

“STRANGERS IN A STRANGE LAND”: MUTUAL VISIONS OF ANGLO-AMERICANS AND CANARIANS IN THE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURIES

María Isabel González Cruz
María Jesús Vera Cazorla
Universidad de Las Palmas de Gran Canaria

ABSTRACT

The discourse of Otherness is crucial for constructing identity. This paper deals with the role played by the views of the Other in the creation of an image of the Anglo-American as the positive Other in the Canary Islands (Spain), and the emergence of a view of Canarians as the strange natives of an exotic land. After introducing the socio-historical background for these intercultural contacts, we make a brief reference to the way the discourse of Otherness has been used in cultural and literary studies. Then we offer a series of descriptions taken from a selection of English-written publications dealing with the Canaries. Another section is devoted to the Canarian vision of the “ingleses” (English), mainly through the works of two authors, Guerra and Millares Sall. The article is conceived as a broad survey that tries to account both for textual detail and the discursive trends found in the corpus used.

KEY WORDS: Otherness, Canary Islands, Canarian identity, Anglo-American identity.

RESUMEN

El discurso de la otredad es crucial para la construcción de la identidad. Este artículo estudia el papel que juega la visión del otro en la creación de una imagen positiva del angloamericano en las Islas Canarias (España), y la presentación de los canarios como los nativos extraños de un lugar exótico. Tras describir el contexto sociohistórico de los contactos anglocanarios, comentamos brevemente la forma en que se ha usado el discurso de la otredad en los estudios culturales y literarios. A continuación ofrecemos referencias tomadas de una selección de obras en inglés sobre Canarias. La siguiente sección la dedicamos a la visión canaria de los “ingleses,” basándonos en las obras de Guerra y Millares Sall. El trabajo se concibe como un estudio amplio que aborda las evidencias textuales y las tendencias discursivas encontradas en el corpus utilizado.

PALABRAS CLAVE: otredad, Islas Canarias, identidad canaria, identidad angloamericana.



1. INTRODUCTION

Scholarly debates on alterity and otherness, difference, identity and subjectivity have long been taking place within comparative literary theory, comparative literary criticism, and cultural, colonial and postcolonial studies in a variety of languages and cultural contexts (McClintock; Pratt; Said; Young). The Canaries offer a suitable scenario for this type of studies, since foreigners have always been present throughout its history. Among our foreign visitors, those with Anglo-American origin have played an important role. Their customs, investments, architectural notions, speech... have influenced the islands, in general, and contributed to the building of Canarian identity.

After incorporating into the Crown of Castile in 1496, the archipelago soon became a point of socio-cultural and linguistic contact due to its strategic position half way along the maritime commercial Atlantic routes. Despite the islands' dependence on mainland Spain, close commercial links with the Anglo-Saxon world were always strong. Earlier contacts can be traced back to 1519, with the wine trade established between the islanders and English merchants from Bristol. Yet it was after 1880 when a numerous British colony settled in the islands, particularly in the islands of Gran Canaria and Tenerife, two very convenient ports on the routes to West Africa.

The British colony residing here played a significant role in the development of the Canarian economy, and also had a great impact at the socio-cultural and even the linguistic levels. Their initiative resulted in the increase in commerce and the beginning of two essential industries, the export of bananas, tomatoes and potatoes, and tourism, which are still our main economic resources. Besides, the British exerted a great influence on the islanders and many customs and words were adopted, since both groups participated in numerous socio-cultural, sport and charitable activities (González Cruz, *Convivencia* 401-515).

This favoured the image of the British as the prestigious makers of the islands' progress as well as the reference to them as the "ingleses" (meaning "the tourists and residents coming from English-speaking countries") in our folk songs and stories. How these two communities see each other is the main topic of this paper, which is structured as follows. After introducing the article's aims and the context surrounding the Anglo-Canarian contacts throughout history, section 2 outlines some relevant points in the discourses of the Other. Section 3 offers the vision several British and American writers from the 19th and 20th centuries gave of Canarian people. Our concern in section 4 is with the image of the "ingleses" in two popular literary works by two 20th-century Canarian authors. Finally, the paper offers some conclusions about these views of the Other and proposes further work on the validity of these visions for the present.

2. ON THE DISCOURSES OF OTHERNESS

Otherness has become a very prominent concern in contemporary thought. There is a long and very productive tradition within cultural studies dealing with the antinomy “we / the Others.” As Voesterman remarks, discourse on the Otherness of people is based on the contrast alterity/identity, where identity is defined as “the affirmation of who we are by contrasting nearly every element of our way of life with that of others” (221). In Corbey and Leerssen’s words, “the circumscription of cultural identity proceeds by silhouetting it against a contrastive background of Otherness” (vi). These terms, identity and Otherness, often have to do with cultures and are so closely intertwined that one does not go without the other.

