

# **SOUVENIRS AND TERRITORIAL REPRESENTATIONS:**

## **A CASE STUDY IN SANTIAGO DE COMPOSTELA**

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**ABSTRACT:** The design and commercialisation of souvenirs and merchandising associated with tourist destinations has evolved to an extraordinary extent in recent years. By interpreting them as graphic representations of tourist space it becomes possible to identify the main territorial attributes linked to their image, through the simplification and symbolisation of the territory with a commercial purpose based on stereotypes. Their purchase by tourists is material proof of having visited or stayed in a certain place, used as a memento or as representative part of the territory itself. This reality makes them an attractive product for businesses in areas with a high throughput of visitors and tourists, such as airports, tourist offices, historical city centres or shopping streets. A burgeoning economic activity that receives a certain amount of criticism in the face of the progressive trivialisation of certain tourist destinations, it nevertheless represents a significant source of income for small shops. This confrontation between economic interests and destination quality will serve as the starting point for an in-depth discussion of the appropriate use and commercialisation of souvenirs, which are interpreted as elements of territorial representation. **Keywords:** souvenirs, territory, image, stereotypes, Santiago de Compostela.

**RESUMEN:** La concepción y comercialización de recuerdos y merchandising asociados a destinos turísticos tiene evolucionado de forma extraordinaria en los últimos años. Interpretándolos como representaciones gráficas del espacio turístico se vuelve posible identificar los principales atributos territoriales relacionados con su imagen, a través de la simplificación y simbolización del territorio, con una finalidad comercial basada en estereotipos. Su compra por los turistas es la prueba material de que visitó o de que se quedó en un determinado lugar, utilizados como parte del recuerdo o como algo representativo del propio territorio. Esta realidad vuelve estos productos atractivos para empresas en áreas con una alta de transferencia de visitantes y turistas, como aeropuertos, puestos de turismo, centros de ciudades históricas o calles comerciales. Actividad económica creciente, recibió algunas críticas frente a la trivialidad progresiva de ciertos destinos turísticos, no deja de representar una importante fuente de rendimiento para pequeñas tiendas. Este confronto entre intereses económicos y la cualidad del destino servirá de punto de partida para una discusión profundizada del uso adecuado y comercialización de recuerdos, que son interpretados como elementos de representación territorial. **Palabras-clave:** recuerdos, territorio de imágenes, estereotipos, Santiago de Compostela.

**RESUMO:** A conceção e comercialização de souvenirs e merchandising associados a destinos turísticos tem evoluído de uma forma extraordinária nos últimos anos. Interpretando-os como representações gráficas do espaço turístico torna-se possível identificar os principais atributos territoriais ligados à sua imagem, através da simplificação e simbolização do território, com uma finalidade comercial baseada em estereótipos. A sua compra pelos turistas é a prova material de ter visitado ou ter ficado num determinado lugar, utilizados como parte da lembrança ou como algo representativo do próprio território. Esta realidade torna estes produtos atraentes para empresas em áreas com uma alta taxa de transferência de visitantes e turistas, como aeroportos, postos de turismo, centros de cidades históricas ou ruas comerciais. Atividade económica crescente, alvo de críticas em face da banalização progressiva de certos destinos turísticos, não deixa de representar uma importante fonte de rendimento para pequenas lojas. Este confronto entre interesses económicos e a qualidade do destino servirá de ponto de partida para uma discussão aprofundada do uso adequado e comercialização de souvenirs, que são interpretados como elementos de representação territorial. **Palavras-chave:** lembranças, território de imagens, estereótipos, Santiago de Compostela.

## INTRODUCTION

The image of a tourist destination is subjective and intangible. We all carry in our own minds a series of attributes we associate with a given place, which may coincide or not with the image that others have of the same place, and even with the reality of the identity of each tourist destination. In this article we will analyse the theoretical process behind the creation of the image of tourist destinations and the existence of territory-related stereotypes and prejudices. How is the tourist image of a territory formed, and how does it evolve? A qualitative analysis has been made to answer this question, focusing on the old city of Santiago de Compostela and using souvenirs as symbolic elements of its tourist image.

