, and business. Before the Olympics, in 1990 Barcelona was ranked as the 11th best European city in which to place a business. Just after the Olympics, in 1993, it was 10th, and by 2001 it had jumped to the 6th position. This onset of businesses and shopping districts encouraged large, brand name, multinational retail chains to penetrate the area, again encouraging visitors from abroad.

Barcelona has developed a tradition of using world events as a manner of attracting visitors to the area, and the Olympics was not the end of this. In 2004, Barcelona held the Universal Forum of Cultures. The 141-day event had support from various countries across the globe, and its main goals were to promote peace, human rights, sustainable development, and respect for diversity. The Forum is an acknowledgement of the globalization that the world has undertaken, and a search for open communication between countries to move forward peacefully. What is distinctly different about this world event as opposed to the others that Barcelona has held in the past is that it is much less about the city of Barcelona, and truly about world union. In order to create this event, the Spanish Government, the Catalan Autonomous Government, and the Barcelona City Council all had to get together and agree on the program and proceedings of the Forum.

This cooperation is one that has traditionally been difficult over the history of the area, and for them to all unite to accomplish this speaks to the nature of the event.

Given the importance that the people of Barcelona have always placed on the reputation of Barcelona, it is easy to see how the success of the tourism industry has greatly affected the city. With a simple Google search, one comes up with hundreds of available walking, biking, or driving tours of the city, guidelines for the city, the most visited tourist locations, as well as several websites designed to help a visitor figure out where to go at what time, and why. The Barcelona Tourism Office (Turisme Barcelona) has its own official website, with available tickets to the biggest attractions, maps, shopping, and guides on what to do, as well as where to sleep, where to eat, and more. One not even need show up in Barcelona without knowing exactly where everything is and how they will go about their everyday business. The website leaves nothing up to the tourist, and truly tells one what to see and feel in a specific period of time. One can choose a pre-made itinerary based on how many days they plan on spending in the city so that one can “enjoy the city to the full”. These itineraries highlight those things that Barcelona has been espousing for itself since before the Olympics, such as its modernism. In addition to pre-made itineraries for tourists, the website provides ‘themed’ routes of the city one can follow in order to see a certain aspect of Barcelona. These choices range from the “Roman Route” to the “Modernista” or “Contemporary” routes, as well as routes that follow various famous Barcelonan artists, or the parks of the area. All in all, this website does exactly what the city itself has been attempting since well before the existence of the Internet.

All these guides, tours, itineraries and more have come to good use, it seems, as the tourism industry in Barcelona has continued to soar, even twenty years after the catalytic Olympics. As of 2010, 7.3 million people visited the city of Barcelona in that year, with more than 14 million hotel rooms booked. This was a record year for Barcelona, and tourism industries such as Turisme Barcelona projected even higher numbers for the future (Coll). Not only were numbers up in terms of tourist visits, but also in terms of business meetings and conferences held in the area. For increases in both these areas to be occurring while the world was simultaneously suffering an economic crisis demonstrates what strength Barcelona has in its ability to promote itself as a major global city.

The city has clearly already made a name for itself as a place to see and be seen, but that has not stopped city organizers from continuing to hold major world events, just like those World Fairs that first attempted to boost Barcelona's economy. Barcelona now holds an annual 'Tourism Show' called the Catalonia International Tourism Show, in which countries and businesses from around the world come to advertise the best that they have to offer. The main draw is to other tourism agencies from around the world, which all come and set up booths advertising the best of the best from their region. The fair boasts sport tourism, wine tourism, environmentally friendly tourism, technology related-tourism, as well as area-related tourism such as the Mediterranean, camping, cruises, and more. Additionally, there is a section just for travel agencies so people are able to not only see different areas available, but also itineraries and special packages provided through various travel agencies. The fair also covers specific areas such as the 'Pink Corner', which is specific to LGBT travels, and an area titled 'Gateway to the

Desert’ which showcases different countries and their desert attractions. This fair encourages general tourism of the world as well as tourism to Spain, and particularly, Barcelona. This annual fair recalls the World Fairs that Barcelona boasted at the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th centuries. Though they are no longer redesigning or reformatting the city, they are essentially putting the country on a highlight reel, encouraging visitors to see all of what Barcelona has to offer. Though Barcelona is one of the number one visited cities in the world, its global status is something that is constantly seeking improvement.