The questions “Who are we?” “Who are the Others?” have been posed from different perspectives in an attempt to define those identities that tend to be considered as the norm, and those that are viewed as marginal. In connection with this, we must take into account something obvious that is usually forgotten, as Santaolalla notes: the fact that we all belong to some socio-cultural or ethnic group (11). However, the hegemony traditionally exerted by the white ethnic groups has resulted in a sort of generalised recognition of the whites—particularly of the Anglosaxon group—as the unmarked, neutral or invisible identity, whereas other variously “coloured” identities have undergone a process of categorization and stereotyping. In this sense, Weisz highlights the importance of the exotic subject in literature. It is a literary figure of Otherness, often marked by a token of the strange, the unknown, sometimes being a dangerous character, and Others becoming the source of some mysterious attraction (11).

On the other hand, culture may be viewed as a field of concrete practices which embody and perform differences. These cultural practices go unnoticed by the people who live within a particular cultural framework. It is only when a group’s behaviour is seen from the perspective of outsiders that the remarkable features of that particular culture are identified. This is precisely what happens in travel writing, which involves the authors’ encountering other cultures and clarifying, explaining and justifying those new realities. In those intercultural encounters one inevitably tends to assess Others’ merits and faults by contrasting them with those of our own (González Cruz and González de la Rosa 45-6). Besides, the writers’ attitudes, beliefs, values and ideas are greatly influenced by the culture in which they live or travel. As Mills states, “far from being ‘objective’ descriptions of the way the nation is, these descriptions are largely determined by the socio-historical context within which they are written” (86). Thus, we share her view that travel writing is an “implicit quest for anomaly,” as if the travel writer were searching for something as strange to describe. And yet, [...] this is only because in describing the anomaly the writer is affirming the societal norms of England [...]. One of the striking features in all the descriptions of other countries is that objects are presented only in terms of their *difference* to objects in Britain. And this difference is portrayed as “strange” (89).

When considering Otherness, Petersoo proposes a typology of Others, based on two dyads: external versus internal and negative versus positive, resulting in four



ideal types of Others: internal positive Other, internal negative Other, external positive Other and external negative Other (120). Although the accuracy of Petersoo's typology might be questioned by some authors who have posed its limitations, in general, it can be said that in the Canaries it could be applied rather unproblematically. Thus, while there is not much textual evidence about it, Spaniards can intuitively be considered as the internal negative Other (with their aquiline noses, fricative sounds and superiority pretentiousness, as depicted in many folk stories and songs), whereas the Englishmen are the external positive, despite the existence of some ambivalent views. They could be cheated or laughed at, yet there is admiration and gratitude for this group of outsiders in the islands.

These ideas shape our analysis of the Anglo-American view of Canarians, based on the travel writings commented in section 3 below. They aim at proving that the natives "share widely a set of relatively stable traits of physique and personality, patterns of behaviour and attitudes" (Altenbernd 9). Despite their criticisms, which by no means imply hostile distrust and denigration, we can find admiration for their hospitality, content and simplicity of life, and other universally positive virtues.

For the Canarians' view of the "ingleses" in section 4, we resort to two humorous books whose authors are still very popular in the islands. In both works, but especially in the case of Guerra's stories, humour is used as a device for the construction of Otherness, humanizing the other, bestowing upon him qualities that personalize him. He is no longer a stereotype, but an individual who has his own reasons to behave in a certain way. On the other hand, when characterizing the Other in a humorous ironical way, these writers obviously make fun of the features and habits of the "ingleses," but somehow this can often be interpreted as a sublimated form of embarrassed envy for what their own group lacks.

3. THE ANGLO-AMERICAN VISION OF THE ISLANDERS

There is actually a copious literature on the Canaries written mostly by British, but also some American authors. This bibliography, compiling more than 300 titles since 1583 till the present, constitutes an invaluable legacy which reveals the enormous interest this place has aroused throughout history (González Cruz, *Notas*). Tourist guides and travel accounts show the enormous capacity of observation of their authors. Eager to learn everything about the islanders and their customs, they gave detailed descriptions of almost anything that caught their attention: little wonder that Robertson referred to them as the impertinent, inquisitive visiting-writers.