There is an obvious relationship between the image of tourist destinations and the iconographic elements of the territory represented in souvenirs and merchandising (Love & Sheldon, 1998; Hashimoto & Telfer, 2007). The development and evolution of tourist activity in Europe from the mid-twentieth century onwards has favoured the explosive growth of commercial activities linked to the sale of souvenirs, gift items and memorabilia. This growth has been evaluated both quantitatively and qualitatively on several occasions (Littrell, 1994), mainly from a negative perspective, but the subject itself has to date been the theme of relatively few studies. The growing proliferation of souvenir shops in the main tourist areas of European cities has been variously related to the trivialisation of tourist destinations, massification, the disappearance of traditional shops and crafts, threats to the elements that constitute a territory's identity and the erosion of brand image due to the promotion of stereotypes and the loss of product quality. This is particularly true when we consider the low prices of the articles that, in the current context of economic crisis, are the most sought-after by shoppers, and thus steadily take the place of traditional goods and shops that offer greater quality at higher prices.

This reality becomes apparent in a half-hour walk through the old streets of Santiago de Compostela, in Galicia (Spain). The number of souvenir shops in the streets surrounding the Cathedral has grown considerably over the last ten years, particularly those selling small items at very low prices. The Way of St James and the city of Santiago itself have experienced significant growth in the number of tourists and visitors they receive throughout the first decade of this twenty-first century (Santomil, 2011). Pilgrims come in greater numbers, particularly in Holy Years, as a result of tradition, the increasing popularity of the Way and the reduced outlay it supposes for a significant proportion of them, who in many cases reach this tourist destination with limited material and financial resources. In a context of economic crisis, which has favoured short-range and low-cost tourism, we have also witnessed an abundance of souvenir shops lining the main tourist arteries of the city's historical quarter.

As residents of Santiago de Compostela, we took a stroll around the city to identify souvenir shops, their location, the items on sale and their relation to the tourist image of Galicia. As well as enabling us to quantify for the first time the number of establishments dedicated to this activity in Santiago de Compostela, it also allowed us to make a qualitative assessment of their wares and the territorial elements represented in each different item. The main purpose of this study is to reflect on the importance of souvenirs as a strategic element with repercussions on the image and quality of tourist destinations.

This is a brief qualitative and quantitative analysis to understand how the sprawl of souvenir shops can have a negative impact on the quality of tourism, the image of the tourist destination and the traditional arts and crafts in Santiago de Compostela.

Also, qualitative methods have been used to identify the relation between souvenirs, the image of the tourist destination and stereotypes in the old city. Then we have applied it to find souvenir shops and their distribution through the most visited streets, trying to recognize the positive or negative repercussion in the local tourism management and planning.

In accordance with this, the first point of the paper shows the meaning, creation and description of the concept "destination image" for tourists. The second point analyses the overdeveloped topics "stereotypes and prejudices", but in this case both aspects are linked with the souvenir industry and the tourist image of the old town, based on the interpretation of souvenir items as territorial stereotypes.

The following case study analyses the closest streets to the Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela, where the local tourism planning identifies the concentration of visitors and also an intense tourist activity. This aspect has been recognized by local planning, like the Tourism Excel-

lence Plan (2001 – 2004) and the Strategic Tourism Plan of Marketing designed in 2003 by the local government.

Finally, the conclusions are organized in two aspects: on the one hand the relationship between souvenirs and tourist image, on the other hand the competence of souvenir shops and traditional arts and crafts shops established in the old town of Santiago de Compostela.

