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RESEARCH ARTICLES

Insular Contemporary Poetry in Dialogue: Glocal Alliances Against Mass Tourism

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This paper establishes a transnational dialogue between different island spaces impacted by mass tourism and highlights poetry's contribution to the political reconfigurations of the Balearic and Caribbean islands. Notwithstanding these island spaces' different historical circumstances, it acknowledges that the tourist industry illustrates crucial historical continuities in each archipelago. The poetics analysed question the pro-growth ideology of the industry, the subservient role of their islands' political classes that disregard human well-being and environmental sustainability, and put the islands' survival at risk. This study identifies resemblances in Caribbean and Balearic island spaces' poetic responses to tourism and recognises local emancipatory alliances that not only bring to the surface shared forms of oppression, but also propose alternatives beyond the (hotel) chains of global capitalism.

Introduction

Culture is a privileged site to find alternative futures in the era of global capitalism. The different art forms are spaces that allow "for the articulation of the reproduction of capitalist social relationships and antagonism towards them" (Santos et al., 2007, p. xxv). Poetry, in particular, as a literary genre whose practitioners are far from seeking economic gain, is one of the most apt forms to contribute to investigating and questioning the tourist industry, one of the largest capitalist industries. The poet is understood as a key cultural worker with a sensibility that allows them to uncover what is not seen and decipher what lies behind official narratives. George Lamming describes the task of the poet as key in political reconfigurations. He argues that for political leaders it is essential to include different sensibilities and find "collaborative support from other modes of thought and perception, from the historian, the poet, the student of philosophy and the social sciences, the economist and the theatre director who recreates the cultural history of the nation" (2004, pp. 15–26).

Following Derek Walcott's assertion that "poetry is an island that breaks away from the main" (1998, p. 70), this paper shows how poetry advances alternatives for the industry to become an "instrument of post-capitalist politics" (Fletcher, 2019, p. 532). The focus is on poetry that denounces and advances alternatives to resist the liberal capitalist onslaught of the tourist industry in Saint Lucia and the British Virgin Islands in the Caribbean

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archipelago, and Mallorca in the Balearic archipelago. Both archipelagos are impacted by the alienating, assimilative, and extractive industry of tourism, namely a type of large-scale mass tourism led by the "capitalist elites of the world-system" (Grosfoguel, 2016, p. 3). In the face of the current neoliberal globalization, the Caribbean and Mallorcan poetics explored here do not only unearth silences and historical continuities, but propose alternative forms of development.

Literatures produced in island spaces have been mostly compiled (see Laughlin, 2018) or analysed in comparative terms (see DeLoughrey, 2012) when these shared a colonial history. This article, instead, compares literatures from island spaces that do not have a colonial past in common nor are they written in the same language, as it analyses Caribbean poetry written in English and Mallorcan poetry written in Catalan. It must be noted that the term "Balearic literature" is not favoured in this article because it has been used to segregate the Catalan cultural and linguistic community (Picornell, 2014) and to stress the island's peripheral role within Catalan literature (Picornell, 2010; Pons, 2010). Given that the tourist industry has long been established in the aforementioned island spaces, the revision of tourist discourses in Caribbean and Mallorcan literature is by no means a new preoccupation among their writers. Notedly, in the case of the Anglophone Caribbean, Jamaica Kincaid's *A Small Place* (1988) and Derek Walcott's *Omeros* (1990) represented and problematised the tourist industry and highlighted its connection to colonialism. Mallorcan literature similarly found in Antònia Vicens' novel *39° a l'ombra* (1967) and Guillem Frontera's *Els carnissers* (1968) two of the earliest and most acclaimed examples of fiction that explore the social and cultural impact of the tourist boom on the island in the midst of a Fascist regime. Building on the work of their literary predecessors, 21st century poets Richard Georges from the British Virgin Islands, Kendel Hippolyte from Saint Lucia, and Josep Lluís Aguiló and Antonina Canyelles from Mallorca are the focus of this paper. Not only can these poets' poetics be said to participate in the task of "eroding tourism" (Fletcher et al., 2023), but, as will be argued, hotel chains connect the two archipelagos in seemingly contradictory, but potentially empowering ways.

Caribbean and Mallorcan island writers have long contested colonial narratives, travel writing, and tourist industry depictions of island spaces as remote, isolated, peripheral to modernity, and static paradisal backdrops for tourists. Against the still pervading colonial representations, this article highlights the importance of island spaces playing a central role as sites of innovative conceptualisation (Baldacchino, 2006, p. 10). The alternatives proposed in the poetics included uncover how resistance and exchange have been and continue to be key to their realities and their survival. Exchanges prove necessary even in a more global sense, that is, "for humanity as a global archipelago" (Sheller, 2020, p. 153) and to allow humans to move across archipelagos "in ways that will reconnect humans with each other, with the

world around us, and with our immanent human-nature connection" (Sheller, 2020, p. 151). Thus, exchanges are vital to undo globalised colonial modes of inhabiting the world.