Although these books include considerable criticism, in many of them the reader can also feel the authors' love and care for the islands. This is the case of Stone, who in the preface to her book admits that "in all I have written, whether it be of virtues or failings, I have been imbued throughout by a kindly feeling towards the inhabitants and a love towards their happy land, the beautiful isles of the Blest"

(x). Likewise, when recounting the various episodes of the Castilian conquest of the islands, she expresses her feelings of admiration for the “Guanches,” the ancient inhabitants, because of the “noble sentiments of valour and generosity” they showed in their behaviour, always treating their Spanish prisoners “according to their usual custom, with gentleness and humanity,” even when their invaders had so often “proved perfidious” (Stone 14-18).

When describing daily life in the islands in those days, there is something that catches everyone’s attention about the place: it is the quietness and the peaceful character of the inhabitants and, particularly, the way they enjoy their lives “in a far better manner than do the people in our hives of industry. They have more playtime [...]. The entire population is inclined for revelry” (Whitford 19). This is justified—Latimer argued—because of the influence of the weather, since as in all warm climates, Canarians almost lived out of doors (146). Similarly, Lee observes how character is largely governed by climate, which explains why the visitor to the Canaries “must not expect to find energy a feature of their inhabitants” (17). In fact, as Brown states, “the climate not only makes the wants fewer, but acts with a sedative effect all round” (c4). In this respect, Murray admitted that “one thing may fairly be said in favour” of the rather gloomy and uninteresting capital of Grand Canary: “Its inhabitants are exceedingly kind and agreeable to strangers” (171). Another item in her list of tropical pleasures is “that of being thoroughly idle.” But the pleasure derived from this idleness was very relative, and some tourists found it rather irritating. This was D’Este’s view about the typical slowness of the native Canarians, which was nothing but exasperating (223).

Most writers seem to agree with Lee, who notes that “indolence is here nature’s first law: *dolce far niente* the aim of life” (17). Likewise, Stone states: “there is a general indolence among the peasants, added to a certain amount of stupidity, which prevents any innovations. A great deal of the stupidity must of course be attributed to an entire want of education” (152). It seems that this want of education together with a strong religious fanaticism pervaded both the mentality and the customs of native Canarians at that time: They were slow to receive an impression and still slower to risk any money by acting on an idea. Partly because of the islanders’ apathy and partly because of the caution or jealousy of the Spanish Government, little had been done to develop industries related to fishery or the extraction of oil, which might have been carried on at a profit (Brown d31-d32). This indolence and apathy also implied carelessness for the island’s natural and historic patrimony and therefore resulted in many cases in the total or partial destruction of places such as the Painted Cave in Gáldar or the Guanche Cemetery in La Isleta, as Stone denounced (184-89).

However, apart from these negative effects, the warm climate also seemed to have a positive side: it produced content, satisfaction and gave a certain *joie de vivre*, which made Canarians quite peaceable and “sober.” Regarding this, Lee notes:

As for licensing laws, they do not exist, for the very excellent reason that they are not wanted. The wine shops are opened and closed at the sweet will of their proprietors. [...] The “drink problem” solves itself. An English resident in Las Palmas



recently declared that in three years he had seen only one drunken man, and he—*proh pudor!*—was a compatriot. (25)

This absence of intoxication, Lee comments, has its corollary in the paucity of crime, since brutality “such as is familiar to us at home” is here unheard of. In those days crime seemed to be unknown in the islands, which also provoked a kind of problem for the Canarian police force, as long as the sturdy guardians of the peace [...] have little occupation beyond passing the time of day with the inhabitants and begging the favour of a light for their cigarettes. For the sake of the police, a little crime is rather to be desired. It would sharpen them up. (25-26)

In Whitford’s opinion, “everybody, old and young, is bent upon amusement” (19). This might explain something that—as Latimer noted—takes but a short time to discover: “it is more acceptable to the Spanish mind to put off for tomorrow rather than do today.” For this reason, she adds, “Mañana-tomorrow has become an appreciated joke among our countrymen” (135). Likewise, Stone stated: “Spaniards are great talkers. If they did more and said less, there would be more chance for the speedy advancement of the islands” (173).

Despite these minor faults, most authors agree that Canarians are remarkably “courteous, hospitable and kind to strangers” (Murray 194). In fact, as Whitford put it: “the high Castilian code of good manners exists in the Canary Islands. Indeed, from the most exalted dignity of the Church to the lowliest beggar of the caves, politeness prevails towards all strangers” (20). While accepting this, it must also be borne in mind that beneath this generalised kindness of the population there was “much ignorance, superstition, and prejudice to combat here” as Barker (13) found in his visit to the Archipelago in 1889. Small wonder, if we just take into account the high percentage of illiteracy among the islanders. In fact, schooling was not compulsory and “there is little or no acquired taste for reading or literature of a higher standard. Typical detail: one will search in vain through the Town for a bookseller” (Foreign Official 81-2). In this respect, Frances Latimer ironically comments: “Spectacles, or glasses of any kind, are not in much requisition among the islanders, who mayhap do not injure their eyes with close study or literary labours” (215).