## THE IMAGE OF TOURIST DESTINATIONS

In Echtner and Ritchie's analysis (1991) of the concept of 'destination image', based on prior contributions made by Hunt (1975), Crompton (1979), Pearce (1986) and Phelps (1986), a destination's image was said to be the set of perceptions or impressions of a place to which we are going to travel. A place that has certain tangible or functional attributes that can be measured, e.g. the price of goods, the climate or its natural attractions, amongst others; and which also has a series of intangible or psychological attributes of an abstract nature, such as its fame or reputation and other such aspects associated with its territorial image.

In their study on the strategies used to attract customers and business in Latin America, Philip Kotler, David Gertner, Irving Rein and Donald Haider (2007) define the image of a place as the set of attributes composed of beliefs, ideas and impressions that people have of it. Images commonly represent a simplification of a large number of associations and pieces of information relating to a place. These images are produced by the mind as it attempts to process and frame a great deal of data about a place, and take the form of adjectival constructions (using concepts associated with a space) and symbolic constructions (a selection of elements considered to be characteristic of a space). People thus simplify their mental map of a territory by remembering the whole of it through the agency of a minimum but symbolic part. This is what, for example, enables them to associate Paris with the Eiffel Tower, the Netherlands with tulips, Santiago de Compostela with pilgrims or Andalusia with flamenco music.

Phelps (1986), citing the example of his image of Minorca before and after he visited the island, differentiates between two kinds of image, the 'primary image' and the 'secondary image'. The latter is the one we create before we visit a destination, whilst the former, also known as the 'experiential image', is the one we create after our visit and our personal experiences of a place. The purchase of souvenirs or memorabilia usually takes place towards the end of a visit, so shoppers tend to look for some kind of element or attribute in them that will help them to remember the place they have visited. We thus defend the existence of a direct relationship between the primary or experiential image and souvenir design.

On the other hand, Gunn (1988) considers that the secondary image, prior to visiting a place, is formed from the fusion of an organic image with an induced image. The organic or informal image (Mansfeld, 1992) is taken to be that which originates in non-commercial sources of information such as education, prior knowledge, the opinions of friends and relatives or opinion forums, amongst others. The induced or formal image (Mansfeld, 1992) would be that which is controlled by those responsible for managing a destination for commercial purposes: tourist brochures, travel guides, information provided by travel agencies, tour operators and government tourist departments, as well as by the commercial activity related to the sale of souvenirs. Mansfeld identifies seven stages in the process by means of which the image of a tourist destination is formed:

1. The accumulation of mental images concerning the experiences and knowledge of previous trips.
2. The modification of such images as the result of the acquisition of additional information about the destination.
3. The decision to undertake the trip.
4. The journey to the chosen destination.
5. The stay at the destination.
6. The return journey home.
7. The modification of our images in accordance with our personal experience of the trip.

Stage 1 corresponds to the organic image, stage 2 with the induced image and stage 7 with the experiential image, whilst souvenirs are usually bought during stages 5 and 6 of the image-forming process. It can therefore be shown that this commercial activity can have a direct repercussion on the process, conditioning the experiential image and the reminding message.

In this regard, Fakeye and Crompton (1991) establish a relationship between the organic, induced and experiential images, indicating the kind of message arising from each of them in turn:

1. Organic image = Informative message
2. Induced image = Persuasive message
3. Experiential image = Reminding message

An informative message is one that is acquired as the result of personal knowledge, with no commercial intent. A persuasive message is created, produced, pre-conceived, controlled and manipulated for commercial purposes, as in the case of souvenirs. A reminding or historic message is one that remains in the mind as a consequence of a past event and personal experience. According to Phelps, the organic

and induced images constitute the secondary image, the one we have before visiting a place. The experiential image would therefore correspond to the primary image, post-visit. The souvenir essentially forms part of the reminding image, which confirms its relation to the primary image and also the experimental image, with the goal to recognizing the place through one symbolic or representative element (Santomil, 2011). From the interrelationship between the organic, induced and experiential images there arises a subjective and global image conditioned by all the agents and sources of information referred to above. This subjective image, when applied to a tourist destination, will condition our opinion of the latter and influence our decision as to whether to visit it or not. Hence the importance and power of an image in consumers' decision-making processes. Applied to the tourist industry, it can be said that the image that each of us holds with regard to a given destination will be the main conditioning factor when it comes to spending our time and money on visiting it.