This article makes use of an array of methodologies including Decolonial Theory, Postcolonial Theory, Tourism Studies and Island Studies in its exploration of issues of belonging, mobility justice, the neo-plantation nature of tourism, capitalisms' pro-growth ideology, islands myths, emancipatory glocal alliances, and postcapitalism tourism. Apart from its interdisciplinary nature, the analysis of the poetic texts privileges Caribbean and Mallorcan scholars such as Aaron Kamugisha, Kamau Brathwaite, Angeline Nixon, Mercè Picornell, Sebastià Perelló and Macià Blázquez. This article is divided into four sections. The first section describes the parallelisms and the differences of the island spaces analysed and argues for the non-flattening of their different cosmopolitanisms so as not to risk recreating imperialist practices. The second section, "Balearic and Caribbean tourism (hi)stories," traces the birth and evolution of the tourist industries in the two archipelagos and argues for the potential of poetry to forge alliances. The third section, "Inhospitable Monsters," highlights the feelings of alienation and immobilisation in Mallorcan poetry as a result of tourism. In particular, the poetry of Josep Lluís Aguiló and Antonina Canyelles denounces the industry's destructive policy of continuous growth that disregards human well-being and environmental sustainability, and the islands' servile political classes. Focusing on Caribbean poetry, the fourth section, "The Return of Inhospitable Monsters," establishes parallelisms with the majority of issues found in Mallorcan poetry. In addition, it argues that the poetry of Richard Georges and Kendel Hippolyte stresses the neo-colonial nature of the tourist industry in the region. The fifth and final section, "Alliances against and alternatives to (hotel) chains," argues for the necessary forging of glocal alliances in order to find alternatives to tourism and alternative tourisms.

Island spaces' hybridity: creolization and fragmentary reterritorialization

This study does not elude the potential pitfalls of establishing a dialogue between poetry produced in an archipelago belonging to the Global South (Caribbean) and one in the Global North (Balearic Islands). The comparativist practice here developed does not neglect, disregard, nor flatten each archipelago's different geopolitical and historical contexts, as I agree with Picornell that such a practice would only reproduce neo-imperialist cartographies (2019, p. 76). Bearing this in mind, Caribbean and Balearic islands' cosmopolitanisms are first highlighted as setting the two archipelagos simultaneously together and apart.

Caribbean island spaces have been from their inception defined in terms of diversity and hybridity. Due to centuries of transoceanic diaspora and settlement, the islands have become "vital and dynamic loci of cultural and material exchange" (DeLoughrey, 2012, p. 802). Shalini Puri contends that discourses of hybridity have been central to Caribbean's political culture and unparalleled to any other region of the world because of "the sheer number and

nuance of the Caribbean's account of hybridity, its diverse sources, modalities, and consequences" (2004, p. 2). In this light, Edouard Glissant describes each Caribbean island as embodying openness (1981/1989), and US-based Jamaican writer Marlon James reclaims islands' largeness as he recognises that "we have to return to our small islands, if only to remember how to live large" (2018, p. 19). The term creolization has been used in the Anglophone Caribbean to theorise the particular cultural mixing developed. The discussion over the term creolization, as a theory of cultural mixing, was initiated by Kamau Brathwaite in *The Development of Creole Society in Jamaica, 1770-1820* (1971), in which it was defined as "a cultural process that took place within a creole society – that is, within a tropical colonial plantation polity based on slavery" (p. 306). It is important to acknowledge that the definition is grounded on the region's social and historical circumstances. Namely, as Sheller explains, creolization "is not simply about moving and mixing elements, but more precisely about processes of cultural 'regrounding' following experiences of violent uprooting (...) and deeply embedded in situations of coerced transport, racial terror, and subaltern survival" (2003, p. 189). In addition, the cultural mixing developed after the forced movement of African peoples was subsequently extended – to a lesser or greater extent depending on the island – with the arrival of indentured East Indians and Chinese workers, the settlement of Arab, Jewish, Syrian and Irish immigrants (among others) as well as interisland migration.

Mediterranean island spaces have also had hybridity as a crucial defining trait. Pèrpoco argues that Mediterranean islands have played a "strategic role as cradles of [an] early form of cosmopolitanism" (2011, p. 72). Cassano describes an intertwined Mediterranean in which languages, histories, and genetic patrimonies mixed, where "'we' is a 'we' full of others, where the dream of every purity and ethnic cleansing is a criminal delirium that, as we have already seen, leads to a spiral of slaughter" (2012, p. xxix). As can be inferred from Cassano's words, unlike in the Caribbean, Mediterranean discourses of hybridity were neither incorporated as enabling the nation nor entailed a bonding force among its citizens. Focusing on Mallorca, in an effort to reclaim cosmopolitanism as foundational in the history of the island, Trobat describes –in a volume that brings together his opinion columns published in the major Balearic Islands' newspaper in Catalan, *Ara Balears* – a mongrel Mallorca ("*Mallorca mestissa*") that developed a creole identity ("*identitat criolla*") in the late Medieval era, in which 25% of the population were enslaved Muslims from different parts of Africa, the Near East, other Mediterranean islands such as Sardinia and even Central Asia (Trobat, 2018, p. 117).

Trobat's creole identity *avant la lettre* greatly differs from that originated in the Caribbean both in terms of labour organization and the extent to which enslavement was experienced. The historical and social experiences of Mallorca are only partly defined in terms of conflict, trauma, and the violence of uprooting because slavery was not introduced on an "industrial scale" (Beckles, 2013, p. 1) or essential for the system (2005, p. 40). In contrast, the complex

reality of Mallorca in the 14th and 15th centuries included enslaved individuals in the hands of large landowners alongside small landowners and recompensed labourers (Jover Avellà et al., 2006). In addition, due to the substantial time difference, it is only in the Caribbean that slavery continues to be a "lived experience despite over a century of emancipation" (Beckles, 2013, p. 2). In fact, as Deloughrey notes, the discourse of creolization "does not 'travel' evenly across all island spaces nor does it represent all island histories" (2012, p. 822). Therefore, although the use of the concept seeks to valorise Mallorca's mixed origins and uncover a legacy of slavery, referring to an island that has not gone through the brutal legacy of centuries of colonialism and transatlantic slavery as creole might be problematic and could be interpreted as downplaying or appropriating a key concept in the history of the Caribbean.