Throughout the 20th century, the breaking of the two world wars put a curb on the massive influx of visitors but the tourist industry continued developing with one new feature: thanks to the increasing power of the cinema, American tourists started to visit the islands, and several publications dealing with the Archipelago appeared in New York. They were mostly travel books but also fiction. Due to lack of space, we will just comment briefly on three of them.

One is Cronin’s novel, where the characters complain about the people or the place. Thus, we read that Corcoran “deplored the indolence of the natives” (93). Talking about Canarians, another character states: “‘Tis the business instinct. If ye don’t watch out, they’d swindle ye hollow” (94). In reference to Tenerife, another protagonist says: “This place is a sink. Choked and festerin’ with black godless ignorance” (146). Somewhere else we read: “You know, most folks think we’re a primitive society here. Nothing of the sort. We have every amenity. It’s the most charmingly delightful spot you could imagine... Everybody has a good time here” (106).



Likewise, prolific writer Paul Eldridge offers a collection of 25 stories inspired on the islands and their people. A master storyteller, Eldridge presents the Canarios as: “wise and naïve, kindly and cruel, delightful and exasperating.” He launched a fierce attack on the various aspects of their behaviour that he finds unfair, so that the stories manage to give a completely demystified vision of life in the islands. “The Islanders”—he wrote—are “suffering from a perpetual sense of inferiority vis-à-vis the Anglo-Saxons” (85). One of his Canarian characters said: “we are *malos*—bad—*malos*. But only toward one another. Toward the foreigners we are all butter and honey. We smile and bow and scrape, and they say—the Canarios are angels. But toward our own we are” (64). In another tale, another Canarian character meditates: “he, too, rejected the poor and fawned upon the rich. Was this a disease prevalent only among the Canarios, as the Canarios who were contemptuous of one another believed, or a universal epidemic?” (82).

In some of the tales we can identify Eldridge as both the narrator and main character who ironically states:

Oh, how I loved this oasis in the vast desert of the Atlantic—everything about it, its beauty, its even climate, its legends. (...) I even loved the Island’s inconveniences, its insularity, its backwardness. And its people, too, I loved, despite their unreliability, their congenital lying, their infantile moodiness. (98)

More negative comments can be found throughout the text, mainly in the characters’ lips, such as: “You are a flatterer, like all Canarios” (308), or “we Canarios haven’t any initiative [...]. We drag our loads like mules and oxen and go wherever we are driven” (63). Notwithstanding, we must make it clear that the author’s intention and attitude are not negative at all. Rather, his aim is to prove how the islands were far from being a paradise for their inhabitants: As soon as “Ferdinand and Isabella of Castile and Aragon established their permanent sovereignty over all the Canaries, the Fortunate Isles found their name a jest and a mockery” (12).

Finally, American publicist and military Walter recounts his family’s process of adjustment to life in Gran Canaria, where they had run off “for a change of pace” (17). It is only natural that the Walters of Angostura Valley would be somewhat different from the Walters of Haddonfield, New Jersey. Just after renting a villa, Walter writes, “gradually—very gradually—we began getting deliciously *bananafied*,” a local term since in his opinion “Grand Canary is home base for the *bananafied*,” meaning that for Canarians “life is simple, relaxed and serene—quite free of ulcers, hypertension, overtime, shock treatments, rest cures and five o’clock martinis.” He notes how “the banana plant, and therefore the *bananafied* human being, is NOT lazy. He just doesn’t crowd his capacity” (97-98).

The third part of the book, titled “Getting *bananafied*,” describes the Walters’ process of adaptation to life in the island and the contrasts between Americans and Canarians:

While the American flees to the suburbs, the Canario villager—having no car—embraces the sociable congestion of the town. Even our eager search for sunshine



[...] was greeted with quite incomprehension. The sun here—though never intense—was considered something to avoid. (95)

Walter underlines “the friendliness and serene good nature of the valley people” which made them relax more and more, so much so that they didn’t bother to lock their door, as they “trusted all who worked within” (148). They soon realised how “today’s Canarios are a people apart from the visitors from peninsular Spain. They are a happy blend of the serenity, industriousness and trustful directness of the Guanches with the dignity, independence, chivalry and hospitality of the Spanish” (114).