## SOUVENIRS AS TERRITORIAL STEREOTYPES

The American journalist Walter Lippman (1998) used the term 'stereotypes' in the early 20th century (1922) to refer to rigid and irrational preconceptions and false ideals created by society. *'Pictures in our heads'*, as he called them, that form part of our social heritage and constitute veritable attacking and defensive weapons used by human beings to justify their actions through the agency of a distorted reality. The diffusion of these mental images conditions and modifies public opinion, and as a result a direct relationship arises between stereotypes and their repercussion on the latter.

This concept of 'stereotypes', initially attributed to Lippman, was explored many years later by Furnham and Lamb (1986), who considered stereotypes to be oversimplified, rigid and generalised beliefs about groups of people. A stereotype is seen as a defence mechanism against other individuals or groups of people, and its effects vary according to whether we are talking about stereotypers (the people who create a stereotype) or the stereotyped (those who receive it). The former consider themselves to be the ethnic group of reference and mark the latter with a series of adjectives they attempt to insert in society for a particular purpose (Valls, 1992), e.g:

In egocentric self-defence and in order to justify attitudes and beliefs, as occurs during conquests or wars.

- As a means of despising the opponent, as is the case with racist and xenophobic attitudes.
- As an economic weapon, to harm their reputation and reliability.

- As a tool for categorising and creating identity in the face of the need for self-identification and integration in a given social group, etc.
- As a way of discrediting the culture of a given people or ethnic group.

Turner (1987) points out that stereotypes lead to depersonalisation and condemnation in public opinion, thereby leading to the loss of one's own personality in favour of a personality or identity imposed by the stereotyper. He also states that the stereotyping process takes place in three stages, the first of which is the categorisation of what is assumed to be a social group, the second the attribution of a series of identifying norms and traits that stereotype this group, whilst the third occurs when this group assumes these norms and traits as its own and applies them to itself. This process of categorisation and adjectivisation is implicit in all stereotypes and may be either positive or negative, but always directly related to the public image of a given group of people.

In 1981 Sangrador García published an article in which he analysed the stereotypes of the historic nationalities in Spain (Basques, Catalonians and Galicians), referring to the functions and effects of stereotypes in contemporary society. Sangrador accepts the definition put forward by Lippman and considers that stereotypes are beliefs or opinions with a clear purpose: to defend oneself or one's group. He thus takes them to be defence mechanisms based on socially unacceptable desires, drives or feelings that are projected on to other groups so that the stereotyping person or group of people can protect themselves from such groups (Sangrador García, 1981). Furthermore, stereotypes are also adjectives that are attributed to a person or group of people in order to socially label them, regardless of whether their identification as such is true or not. For example, some of the adjectives attributed to Galicians in this study label them as affectionate, lovers of their homeland, honest, hard-working, unaffected, superstitious, hospitable, home-loving, easy-going, timid, religious, traditional, conservative, indecisive and long-suffering, evidence that not all stereotypes are negative. We can thus speak of positive stereotypes that whilst they do not actually discredit, do however label and generalise.

Valls (1992) considers prejudices to be prior judgements in favour of or against something or someone, whilst other authors such as Allport (1963) or Leyens (1994) define prejudice as a negative attitude of a social nature held by one group of people towards another. Is prejudice therefore always negative? If we believe so, we could think of it as a negative stereotype. A prejudice would thus imply the discrediting of and a discriminatory predisposition towards the pre-judged thing

or person, as a result of accepting an affirmation made with no prior knowledge of it. It can thus be understood that prejudice always holds a negative connotation for the pre-judged, whether they be for or against, because there is no real information about the affirmations that have been made and because a subjective opinion has been accepted as if it were an objective one, with the subsequent direct repercussion on the identity of the pre-judged person or thing. Nevertheless, there is a certain degree of flexibility as to such a definition, and prejudices cannot be unreservedly affirmed to always be negative, and we will therefore leave the matter open to debate, with a question mark next to it.