At the same time, it is crucial to acknowledge that in the 1990s the term extended its meaning to incorporate the current worldwide diasporic movements. Hence, as a theory of cultural mixing, the concept has been credited for seeking not only to valorise the legitimacy of creole culture, but also to refer to a harmonious "utopian model for future societies" (DeLoughrey, 2012, p. 824). In fact, Trobat describes contemporary Mallorca as responding to a "creole mixing" similar to that of the pre-capitalist post-feudal era (2018, p. 117). This assertion responds to the current make-up of the island, which includes two types of recent newcomers who started arriving on the island in the 1990s from northern European countries and Global South countries. The former are non-working residents, "retired Europeans with high purchasing power who live in Mallorca permanently or for long periods" (Picornell, 2014, p. 228) contributing to the island's gentrification. The latter are people from Latin America, Africa, and Asia in search of better living conditions. All in all, although the use of creole to refer to the contemporary world seeks to celebrate and validate hybridity and mixings, it flattens a context-specific term. It is proof that, as Grosfoguel argues, conceptual frameworks' particularity and limitations are to be taken into consideration (2013), otherwise we run the risk of following the imperialist practice of "intellectual extractivism" (Grosfoguel, 2016). In fact, in that context, the use of "creole" would unintentionally celebrate a globalisation system which brings precarity, environmental destruction, and unsustainable living conditions to island spaces. Ultimately, its use could be interpreted as an uncritical celebration of globalization, "appropriated as a free-floating signifier of the border-transcending encounters of globalization" (Sheller, 2003, p. 195).

The concept of "*reterritorialització fragmentària*" (fragmentary reterritorialization), coined by Sebastià Perelló (2010), seems to be a more productive concept to describe Mallorcan cosmopolitanism. This grounded concept stresses both hybrid origins and contemporary times. Perelló argues that this is best seen in Mallorcan literature that both chronicles the transformation of the island and advances future avenues:

> Our focus needs to be directed to what goes unnoticed, we need to carry out an investigation that seeks to highlight what in the context of the paved island is almost imperceptible, but that perseveres, also with tenacity in literature. From the perspective of being archaic, from the inconsistency of being everything that has accumulated, even from the anachronism, but also from the multiplied and diffused space of our mode of being in the decentralised globality (2010, p. 17; translation our own).

Perelló describes fragmented past and present realities that escape easy definitions or parallels. The complex reality of "the paved island," that is, the island that has seen tremendous growth in construction of residential areas and crisscrossing highways due to tourism, is not easily deciphered. Literature persists in its description of an ever-changing reality that, under the mantle of non-stop paving, acknowledges its immemorial mix of origins and hybridity and, at the same time, recognises the current island's positionality as an enlarged and disperse space. In fact, the assimilative and homogenising impositions of an almost forty-year long Fascist dictatorship – strongly connected to the development of the tourist industry on the island, as will be further explained – did not erase the island's own culture and cosmopolitan features. On the contrary, Mallorca's culture and hybrid identities persisted thanks to the islanders' struggle or, in Perelló's words, the island's "constitutive persistence" (2010, p.17; translation our own). Mallorca can now be described into this fragmented reterritorialised space because its cosmopolitan dimension has been enlarged by a great flux of migrants due to the island's becoming one of the largest global vacation spots. Thus, Perelló's "decentralised globality" can be said to also recognise the different influxes and movements on the island both from the Global South and the Global North as a result of global capitalism.

Balearic and Caribbean tourism (hi)stories

The Caribbean and the Balearic archipelago are two of the most tourist dependent regions in the world. Their respective overreliance on tourism and more particularly on extractive forms of mass tourism, which have been credited with "developing" both regions, started in both locations in the mid-20tth century. Their particular historical and social circumstances explain interconnected stories with vast differences.

In the Anglophone Caribbean the development of the tourist industry coincided with the independence of the first colonies (Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago in 1962) and is largely owned, controlled, and managed by foreign multinational companies. As a consequence, not only does the industry maintain the region's dependence on Western investment, but as Patullo argues, the economic model of export-led agriculture, light industry, and a tourism based on foreign investment does not provide for "basic needs provision" for the people (1996, p. 204). The benefits of the industry for small island national economies are very limited. Pantojas García explains that it is

estimated that only between ten and thirty cents of each dollar tourists spend in the Caribbean contributes to the domestic economy (2022, p. 71). The tourist industry is undoubtedly one of the most outstanding manifestations of the permanence of the colonial system and the hospitality business in particular clearly highlights the historical continuity of the old system of exploitation. The extent of the neo-colonial dimension of hospitality businesses is seen, as Strachan explains, in the repurposing of plantation great houses as hotel accommodation (2002, p. 232), which shows a blatant racist disregard to the local people. In fact, the kind of generalised extractive tourism of the region is seen as "the offspring of the plantation economy" (Strachan, 2002, p. 94), and reproduces "the destructive psychology and race and gender dynamics of slavery and colonialism" (Nixon, 2015, p. 14). Moreover, tourist-centred visual and literary representations disseminate a set of western constructions of the region which contribute to the dissolution of independent and diverse expressions of Caribbean identity. As Derek Walcott recognises, "the islands from the shame of necessity sell themselves; this is the seasonal erosion of their identity" (1998, p. 81).

As for the Balearic islands, and focusing on Mallorca, the development of the industry started in the 1950s in the midst of a Fascist regime. It is important to note that in 1936 when the democratically elected Spanish government – the Second Spanish Republic – was overthrown in a military coup, Fascists brutality seized Mallorca from the beginning (Garí Salleras, 2017). All those people associated with the Republic, affiliated with and sympathizers of left-wing parties, trade unions, or even cultural and sport associations were brutally murdered, incarcerated, or put in concentration camps. Thus, tourism developed on an island that had been torn apart some decades before and in which people lived in fear, without many of their fundamental rights. Buades explains that Mallorca's economic transformation from agricultural and small to mid-sized industry to a global mass tourism destination occurred in only two decades. The boom intensified in the 1960s when the island experienced a cycle of unrestrained growth (Buades, 2014, p. 51). Hotel construction in the Balearic Islands – mostly in Mallorca and Eivissa – went through a period of dizzying growth (Murray Mas, 2012, p. 1518).