In his final evaluation of the meaning of their Canarian adventure, Walter writes:

The Canarios showed us how to live useful lives without strain. They do not pretend to be something they aren’t. They are morally honest—honest with themselves, their families, their friends. [...] Canarios generally are not preoccupied with perfection in the things they make or service they perform. They are industrious without being exacting. [...] It’s all part, I suppose, of being bananafied, acting oneself, not crowding one’s capacity and living a long contented life. (238-39)

In short, these texts prove the interest the visitors had in the Others, the native Canarians; but this interest is mutual, as we will see below. In Isaac Latimer’s words, “[Spaniards] are as interested in looking at a native Briton as the native Briton is interested in seeing them” (60); likewise, his daughter Frances notes Canarians “are quite as desirous of making acquaintance with our ways as we with theirs” (161).

4. CANARIANS’ VIEW OF ENGLISHNESS

As stated above, foreigners soon became part of the folklore of the islands and their presence was felt in many spheres, including literature. There are many instances of the Other in Canarian writings, like those of Quesada’s and Morales’, two modernist Canarian authors, who made wide reference to the British presence in the islands, both as tourists and permanent residents, representing progress and welfare, but also being partly criticized for their apparent colonial exploitation.

Our study of the image the “English” have in the Canaries will focus on two humorous books, those by Guerra and Millares Sall, this latter also known as Cho-Juáa. Set in the decades after the Spanish Civil War, both works reflect the hardships Canarians had to endure at the time. Nevertheless, the use of humour as a cohesive identity instrument is a key element in these works. As Ziv states:

A cohesive group provides its members with defence from external forces. What is humor’s contribution to group cohesiveness? In the model presented by Martineau (1972) for the social functions of humor, he emphasizes the tasks of humor as raising the morale of group members and as strengthening ties between them. He



also notes that humor contributes to the maintenance of consensus within the group and narrows the social distances between its members. (32)

Similarly, Triandafyllidou notes the Other “serves in overcoming the crisis because it unites the people in front of a common enemy, it reminds them ‘who they are’ and emphasizes that ‘we are different and unique’” (Petersoo 119).

The beauty and humour of the books rely mostly on the language and the tone used, and the way they illustrate the typical Canarian cunning. As we will see in the extracts below, language is a vital tool to create humour and to distinguish the native from the stranger. Likewise, the language of the Others is an important device to identify them, since these authors imitated the sounds and expressions used by our visitors when trying to communicate with Canarian people. Guerra is especially brilliant at reproducing the attempts of many Englishmen to speak Spanish: their difficulties in pronouncing the “r” or the “j” sounds, their changing the gender of certain Spanish nouns, the verb tenses and forms, among other typical problems.

It is difficult to translate humour, especially when it lies mostly in form and, although meanings can be paraphrased, the vocabulary and expressions are lost. Besides, many of the words and expressions used in the two books are also, regrettably, disappearing in the current Spanish of the islands. The media, the national education system in the 1960s and 1970s with teachers from mainland Spain correcting pronunciation and vocabulary, and the lack of prestige of the Canarian dialect have contributed to this fact. It seems characters like Pepe Monagas and Cho-Juáa appeared as a reaction to this situation.

According to González, Cho-Juáa, the main character of *Humor Isleño*, became in the 1960s the symbol of cultural resistance against a world that, with the appearance of television and massive tourism, as well as with the invasion of work force from mainland Spain, was beginning to disappear (430-1). The same could be said of Monagas, who is still considered the quintessence of Canarian identity, the down-to-earth country bumpkin.

Interestingly, Cho-Juáa is also the nickname of the author, Millares Sall, who illustrated *Los cuentos*. When drawing some of their scenes, he used a cartoon very similar to his own Cho-Juáa to depict Pepe Monagas, with the subsequent consequence that for many Canarians Monagas and Cho-Juáa share the same physical appearance: a tall strong man with a belly, who wears a white shirt, black trousers, the typical Canarian hat and a black sash where anyone could see the typical “naife” (from ‘knife’).

Published between 1976 and 1978, *Los cuentos* is a series of short stories, normally with no real beginning or end. The protagonist is a 20th-century picaresque character, who in post-Spanish civil war times does whatever he can to provide for his family. Not famous for his love of work, many Canarians know his aphorism “Todo aquel que trabaja es porque no sirve pa otra cosa” (“Anyone who works is because he is no good for other things”). He sometimes works as a tourist-guide, a folk healer, a carriage driver, among other jobs. In some stories, he undertakes little assignments, usually legal, to get some money. Thus, he is seen painting a house, training the parrot of a cathedral canon to sing “Retosna vinchitore,” sell-



ing brooms he had “borrowed” from a nearby stall. His neighbours call him for help or as a mediator, but especially when there is a party.