Without having to enter the country, one can find out exactly what the tourism industry of Barcelona thinks you should see. The website gives the traveler so many options that it makes it feel as though one is choosing for themselves, yet without ever entering the city it is clear that one can make up their minds about the city as a whole. What the website, as well as other forms of advertisement of the city, seems to lack, is advertisement of everything that makes the city what it is. In a minute and a half long video sponsored by Turisme Barcelona, the city is described (in order) as: home of Gaudí, cosmopolitan, Mediterranean, business center, millennial, cultural, professional, tasty, walk-able, friendly, modernist, a lifestyle, congresses, dynamic, stylish, and sparkling. The city is being sold not as the political, controversial, beautiful place that it is, if not as something modern and shiny, that ignores its own past. Descriptions like “a lifestyle” “sparkling” and “tasty” don’t tout anything about the true value of the city, if not the fact that it is a location to be seen. In the 19th and 20th centuries the city was attempting to make itself another version of Paris, and now that it has succeeded in terms of visitors, it is still being made out to be less than it is for the sake of getting people to it.

The website has access to the “History of Barcelona” which covers in four paragraphs the various hardships and successes the city suffered through since the first century BC. It mentions modernism, and the works of Gaudí, yet skims over the Civil War as though it had little effect on the city. Indeed, this description of the history of Barcelona does not truly focus on the history, but promotes the city simply as a pretty place to visit.

It is easy to see that all these mediums of advertisement demonstrate the Barcelona that they wish the world to see, all the while essentially ignoring its political and turbulent past that makes the city what it truly is. A group of artists native to Barcelona have perceived just that, and attempted to bring back the history of the city. Their idea is to “[organize] interventions in public spaces drawing on the practises and language of tourism” (Obrador & Carter 525). Of the interventions they’ve held, starting in 2001, the most prominently known took place in 2005 and was titled the “Route of Anarchism”. This intervention mimicked the themed routes provided to tourists by the Turisme Barcelona, but instead of leading one through a trip of the beautiful and artistic, one is able to see the city from the point of view of the anarchist movement. Whereas websites like the one sponsored by the Barcelona Tourism Office, advertise the city as “stylish” and “modernist” Tactical Tourism attempts to show the city’s strengths not through its beauty, but through its power. “Tactical Tourism appropriates the language and practices of tourism for politically progressive ends, as a culture resource for dissent and emancipation” (Obrador & Carter 527). This group of people sees the city for much more than the shops and monuments that have been created around it, and attempts to show those that don’t know it the real side of the city. One visitor to Barcelona took both the ‘Route of Anarchism’ tour as well as an ‘urban regeneration’ tour the day previous. In

both tours he was shown a convent and church that had been burned during the previously mentioned Tragic Week. While those leading the “Tactical Tour” made sure to mention its turbulent past as well as explain the Tragic Week to the group, the other tour indicated nothing of the sort. The tour also led to old jails, schools, and headquarters for various anarchist movements, none of which “had any visible reminders of their anarchist past” (Obrador & Carter 526). It is to be expected that physical signs of damage have been covered up since the Tragic Week and the Civil War, but the fact is that the history has been covered up as well. Besides these Tactical Tours there are few opportunities to learn about the wretched, emotional, and powerful past of the people of Barcelona, and without previous knowledge of the past one could spend days in the city without learning a thing.

Through a study done based on the number of photographs taken at various tourist hotspots in Barcelona, one can see where the most popular locations to visit are. The most photographed area in all of Barcelona is the aforementioned Plaça Catalunya. With its presence right in the center of the city, along with the affluence of shopping centers, hotels, and restaurants in the area, it is easy to see why this region would be so heavily trafficked. Add this to the multiplicity of public transportation options available from the plaza, and it is easy to see how this has become the most photographed area by tourists. One has to wonder if this popularity comes from the beauty of the site, or if it is merely a convenient and heavily frequented location. The plaza is connected to one of the biggest and most popular streets of the city, Las Ramblas. This street, too, is rife with historical context, but is better known today for its fast food restaurants, street performers, and the plethora of pickpockets in the area. Overall, the top 30 most photographed locations are

not mainly the monuments created to impress the world, nor are they historically significant in their creation. They predominantly include hospitals, hotels, plazas, and streets, as well as museums and the aquarium. In the end, they are not locations that speak either to Barcelona's past of attempting to make itself a tourist city, nor to the politically charged history that showed the world what its citizens were capable of. These locations are what represent the city as a fun, easy, playful, and simple place to visit.

The distorted self-representation that the Barcelona Tourism office presents to visitors to the area speaks to the idea that Barcelona does not want the city to be known for most of the things that make it so unique. Representing itself through statues and parks that were replicated from other areas of the world is the easy way out. The city was constructed in a way that reflected nothing about Catalonia or its people, but instead just the things that they could make. Large shopping malls and convenient plazas are what make the city so popular. Few who travel to the city understand its roots, or see anything that could represent or explain to them the turbulent past the area has suffered through. What truly makes Barcelona unique is its Catalan roots, its history of being a city full of industrial workers who stuck up for each other through the most violent of times, its ability to keep Franco's armies at bay until the very end, and its constant mix of various political parties and powers. Yet none of this is reflected or represented in the guided tours, in the statues, nor the websites travelers depend on to learn about the city.