Writer Antònia Vicens explains that in a terrorised, repressed and controlled Mallorcan society the development of the industry felt like an earthquake: "people go mad, sell the coastline, hotels are built, the youth abandon the land and start serving as waiters, fishermen quit the boat and hire themselves to work at hotels" (cited in Pons & Sureda, 2004, p. 265; translation our own). The industry's explosion utterly and suddenly transformed Mallorcan society as well as its landscape. Unlike the Caribbean, a new class of tourist industry elites, and particularly hotel owners, emerged at the shadow of Franco's dictatorship and with the help of the US due to its interest in Spain's support during the Cold War and the island's strategic location (Buades, 2004, p. 121). This elite class of hotel owners that emerged on the island has retained a great deal of political and social control and different Balearic governments

have submitted to their authority turning the archipelago into a "neoliberal autocracy" (Blázquez, 2014). Tourist-mediated visual and literary portrayals of the archipelago combine generalising images of the tropical island with those of peaceful wellbeing. Within the rhetoric of modernity, Cassano explains, the only acceptable meaning for the Mediterranean is that of "wonderful landscapes; hills of olive trees that flow into the sea; and vacation beaches where the disciplined forces of the industrial polis escape to enjoy their moments of freedom and of sun, and rediscover nature and their bodies" (2012, p. 133).

As acknowledged by scholars and writers alike, mass tourism has a deep impact on host societies and specifically on people's identities and cultures (Colom-Montero, 2019; Picornell, 2010; Strachan, 2002; Vicens, 2004 [cited in Pons & Sureda, 2004]; Walcott, 1998). In particular, tourism has proven to enormously complicate one's relationship with their space. The dramatic landscape transformations caused by the industry's incessant growth impacts one's sense of belonging to a place. Joan Nogué explains that the feeling of being part of a landscape is an essential ingredient to one's sense of place. Thus, the landscape plays a fundamental role not only in the process of creation of identity but also in its preservation and consolidation (2010, p. 127). In this respect, in an anthology in Spanish titled *La geografía al servicio de la vida* (1980), 19th century anarchist geographer Élisée Reclus rightly predicted a future with "insolent architects, paid by shameless hotel owners [that] would build enormous hideouts, rectangular blocks, inscribed with a thousand rectangular-shaped windows, and with a hundred fuming chimneys bulging in front of glaciers, snow-caped mountains, waterfalls or the ocean" (1980, p. 275; translation our own). This precise and prescient description of future models of holiday accommodation, which according to Reclus produces sheer repugnance (1980, p. 275), fits not only the hotels and apartment buildings for tourists, but also the enormous cruise ships that dock in small islands harbours.

The analysis of the following two sections highlights feelings of alienation, immobilisation and even homelessness. The different history and positionality of the two archipelagos explain why the inhospitable nature of the tourist industry is experienced differently in their respective island spaces. 21st century Caribbean and Balearic island spaces share their public institutions' servile or subservient role to either Western companies (Caribbean) or to the economic lobbyists (Mallorca). The governmental overreliance on tourism is at the expense of crucial areas for the development of both regions. Both Mallorcan and Caribbean poets describe the mainstream tourism industry's commitment to a "path of incessant growth" (Fletcher, 2019, p. 532) as unsustainable for the survival of their island spaces. Thus, they question the industry's pro-growth ideology and their servile political classes that support it. Their poetics recognise that, as Sheller argues, "more modernization, better infrastructure, imported outside experts, more 'development'" (2020, p. 146) will not change the disastrous future that the Caribbean seems to be irredeemably directed toward. In a similar light, Cassano challenges the type of 'development'

implemented in the Mediterranean and instead, proposes to rebuild "our shared public properties, those properties that belong to everyone and are vehicles of identity, solidarity, and development" (Cassano, 2012, p. xxxvi).

Bearing all this in mind, this article focuses on common oppressions and the potential of glocal alliances as highlighted in Caribbean and Mallorcan poetics. Antonina Canyelles' poem "Birds" ("*Ocells*") sets the tone for analysis:

> My cage only
> differentiates from yours
> in colour.
>
> Your cage only
> differentiates from mine
> in its colour.
>
> Let us swing each other. (2015, p. 97; translation our own)

Without disregarding each other's cages different colours, the poem recognizes that the "I" and the "you" of the poem experience parallel forms of oppression. Unable to see beyond one's own stifling struggles, Canyelles proposes a collaborative approach that allows for the imagining of alternative paths beyond each respective cage. The poem can be interpreted as a call to find alliances between island spaces. Focusing on tourism, the global scope of local struggles against the tourist industry in island spaces points at the necessity to "forge translocal and global alliances" (Santos et al., 2007, p. xxv). Thus, to challenge the system and find alternatives requires the creation of translocal and glocal alliances which recognise the shared detrimental effects of the industry and propose alternatives.