In his research on graphic humour in the islands, González states that tourism contributed with a new character, who is generally identified with the British tourist, known as “mister” or “choni” (a popular derivation from the diminutive Johnny)” (445). In fact, foreigners appear in some of Monagas’s stories and Cho-Juáa’s cartoons. Foreigners are basically the “English,” although Guerra distinguishes between English residents and tourists, both groups united as an endless source of money. Opposite to all these outsiders, Pepe Monagas represents the shrewd common Canarian man, some kind of a country bumpkin: witty, mischievous, funny, with a mixture of admiration and greed in his attitude towards the English (Vera Cazorla, “Todo” 265-80).

There are four stories with an English character involved in a funny situation or joke in *Los cuentos*. Their speech is transcribed exactly as it sounds and the image they project is far from negative (Vera Cazorla, “Visión” 311-26). They are the following:

1. “When Pepe Monagas thrashed some *chones* who were boasting,”
2. “When Pepe Monagas did not please a tourist,”
3. “When an Englishman took revenge on Pepe Monagas,”
4. “When Pepe Monagas unblocked the *vate colose* of an Englishman on a Carnival Monday.”

In the first story, Pepe is showing the city to a group of sailors. Half of them are British and the other half American, but they are all “chones.” For hours Pepe takes them to different parts of the city, when an Englishman said that the population of Las Palmas could fit in a London park, or that the statement that San Antonio was the church where Columbus prayed before leaving on his trip to America was a lie and some other comments. While Pepe kept quiet, an American began to talk about New York and said in a difficult Spanish:

Nousogtros en Ameggica tenegmos a unos siroujanos espeialessss... A oun soldgado delg Pacífico le llevó ouna bala de canión una piegna entegra. Oun cirougano amegicano le opuso ouna mecánica y ahoga es el mejor cogedor del moundo. ¡Ooooh! (We Americans have special surgeons. When a cannon ball tore off a soldier’s leg, an American surgeon gave him an artificial one and now he is the best runner in the world. Oooh!)

The Englishman replied:

Ooug, señoggg! Eso nou es nagda. En Inglategra oun mégico inglés pouso a oun soldgado ingles que él había pegdido aun brazo enentegro oun brazo mecánico. Y él volgvió a hasegrr sus cosas togdas del bragso. Y hoy él es el megorr vioulinisgta del moundo... (Oh, sir! That is nothing. An English doctor gave an artificial arm to an English soldier who had lost his. And he went as before. Now he is the best violinist in the world...)

Things got worse and the tourists could not agree on the merits of their countries, until Pepe explained that a boy was working in a well when an explosion injured his chest. Then a doctor from the island took a nannygoat's udder and "grafted" it onto the boy, who is now producing milk without froth.

In the second story, Pepe is driving a carriage. Although he does not understand a word of what a tourist utters, he takes him to different sights in Las Palmas: San Telmo Park, the Cathedral and the like. Once finished, he takes some money out of the wad of cash produced by the tourist. But the latter complains because he thinks it is too much, and looks up in the dictionary the word "fee" in Spanish, which is "tarifa," and shouts "¡Tagifa, tagifa!" aloud. With the noise a crowd gathered around Pepe and the tourist, and a local policeman arrives and asks what the problem is. Quickly, our protagonist tells the policeman that the man wants Pepe to take him to Tafira, a village close to Las Palmas, and that due to the heat and the state of his horse he cannot drive him there, while the poor tourist continues shouting "¡Tagifa, tagifa!"

Another famous anecdote occurs in the third story, with Pepe working as a tourist guide and carriage driver. He sold a Canarian bird to an English sailor; once aboard, the sailor realized the bird was lame and wanted his money back:

¡Simerrrrrrjuensa, ou yes! Mi no quiere comprá uona pagarrita con menos uno sapato... Devuelvi librras, que te devuelvi la pagarrito... (Swine, oh yes! I do not want to buy a bird with less than one shoe. Give me my pounds back... give me my pounds back, I will give you back your bird...).

Guanijai ti tu plei... rezongaba Pepe [...]. ¿Usté pa qué lo quiere? ¿Pa cantá o pa bailá? (Guanijai¹ ti tu plei... grumbled Pepe [...]) What do you want it for, to sing or to dance?. (476).