Modern day tourism in Barcelona has become something known worldwide, and the number of foreign visitors to the city is increasing steadily with each year. The city is represented by shopping districts, monuments, and by its huge number of visitors. It expresses itself as cosmopolitan, professional, cultural, and more, as seen from the

Turisme Barcelona website. However, none of these descriptions, nor the available resources of the Turisme Barcelona website depict the violent, honest history of Barcelona. This lack of knowledge is represented in tourism today, as it is rarely mentioned in tours other than Tactical Tourism. The existence alone of a company such as that one demonstrates the reality of Barcelona's lack of true cultural expression. Common advertisements of the tourism of Barcelona hold a distance between the viewer and what is being viewed, which simply emphasizes the lack of knowledge portrayed in Barcelona tourist attractions.

Conclusion: A History of Misguided Self-Representation

Modern day Barcelona continues to emanate the same sort of tourism attitude it carried in the 1800s. Its attempts to become a European hot spot have finally been realized, and with centuries of hard work the city has put itself on the map. Starting with the World Fair in 1888, it is easy to see how the city was purposefully planned as a place to see and be seen. From the end of the 19th century monuments were being constructed in order to embody the same big-city European feel one got from places like London or Paris. Though the Franco years negatively affected the reputation of the state, the economy, and tourism in the country, Barcelona was able to maintain its individuality, giving it that same unique quality it didn't quite express through its attempts at creating tourism. Though it took a while for the city to rebuild itself after the Franco Regime, by 1986 the city had gotten the bid for the 1992 Olympics, and it was ready to present itself to the world. By completely restructuring the city in order to make it more manageable, the Olympic planners not only found a way to impress the world, but also made it so that these changes would positively affect the city in the years to come.

The modifications made to the city starting at the end of the 1800s were at times practical, and at times used simply for the purpose of visually transforming the city. The monumentalization that the city underwent for the 1888 and 1929 World Expositions did not express anything Barcelonan or Catalan in nature, but instead imitated statues and monuments previously built in other parts of the world. Instead of creating memorials of things that they had accomplished, the city planners chose to create a city that was compiled with what made other cities special. By doing so, the city was made in a way that ignored the individuality of the people of Barcelona.

Much of what makes the city of Barcelona great has to do with its constant thirst for independence. It was, and still is, a city in which people of all different types could express themselves. At times this led to conflict, as seen in the Tragic Week and the May Days. However, it is also what kept General Franco and his armies at bay for so long during the Spanish Civil War. And yet, there are no monuments, statues, fountains, or plazas created to demonstrate the strength that the city showed in these times of trouble. The buildings that were burned in the Tragic Week have been mended or torn down, with no existing sign of what once was. This ignoring of what had existed recalls the upsetting pattern of “desmemoria” sweeping the Spanish nation in terms of the Spanish Civil War. The culture of forgetting is something that many people who had to survive through the civil war have subscribed to, and it is very similar to what Barcelona is doing to itself. For many people who survived the war, it is easier to forget that such tragedies never happened instead of attempting to accept them. This culture of forgetting has negatively affect the descendants of those who lived through the war, as they have no clue as to what happened, but can still sense the pain. This sort of forgetting is clearly demonstrated in the tourism industry of Barcelona. Instead of embracing the turbulent past of the city that made it so unique, the city has become whitewashed by shopping centers and themed tours. The city’s rich heritage has been covered up for the sake of global tourism.

Events like the 1888 and 1929 World Expositions, the Olympics, and the 2004 Forum were used as ways to draw people into the city of Barcelona. They were not, however, conducive to providing the world with an insight into the heritage or formation of Barcelona. The monuments created for the World Fairs were for visitors alone, built to be impressive and to remind viewers of other global cities, but not meant to convey any

sort of message, or to reflect Catalan sentiment. The Olympics certainly expressed Catalan nationalism, and was a chance for the rest of the world to understand the independence the region thrived for. However, the fame that the Olympics brought to the region was not used in order to continue constructing the city reflecting its heritage, but was instead used to bring shopping malls and international businesses. Modern day tourists are not being told about the Tragic Week, the political unrest, or the Spanish Civil War, instead they are exploring different plazas and parks throughout the city. The city is so heavily filled with tourists that one is as likely to hear English, French, German, or various other languages as Catalan or Spanish. And yet none of these people are seeing or understanding the intense heritage the city is hiding.