Inhospitable Monsters

According to Buades, Mallorcans subsidise the permanent expansion of the tourist and residential industry in detriment of their own quality of life (2014, p. 40). Feelings of overcrowding, saturation and having reached a tipping point are very present in contemporary Mallorca. In the poem "On ghost cities" ("*De les ciutats fantasmes*"), Josep Lluís Aguiló questions the tourist industry's pro-growth ideology. The poem describes, in similar terms to Reclus', the sudden arrival of ghost cities "made out of concrete rectangular / blocks, glass and palm trees:"

> lawless,
> insolent and disordered,
> as if they had arrived
> pushed by a storm;
> fruit of the waves; run aground
> in many of its long sandbanks. (2017, p. 212; translation our own)

Their disorganized, undisciplined disposition is described as that of marine debris or jetsam that reaches the shores of the island, or else as a monstrous ship that has run aground on the coast. The storm could metaphorically refer to the industry that fills the island's coastlines with tall concrete rectangular buildings. The poet describes them as "ghost cities" because of the seasonality of the industry in Mallorca. Even though tourism is a year-round activity, Mallorca's cold months see a drastic change in its landscape. Most of the cities built to house tourists become hibernating monstrous creatures during winter:

> Disconnected from the others
> in the Island, wintering dimmed
> like giants or tired dragons.
> They will resuscitate in the summer
> bigger and more fertile each year
> in streets and constructions. (2017, p. 216; translation our own)

Against the mythical configuration of the island as an isolated space, the poem describes these cities as isolated from the rest of the island. These gigantic constructions disregard the world around them and keep the tourists separated and islanders alienated. The poem also highlights the monstrosity of the spaces which lodge tourists as well as that of the industry itself. The seasonal awakening of these tired beasts points to the unsustainability of the industry. In the context of "the paved island" (Perelló, 2010), Antonina Canyelles in an untitled poem—a great majority of the poems in this collection are untitled—ironically hypothesizes on this growth reaching and even covering citizens' feet:

> If your feet get tarred
> and a stop sign painted on them,
> you're screwed, comrade. (2011, p. 205; translation our own)

The poem exemplifies Canyelles' incisive style, the *brevitas* and use of language that slips away ("*llengua escàpola*"), which Perelló describes as most appropriate for irony (2015, p. 126). By imagining a person who literally becomes part of "the paved island" (Perelló, 2010), this concise poem refers to the inescapable and overpowering societal effect of the industry. Getting one's feet tarred could also be interpreted as interplaying with another myth islands have been configured by, that of island statism. Interestingly, Picornell argues that this myth, co-opted by tourism, has been internalised by its own population (2010). In the poem, the incessant construction of roads leaves Mallorcans incapable of movement. The stop sign painted on their feet makes islanders no longer a hindrance for the industry, but part of the infrastructure that allows for its growth. These immobilising infrastructures have been, instead, a source of wealth for the corrupt Mallorcan political classes who have illegally benefited from many industry-related developments. In fact, among the most notorious politicians convicted for their corrupt practices are two of the presidents of the Government of the Balearic Islands: Gabriel Cañellas

(1983-1995) and Jaume Matas (1996-1999), and a president of the Parliament of the Balearic Islands: Maria Antònia Munar (2007-2010). Furthermore, the poem could also be connected to the many mobilisations—notice the vocative "comrade," which aligns the poetic persona with the politically engaged citizen—against pro-growth projects related to infrastructures devised to support the tourist industry as well as against corrupt governments.

In Aguiló's poem, the industry impacts the landscape the way a storm does the coastline. Importantly, the sea, as an integral part of the island's landscape, also shapes one's sense of belonging. Given the dispossessing effect of tourism, in another untitled and concise poem, Canyelles tells the story of the sea:

> As the *jaieta*
> had no seashell,
> she brought an earthenware mug
> close to my ear
> and told me:
>
> Can you hear the sea that left us? (2021, p. 37; translation our own)

Jaieta, a term used to refer to an old woman in the *rondalles* or Mallorcan traditional oral stories, connects the reader to an ancestral—and even magical—past. After the fleeing of the sea, its sound can only be heard through an earthenware mug, which points at the slow destruction of the island. The poem refers to Mallorca's seasonal erosion of identity, to paraphrase Walcott (1998, p. 81), as the sea which records the islands' (hi)stories has abandoned its people. The loss of yet another crucial identity sign is anticipated in another poem where Canyelles imagines a future in which the Catalan language will not be permitted: "The çedilla and the twinned l won't be allowed / Little by little you lose your countenance" (2011, p. 55; translation our own). Tourism is also an agent that has contributed to the drastic decrease in the use of Catalan, the native language of Mallorca. Thus, the cultural traits that distinguish Mallorcan culture risk disappearing either because, as the poet imagines, they flee (sea) or are forbidden (language).

Going back to Aguiló's poem "On ghost cities" ("*De les ciutats fantasmes*"), the final stanza questions the viability of the dynamic as seen by the community:

> In bars they discuss
> whether they are parasites
> wanting to pass as
> symbiotic organisms. (2017, p. 216; translation our own)

People put into question the benefits of this incessant growth that only caters to the tourist industry and disregards the local population. The poem denounces the need to prioritize the citizens and the island's well-being over growth. Even if disguised as a necessary development by the island's servile

or subservient political elites, people have realised that the industry's costs outweigh its benefits. The degree of mistrust towards the island's political class is described in Canyelles' first stanza of the poem "Politician" ("*Polític*"):

> Makes real whorls
> with his tongue.
> Practices spectacular
> verbal pirouettes,
> that always end up
> as palm tree fireworks
> in a nonexistent sky. (2021, p. 21; translation our own)

The political classes' empty promises and their insistence on the tourist industry as the only horizon can only be articulated through discursive pirouettes that seek to embellish a reality that maintains the Mallorcan population dependent on a destructive industry. This embellished reality reserves a privileged position to tourists, as Aguiló describes in "On Foreign Trade" ("*Del comerç exterior*"):

> A *tourist* has carte blanche,
> almost diplomatic immunity,
> to do as they please.
> The only comparable thing to a tourist
> is a demigod incarnate. (2017, p. 82)

Tourists are excused from observing the regulations of the place they visit on their holidays. The monoculture of tourism and the subsequent overreliance on the industry create and allow unlawful *tourists*, who know that they will not be required to answer for their disregard to the island. In fact, the Covid-induced collapse of mass tourism confirmed their diplomatic or demigod status even further. In the summer of 2020, the first German tourists were both received with rounds of applause upon arriving at their hotels and, unlike the local population, exempt from keeping quarantine.

