

**Stony Brook University  
The Graduate School**

**Doctoral Defense Announcement**

**Abstract**

"Barcelona múltiple: transformaciones urbanas, ciudadanos, visitantes e inmigrantes. De 'ciudad condal' vencida a urbe postolímpica"

by

Natalia Núñez Bargueño

This Dissertation examines how the development of Barcelona, first as an industrial city and then as a spectacular and hi-tech urban center, has been highly influenced by its relationship with visitors and immigrants. The burning of churches in 1835 and the destruction of the city walls in 1854 inaugurated Barcelona's modern existence as a metropolis where urban space is, both symbolically and economically, extremely contested. Although the main battles were about social and economic differences (i.e. between the upper and lower classes), the fact that Barcelona was the capital of the nation of Catalonia, repressed by the Spanish State, made the native population deeply perceptive of cultural differences. As a consequence, socio-economic and political tensions between the locals and the newcomers were often seen in terms of ethnic differences. At the same time, whereas immigrants were portrayed both as a menace to Barcelona's local culture and international image, the arrival of international capital and visitors was highly welcomed.

In this project I analyze novels by Carmen Laforet, Juan Goytisolo, Juan Marsé and Manuel Vázquez Montalbán, as well as a number of films from the 1990s, which use the experience of the immigrant as an stand point from which to express criticism of the city's official model of development and the hegemonic concept of Catalan culture. The tension between "locals" and immigrants, echoed in the city's urban planning, contradicts the internationally acclaimed "Barcelona model," as several critics have demonstrated (McDonogh 1999, Balibrea 2004, Eade 2006). By representing the challenges undergone by the "charnego" (Spanish immigrant, mainly of Andalusian origin) in the 60s, his assimilation to Catalan culture during the transition to democracy, and the arrival of a new type of "charnego," of international origin, in the 1990s, these texts illustrate the continuity of the cultural tension that has divided the city (Vilarós 2003). This Dissertation, thus, charts the way novels and films see the development of Barcelona as an urban center constantly shaped by and against its reception of "outsiders" in the period that spans from the end of the civil war in 1939 to the present.

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