In the fourth story, Pepe is having fun when he is called to the house of an English resident. The toilet was blocked and after fixing it, he charged the Englishman an excessive amount of money:

Whot?—resolló el mister pegado a la pared [...]. ¿Y disa ousté que yo no tiene nagda que desiiir. Eso es moucho carrísimo, absolutamenti. (What? Complained the mister, leaning on the wall [...]. And you say that I have nothing to say. This is very expensive, absolutely.)

Pepe answers:

Es que usté no se jase cargo, miste, que hoy es lune de Carnaváa y que ésa, dispensando el móo de señalar, era caca inglesa. (You are not aware, mister, that today is Carnival Monday and that, excuse my way of pointing, it was English poo.)

¹ "Guanijai" results from Canarians' pronouncing "One John Haig."



On the other hand, in *Humor isleño* foreigners caught the attention of many Canarians for their appearance, clothes and language, and this could be seen in some of Cho-Juáa's cartoons, when a local policeman scolds a man in shorts, a hat with a flower and a camera: "Don't you know that you cannot walk like that in the street?" The confused tourist says "Mi no comprende" and the policeman answers "¡Aah, sorry. You are a foreigner. Go on, go on."

In another cartoon, a tall couple in bizarre clothes walks along the street while a lady in black tells a friend "¡Ay, Saturninita, Carnivals are coming soon!" and the other replies: "Carnivals? No, my child, don't you see they are tourists?" Besides their eccentric clothes, tourists sometimes behave in amazing ways such as when they get undressed or nearly so on the beach. This happens in another cartoon where an old Canarian woman complains: "I do not know if he is a Swede or a Dane, all I could tell you is that he was naked."

As in Guerra's stories, Cho-Juáa's cartoons also prove how tourists are an attractive source of income. They seem rich and willing enough to spend their "pounds." In a street we find a taxi-driver, a man in black and a foreigner in shorts, a flowered shirt and a map. The taxi-driver asks the man in black: "*Marsialito*, how much could I charge this *choni* to go from the Port to the Cathedral?" and the man answers: "Well, I think twenty "duros." The taxi-driver continues: "How do you say that in English?" And the other replied: "Tell him, uan pon." "And if he wants to go to Tafira?" *Marsialito* answers: "¡Ooh, pon, pon." Finally, the taxi-driver exclaims: "If we go to Mogán,² this is going to sound like a machine gun!"

5. CONCLUSION

The texts examined above seem to record Anglo-American's colonialist stereotypes mainly in their perception and judgements regarding local literacy and, indirectly, civilization standards. We can conclude that the English-writing authors of the 19th and 20th centuries describe native Canarians as a very kind, peaceful and gentle people who know how to enjoy their lives; however, they also appear rather primitive, lazy, ignorant and indolent. In turn, Canarians tend to show admiration and gratitude towards the "ingleses," for the progress they brought with them; but they are also humourously observant and critical with their visitors' appearance and behaviour. All in all, in these ambivalent views of the Other there seem to be more positive than negative aspects.

For the last two centuries the Anglo-Canarian encounters have not stopped, though perhaps their direct impact on Canarian society has somewhat diminished, becoming absorbed into the globalised influence Anglo-Saxon culture is now exerting on the whole planet. Following this line, we ask ourselves what aspects of our typical Canarian identity remain today. Undoubtedly, we have changed dramati-

² Mogán is the farthest village in the southeast of Gran Canaria.

cally but maybe we can still partly recognise ourselves in those descriptions and opinions offered by Anglo-American authors in the past. Further work may also determine whether our impressions about the positive role our English-speaking visitors continue to play are certain and whether they remain being the positive Other we like to have around.