The Return of Inhospitable Monsters

To the shared feeling of alienation, the erosion of identity, and the community's opposition to the incessant growth of the industry found in Mallorcan poetry, Caribbean poetry, due to its different historical circumstances, adds a particular sense of unbelonging. Unlike in the Balearic archipelago, the tourist industry brings back an already familiar sense of displacement in the region that has its roots in the forced uprooting, which, as previously described, explains the creole composition of the Caribbean. In "Heartache is for Lovers, and Other Lies We Tell Ourselves," Richard Georges stresses on the inhospitable nature of the industry for Caribbean people:

> Nobody here is ever quite here enough –
> the tourists adore the unpeopled shores,
> and *the locals*, the locals are unsure. (2019, p. 48)

The neo-plantation nature of the tourist industry is reflected in a déjà vu type of unsettling feeling of unbelonging. In writing "*the locals*" in italics, Georges points to the tourists regained authority of naming reminiscent of the coloniser's Adamic power upon arrival. Moreover, the political status of the British Virgin Islands as a British Overseas Territory might even intensify the type of imperialist attitude tourists display. Tourists' preference for empty paradisiacal backdrops is connected to their occupying a non-space or, in Kamugisha's words, being granted an "extra-territorial citizenship" (2007, p. 29), which, as Aguiló described, gives them a set of privileges or "diplomatic immunity."

Moving on now to cruise ships, one of the means of transportation through which many Western tourists move across the Caribbean, these are presented as gigantic monstrous creatures similar to Aguiló's ghost cities. Cruise ships advertise their superiority to land-based holidays in that they offer a "trouble-free environment" and superior activities and entertainment (Pattullo, 1996, p. 169). Tourists in cruise ships are offered "remote, pacified and private isolation" from "the crowded, demotic and conflictive mainland" (Campling & Colás, 2021, p. 272). These floating hotels intentionally keep tourists even more isolated and islanders more alienated as described in the poem "Paradise" (2012) by Kendell Hippolyte. The poem focuses on the cruise ships' role as a clear contemporary indicator of the economic exploitation, environmental degradation and overall vulnerability experienced in the archipelago. The two opening lines of "Paradise" describe the revelation the poetic persona has when witnessing the arrival of yet another cruise ship: "Every time this tourist ship named Paradise come dock in the harbour / you does realize we never going to make it" (2012, p. 13). The opening lines point at the inability of post-colonial Caribbean island nations to be truly sovereign. It is worth noting that, as clearly seen by the verbal tenses used, the poem highlights the diverse linguistic context of the Anglophone Caribbean. Hippolyte uses Saint Lucian English Creole to validate a language that has not received its due recognition. Even though the discipline of Creole linguistics has long established the different Caribbean island Creoles as full-fledged languages, it is still possible to find academic works on Caribbean Literature in which Creole is either not spotted, described as a misuse of a language, or seen as distorted English (Grau Perejoan, 2016). In a similar fashion to Canyelles' poem "Politician," "Paradise" denounces the Saint Lucian political classes overreliance on tourism. The sight of a gigantic liner (or "limer" as the poet names it to make reference to its idleness and again highlight the native language of the region), higher than any other building in town, docked in the island's harbour represents Saint Lucian governments' unrelenting inability of finding alternative futures for the island beyond the neo-colonial industry of tourism. The exuding pessimism of the two opening lines is connected to Caribbean post-colonial governments'—regardless of their political orientation—economic subjugation and full commitment to Western capitalism:

> And the ambition of each government, whether right or left behind,
> is to build something higher than the smokestacks of this luxury limer
> lounging all day in the harbour (2012, p. 13)

The poem denounces the useless aspirations of post-colonial small island governments that, having internalised the pervasive discourse that defines islands in terms of smallness, seek to compete with gigantic luxurious cruise ships (Grau Perejoan, 2023, p. 144). Tourists or the cruise ship itself are described as indolent and "like an absentee owner, come to make a quick cheque on things" (Hippolyte, 2012, p. 13) stressing the neo-colonial status of Caribbean island-states and the neo-plantation nature of the industry. Thus, "Paradise" denounces the limited benefits that the arrival of the cruise ship and the overall industry report for their island economy. Similarly, the opening lines of the second section of George's poem "At the Waterside" (2017) convey an even intensified sense of pessimism: "The sea is as black as the night, reflecting / nothing but the island's apathy" (2017, p. 61). This apathy might be said to respond to the island's different political status, officially a British Overseas Territory and de facto a colony, because on the island, the poem continues, "the Empire unravels" (2017, p. 61). The nation's even lesser degree of self-government explains an apathy intensified by the impact of the tourist industry:

> This is a rock with no time for her history,
> constructing concrete totems where her cedars groan,
> leaving nothing for the banaquits.
> Crowded marinas spread where the mangroves drown
> filled with reddened wayfarers on catamarans. (2017, p. 60)

Tourism further disavows and erases the island's history and destroys its landscape in order to accommodate "concrete totems," erected for the tourists' use. Thus, the industry has become the religion now professed or else imposed by the "reddened" (re)colonisers. Georges' description of the disregard for the environment and in particular, the destruction of mangroves to build marinas points at the industry's crucial role in the environmental crisis. This neo-colonial enterprise worsens the Caribbean's already destroyed ecosystem in the current geological era of the Plantationocene or Negrocene (Ferdinand, 2019/2022), terms that highlight the historical roots of environmental degradation in the region and prove that "environmental collapse does not impact everyone equally" (Ferdinand, 2019/2022, p. 2). Thus, as the poem foregrounds, the region's colonial past and contemporary (neo-)colonial present explain why the Caribbean is at the forefront of climate change.