Works Cited

- Brunet, Ferran. "The Economic Impact of the Barcelona Olympic Games, 1986-2004." *Barcelona: The Legacy of the Games, 1992-2002*. Barcelona: Centre D'Estudis Olímpics UAB, 2005. Web. 19 Apr. 2012.
- Casares, Gabriel T. *The Development of Modern Spain: An Economic History of the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 2000. Print.
- Casellas, Antònia. "Barcelona's Urban Landscape: The Historical Making of a Tourist Product." *Journal of Urban History* 35 (2009): 815-32. Sage Publications. Web. 19 Apr. 2012.
- Chomsky, Noam, and James Peck. *The Chomsky Reader*. New York: Pantheon, 1987. Print.
- Coll, Gaspar P. "2011 Tourist Perspectives for Catalonia and Barcelona Are "exceptional" and Records Could Be Broken | Catalan News Agency." *Homepage*. Catalan News Agency, 09 Apr. 2011. Web. 19 Apr. 2012.
- Hughes, Robert. *Barcelona*. New York: Knopf, 1992. Print.
- Ladrón De Guevara, Muriel, Xavier Còller, and Daniel Romani. "The Image of Barcelona '92 in the International Press." Barcelona: Centre D'Estudis Olímpics UAB, 1995. *Olympicstudies.uab*. 1995. Web. 19 Apr. 2012.
- McDonogh, Gary W. "The Geography of Evi: Barcelona's Barrio Chino." *Anthropological Quarterly* 60.4 (1987): 174-84. JSTOR. Web. 19 Apr. 2012.
- McNeill, Donald. "Barcelona: Urban Identity 1992-2002." *Arizona Journal of Hispanic Cultural Studies* 6.1 (2002): 245-61. JSTOR. Web. 10 Apr. 2012.

- Minder, Raphael. "Polishing Gaudi's Unfinished Jewel." *Nytimes.com*. The New York Times, 3 Nov. 2010. Web. 19 Apr. 2012.
- Montalbán, Manuel V. *Barcelonas*. London: Verso, 1992. Print.
- Obrador, Pau, and Sean Carter. "Art, Politics, Memory: Tactical Tourism and the Route of Anarchism in Barcelona." *Cultural Geographies* 17.4 (2010): 525-31. Print.
- Orwell, George. *Homage to Catalonia*. New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1952. Print.
- "Parc De La Ciutadella." *Aviewoncities.com*. A View on Cities, 2012. Web. 19 Apr. 2012.
- Payne, Stanley G. *The Franco Regime: 1936-1975*. Madison, WI: Univ. of Wisconsin Pr., 1987. Print.
- Raguer, Hilary. *Gunpowder and Incense: The Catholic Church and the Spanish Civil War*. London [u.a.: Routledge, 2007. Print.
- Resina, Joan R. *Barcelona's Vocation of Modernity: Rise and Decline of an Urban Image*. Stanford, CA: Stanford UP, 2008. Print.
- Rivenburgh, Nancy, and Núria Garcia. "Television and the Construction of Identity: Barcelona, Olympic Host." *The Keys of Success: The Social, Sporting, Economic and Communications Impact of Barcelona'92*. By Miquel De Moragas. Barcelona: Servei De Publicacions De La UAB, 1995. 76-106. Print.
- Share, Donald. "The Franquist Regime and the Dilemma of Succession." *The Review of Politics* 48.04 (1986): 549-75. *JSTOR*. Web. 19 Apr. 2012.
- Smith, Andrew. "Monumentality in 'Capital' Cities and Its Implications for Tourism Marketing." *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing* 22.3 (2007): 79-93. *Wmin.ac.uk*. Westminster Research, 2007. Web. 19 Apr. 2012.

- "Tourists Behavior Patterns in Barcelona." *The data republic.com*. Tourists Behavior Patterns in Barcelona, 2011. Web. 19 Apr. 2012.
- "Turisme De Barcelona 2012." *Barcelonaturisme.com*. Barcelona Tourism Office, 2012. Web. 19 Apr. 2012.
- "TURISME-SITC 2012 - Fira De Barcelona." *Saloturisme.com*. Saló Internacional Del Turisme, 2012. Web. 19 Apr. 2012.
- Ullman, Joan C. *The Tragic Week: A Study of Anti-clericalism in Spain, 1875-1912*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1968. Print.
- "Universal Forum of Cultures." *Barcelona2004.org*. Fórum Universal De Las Culturas, 2004. Web. 19 Apr. 2012.
- Wynn, Martin. "Barcelona: Planning and Change 1854-1977." *The Town Planning Review* 50.2 (1979): 185-203. *JSTOR*. Web. 08 Dec. 2011.