WORKS CITED

- ALTENBERND, Lynn. "The Idea of National Character: Inspiration or Fallacy? *America: Exploration and Travel*. Ed Steven E. Kagel. Ohio: Bowling Green State U Popular P, 1979. 9-17.
- BARKER, Charles. *Two Years in the Canaries*. London: Eyre & Spottiswood, 1917.
- Brown, Alfred Samler. *Madeira and the Canary Islands*. London: Marston, 1910.
- CORBET, Raymond, and Joep LEERSEN. "Studying Alterity: Backgrounds and Perspectives." *Alterity, Identity, Image: Selves and Others in Society and Scholarship*. Ed. Raymond Corbey and Joep Leersen. Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1991. vi-xix.
- CRONIN, Archibald Joseph. *Grand Canary: A Novel*. New York, Grosset & Dunlap, 1933.
- D'ESTE, Margaret. *In the Canaries with a Camera*. London: Methuen, 1909.
- ELDRIDGE, Paul. *Tales of the Fortunate Isles*. New York: Thomas Yoseloff, 1959.
- FOREIGN OFFICIAL. *A Complete Description of the Canary Islands and the Town of Las Palmas*. Miriam's Illustrated Guides. Np: SENS, Printing C. Goret & Co., 1897.
- GONZÁLEZ, Frank. *El humor gráfico en Canarias: apuntes para una historia, 1808-1998*. Las Palmas de Gran Canaria: Cabildo de Gran Canaria, 2003.
- GONZÁLEZ CRUZ, María Isabel. *La convivencia anglocanaria: estudio sociocultural y lingüístico, 1880-1914*. Las Palmas de Gran Canaria: Cabildo Insular de Gran Canaria, 1995.
- . *Notas para una bibliografía inglesa sobre Canarias*. La Laguna: Instituto de Estudios Canarios, 2002.
- GONZÁLEZ CRUZ, Isabel, and Pilar GONZÁLEZ DE LA ROSA. "Dimensions of the Intercultural: British Images of Spain." *Travel Essentials*. Ed. Santiago Henríquez. Las Palmas de Gran Canaria: Chandlon Inn, 1998. 43-61.
- GUERRA, Pancho. *Los cuentos famosos de Pepe Monagas*. Las Palmas de Gran Canaria: Excma. Mancomunidad de Cabildos de Las Palmas/Ayuntamiento de San Bartolomé de Tirajana, 1976.
- LATIMER, Frances. *The English in Canary Isles*. Plymouth: Western Daily Mercury, 1888.
- LATIMER, Isaac. *A Summer Climate in Winter: Notes of a Travel in the Islands of Teneriffe and Grand Canary*. Plymouth: Western Daily Mercury, 1887.
- LEE, Harold. *Madeira and the Canary Islands: A Handbook for Tourists*. Liverpool: Lee and Nightingale, 1887.
- MCCLINTOCK, Anne. *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender, and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest*. Routledge, 1995.
- MILLARES SALL, Eduardo. *Humor isleño*. Las Palmas de Gran Canaria: Imprenta Lezcano, 1961.



- MILLS, Sarah. *Discourses of Difference: An Analysis of Women's Travel Writing and Colonialism*. London: Routledge, 1991.
- MURRAY, Elizabeth. *Sixteen Years of an Artist's Life in Morocco, Spain and Canary Islands*. London: Hurst & Blakett, 1859.
- PETERSOO, Pille. "Reconsidering Otherness: Constructing Estonian Identity." *Nations and Nationalism* 13.1 (2007): 117-133.
- PRATT, Mary Louise. *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation*. London: Routledge, 1992.
- ROBERTON, Ian. *Los curiosos impertinentes*. Madrid: Serbal, 1988.
- SAID, Edward. *Orientalism*. Vintage, 1978.
- SANTAOLALLA, Isabel. *Los "otros": etnicidad y raza en el cine español contemporáneo*. Zaragoza: Prensas Universitarias de Zaragoza, 2005.
- STONE, Olivia. *Teneriffe and Its Six Satellites*. Vol. 1. London: Marcus Ward, 1887.
- YOUNG, Robert J.C. *Postcolonialism: A Historical Introduction*. Wiley-Blackwell, 2001.
- VERA CAZORLA, María Jesús. "Todo aquel que trabaja es porque no sirve pa otra cosa, como dijo mi compadre Pepe Monagas en los famosos cuentos que llevan su nombre." *Ironizar, parodiar, satirizar: estudios sobre el humor y la risa en la lengua, la literatura y la cultura*. Ed. Eduardo Parrilla Sotomayor. Monterrey: Ediciones Eón / Tecnológico de Monterrey, 2009. 265-280.
- "La visión del otro en algunos de los *Cuentos famosos de Pepe Monagas*, de Pancho Guerra." *Lengua, sociedad y cultura: estudios interdisciplinarios*. Ed. María Isabel González Cruz. Las Palmas de Gran Canaria: Universidad de Las Palmas de Gran Canaria / La Caja de Canarias, 2006. 311-326.
- VOESTERMANS, P. "Alterity/Identity: A Deficient Image of Culture." *Alterity, Identity, Image: Selves and Others in Society and Scholarship*. Ed. Raymond Corbey and Joep Leersen. Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1991. 219-249.
- WALTER, Richard. *Canary Island Adventure: A Young Family's Quest for the Simple Life*. New York: E.P. Dutton, 1956.
- WEISZ, Gabriel. *Tinta del exotismo: literatura de la otredad*. México: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2007.
- WHITFORD, John. *The Canary Islands as a Winter Resort*. London: Edward Stanford, 1890.
- ZIV, Avner. *Personality and Sense of Humor*. New York: Springer, 1984.