In a similar fashion to Canyelles second untitled poem, in which the *jaieta* dispossessed of a seashell is the ancestral voice that conveys the message that the sea had escaped from its people, Hippolyte's poem "Avocado" (2019) narrates

the sudden disappearance of the Caribbean, an entity with sea-like features. The poetic persona chases it all over and fears the hotel managers' involvement in its vanishing:

> There had been rumours of hotel managers trying to hire the sunlight,
> contract the hurricane into a breeze for gently fluttering brochures,
> draw columns of strict profit margins permanently on the sand;
> and the Caribbean sensing the intimation of quick, crab-like hands crawling
> to get underneath the white broderie anglaise of her skirt, withdrew herself
> the way the sea, clenching herself into a tidal wave, withdraws. (2019, pp. 16–17)

The same way the sea retreats, the Caribbean, understood as the common source of island and regional identity, ebbs away from a controlling, abusive tourist industry. In order to highlight the extent to which the industry seeks to exert its authority, hotel managers, in their role as neo-plantation overseers, even aspire to control the weather phenomena for their economic benefit. In addition, the interest solely on economic sustainability, regardless of any ethical concerns, is also illustrated by the attempt at sexual abuse which points at the connection between tourism and sexual exploitation in the region. In fact, sex tourism is an inherent element of the industry since, as Nixon argues, "it is always explicit in advertisements, brochures, and other promotional materials" (2015, p. 17).

Alliances against and alternatives to(hotel) chains

The tourist industry and multinational hotel chains in particular, connect the Caribbean and Balearic archipelagos and highlight historic continuities with their respective colonial and undemocratic pasts. However, their connection is twofold due to Balearic, mostly Mallorcan, hotel chains' movement from an over-saturated Balearic region to different regions in the Global South has been defined as a "recolonization in practice" (Girvan as cited in Kamugisha, 2019, p. 63). Murray, Blázquez, and Amer argue that the Balearic archipelago is both periphery of Europe, in that it is a vacation spot for Central and Northern European popular and middle classes, and at the same time metropolis as explained by the multinational hotel chains (born in the Balearic archipelago) expansion into Global South areas (2010, pp. 321–322).

Balearic hoteliers, as "capitalist elites of the world-system" (Grosfoguel, 2016, p. 3) unabashedly showcase their power globally. In recent times, counterhegemonic politics attempting to question hotel chains' tax exemptions and impose higher taxes as well as generalised complaints over the deterioration of democratic environments due to the development of tourism have proved unsuccessful both in Mallorca and in the Caribbean. This can be clearly seen, for example, with the short-lived Balearic ecotax (2001-2003) and

the first and only visit to Jamaica in February 2009 of the then King of Spain, Juan Carlos de Borbón, to appease a wave of local criticism against the Spanish hotel chains exported practices and politics (Blázquez et al., 2011, pp. 18–19). These episodes are illustrative of the Spanish government's involvement in "ensuring the touristic-hotel reproduction of capital" (Blázquez-Salom et al., 2023, p. 239; translation our own). Thus, it is Mallorca's positionality as an island in the periphery of Europe affected by mass tourism and the neoliberal autocracy imposed by their own hotel owners that allows for the creation of alliances with Caribbean island spaces. Finding alternative tourisms and alternatives to tourism to end with both region's overreliance on the industry can be seen as a common cause for both archipelagos. These alternatives require breaking with the "coloniality of power" (Quijano, 2010) from both Global South and Global North locations and tearing modern chains apart. In this sense, Grosfoguel defends the possibility of a decolonial Europe in relation to the world, and argues that unless struggles are no longer limited to a European space, these are only beneficial to a minority at the expense of the rest of the world (Grosfoguel, 2013).

Mallorcan hotel chain owners have not escaped the incisiveness of Canyelles' poetry. These are at the centre of a brief untitled poem, in which Canyelles, in her habitual ironic tone, describes hoteliers in opposition to poets and musicians:

> The one with the silver
> chain
> is musician and poet.
>
> The one with the hotel
> chain
> is neither musician nor poet. (2018, p. 25; translation our own)

The poem can be interpreted as contraposing the role of poets, who, as argued, possess the vision and sensibility to advance alternatives—and contribute to the political reconfigurations of a place—to that of hotel chain owners. As represented by the silver chain, poets do not aim at economic benefit, but the long-term gain of promoting and investing in 'symbolic capital' (Bourdieu, 1998). Hotel chain owners, instead, as part of the elites that emerged in the midst of a Fascist regime in an industry which is one of the pillars of capitalism, represent the complete opposite. As previously noted, their destructive policy of continuous growth disregards human well-being and environmental sustainability. Hotel chains bring forward a tremendous social impact to both Global North and Global South island spaces, offering precarious jobs, exploiting the local population, and taking advantage of those in vulnerable situations. In expanding their practices beyond the Balearic archipelago, the impact of Mallorcan hotel chains has become even more pernicious as a neo-plantation enterprise. In fact, it is no surprise that, given

their origins and continued practices, Mallorcan hoteliers have, as Blázquez explains, preferred Global South destinations governed by dictatorships (2014).

As argued, tourism can be traced back to a historical context lacking in fundamental rights in Mallorca and reawakens a familiar sense of unbelonging in the Caribbean. In fact, multinational hotel chains can be said to be reminiscent of past chains. Georges' poem "Genealogies" describes what is hidden behind the chains worn nowadays to denounce the persistence of a system of control and abuse that undoubtedly has in multinational hotels one of its most modern paradigmatic manifestations:

> Do not tell me a thing does not do what
> it does – that these chains (now plated in gold)
> are no longer chains, or that from above
> the clouds no longer look like drowned bodies
> washed ashore in the rolling surf. (2019, p. 19)

The poem claims that, even if in disguise ("plated in gold"), the chains that were once lethal, as reflected in the shape of the clouds that resemble enslaved drowned bodies, continue to exist. Chains, which were once connected with enslavement and the lack of physical mobility, have now morphed into foreign-owned monstrous buildings secluded from the rest of the island. The industry as a whole also has the potential of becoming lethal in the long term and brings to the surface Caribbean people's lack of mobility justice. As Sheller argues, in the Caribbean current "mobility regimes [...] have deep historical roots in colonial racial capitalism in the Americas and [...] ongoing connections to the reproduction of vulnerability" (Sheller, 2020, p. 7). As a consequence, Caribbean people's mobility justice is at stake, while Western tourists are free to move and act with complete immunity, as previously argued, through the Caribbean. Thus, the tourist industry does not only reawaken a familiar sense of unbelonging, but also that of immobility.

In the last decades, the tourist industry, no longer able to completely deflect criticism but without relinquishing its pro-growth ideology, has started promoting "sustainable" or "green" growth as its dominant paradigm "via mere technical adjustment, rather than fundamental transformation" (Fletcher, 2019, p. 532). That is, paraphrasing Georges', they too have plated (hotel) chains in gold. As Fletcher further explains, since tourism plays an instrumental role in supporting the global capitalist system as a whole, a fundamental transformation of the industry would actually entail challenging the capitalist system (Fletcher, 2011, p. 447). In order to find alternatives to the capitalist mirage-development the tourist industry is based on, Caribbean practices and experiences, may be used as a model. Due to its rich history of resistance and survival, as Sheller argues, the region "has bequeathed to us powerful reconstruction strategies that can guide us all as we face an uncertain future" (2020, p. 147). In this way, by turning the focus to an island space

in the Global South, the search for alternatives moves beyond Northern epistemologies and proves that islands are sites of innovative conceptualisations with the potential of playing a central position.

Hippolyte's previously mentioned narrative poem "Avocado," similar to Canyelles' poem "Birds," calls for a collective approach to move beyond the chains of global capitalism. Namely, the poem identifies regional communal alternatives that challenge the global capital-driven individualistic paradigm. As previously explained, in "Avocado" the poetic persona searches for "the Caribbean," a sea-like entity that has suddenly disappeared. After much searching, the persona catches its first glimpse in the non-monetary exchange of an avocado at the market and eventually realizes that it is most visible in spaces and amongst peoples connected to resistance:

> And since that glimpse, like a green flash, i've seen her, the Caribbean,
> in unexpected places. Her visitations are a gleam and then a dimming:
> a far hillside district, descendant of a freetown settlement, in the mid-day light;
> or a glint of zink from a house changing half of its root on a Saturday half-day, given to a koudmen, lend-hand, gayap, koumbit, fajina, jollification, maroon, gotong rojong (Hippolyte, 2019, p. 19).

The poet, fulfilling his aforementioned capacity to decipher what lies behind official narratives, is capable of recognising the existence of spaces that are "harder to find now" (Hippolyte, 2019, p. 19), but still exist. Spaces that have been historically connected to rebellion and resistance and showcase the existence of people who perform work collaboratively for the common good of the community as shown by the list of all the different terms used throughout the Caribbean to refer to this reality. These postcapitalist grassroots experiences and practices provide reconstructive strategies that could be applied beyond its geography in the task of finding alternatives that work toward a postcapitalist tourism that "move[s] radically from a private and privatizing activity to one founded in and contributing to the common" (Fletcher, 2019, p. 532). They contribute to the proliferation of alternative tourisms that prioritise communities' wellness and highlight cooperation and solidarity within a community. Ultimately, these prove that global resistance against capitalism allows for the emergence of alternatives to the current "destructive ways of inhabiting the Earth" (Ferdinand, 2019/2022, p. 11).

Conclusions

This article has focused on the potential of establishing a dialogue between the poetics from two archipelagos whose hybrid histories characterise them as creole and fragmentary reterritorialized spaces respectively. In general terms, the poetics analysed have underlined the impact of the tourist industry and have helped to bring to the fore global capitalist dynamics that "produce,

reproduce and increase inequality, marginalization and the exclusion of important sections of the world's population, in the North as well as in the South" (Santos et al., 2007, p. xxv). As privileged sites with the potential to contribute to political reconfigurations, this paper has argued that Mallorcan and Caribbean poetics visibilise the economic, social, political, and cultural effects of the tourist industry. Their poetics question the pro-growth parasitic ideology of the industry, as one of the pillars of global capitalism, and the subservient role of their political classes. What's more, their poetry denounces the inhospitable and neo-plantation—in the case of the Caribbean—nature of tourism with a particular focus on cruise ships and multinational hotel chains that highlight historical continuities in both archipelagos.

Further, Caribbean and Mallorcan poetry makes use of the mythical configurations that traditionally describe island spaces to actually depict the industry and reveals island spaces potentiality to work as "protected space[s] from which to gather force and promote collective empowerment" (Sheller, 2020, p. 152) in order to propose alternatives to tourism oriented to the common good. All in all, the transnational and transarchipelagic dialogue established has proven the need to forge glocal alliances in order to engage with emancipatory cosmopolitan politics to respond to parallel forms of domination and oppression and imagine a future beyond capitalism.

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