It is understood that the group promoting the prejudice tends to despise and reject the pre-judged person or thing, with an implicit benefit accruing to it that places it in a privileged position vis-à-vis the pre-judged group. This has historically been the case with European nations, and has since spread out as a common characteristic of Western culture, going beyond the perceptions that may exist between two specific countries.

Whether it be with a positive or negative end in view, human beings tend to simplify geographical space and identify it with a small number of elements, that we can take as being territorial icons or symbols. The dissemination of these elements throughout public opinion and their generalisation will condition the use of certain stereotypes and prejudices which, as will be seen below, will also play a role in the process of designing souvenirs and merchandising products.

The literature on the empirical analysis of souvenirs from a geographical standpoint is extremely limited, and concentrated in short articles in specialist journals, amongst which we can highlight those published in *Tourism Geographies* and *Annals of Tourism Research*. Recent publications such as that by Hashimoto and Telfer (2007), or earlier ones such as that by Littrell, Anderson and Brown (1993), amongst other authors from the 1990s, defend the close relationship between the meaning of souvenirs and the geographical elements present in tourist destinations. As positive aspects of the souvenir industry, they point to the creativity and originality of such items and the commercial benefit they bring to the local economy. On the other side of the scale they place negative aspects that relate to the trivialisation and the loss of identity and authenticity of a tourist destination, accompanied by a reduction in product quality and the steady disappearance of local arts and crafts, particularly in places where small-size kitsch souvenirs are sold, many of which reproduce the main positive stereotypes associated with the territory in question. Articles of this kind are deemed to be an inferior copy or cheap reproduction of existing products, created with a pretentious end in view and which in many cases have gone out of fashion and are in bad taste.



The process or action of stereotyping the territory has spread to the design of souvenirs, which use the main elements and attributes of a tourist destination in order to enable them to be identified with a specific place, as part of a geographical space simplification. For example, we only have to think about the red telephone boxes and double-decker buses from London, the Leaning Tower of Pisa, the Cathedral of Santiago, paella, flamenco, bullfights or the siesta, the last four of which in many cases monopolise the set of stereotypes associated with Spain as a tourist destination.

If we bear in mind that tourists or visitors purchase this kind of article either during their stay or just before their homeward journey, it is apparent that a relationship is established with the primary or experiential image, the goal being to seek some kind of identification of the object with their experiences during their stay in the place, one which will transmit the reminding message referred to earlier. In this regard, it can be said that a souvenir tells us more about the tourist than about the destination itself, threatening the cultural identity of the very territory, which can sometimes have little or nothing in common with its territorial reality.

The interpretation of souvenirs as trivial objects associated with tourism has become apparent in certain historic city centres in Europe, which in the last few decades have experienced a proliferation of commercial establishments connected with the merchandising of products of this kind, and more particularly of the smaller, shoddier and cheaper type of article. In this regard, demand for '*kitsch*' articles increases during periods of economic recession, in open contrast with the performance of shops selling craft goods, which are generally more expensive.

We use the word '*kitsch*', interpreted from a negative standpoint, to refer to trivial and outmoded goods, sold as a cheap and simple replica of poor material or aesthetic quality. A factor that has no effect on their commercial success, but which in most cases is associated with products of the worst quality and taste. Nevertheless, items of this kind are commonly found in souvenir shops, to satisfy the needs of those who are looking for a keepsake that is cheap, amusing and representative of the place they have visited.

In order to verify these assertions *in situ*, we took a short walk along the main thoroughfares of the old city of Santiago de Compostela, in the area surrounding the Cathedral and visited by large numbers of pilgrims and tourists, as tourism planning has indicated.

## A WALK PAST SOUVENIR SHOPS IN SANTIAGO DE COMPOSTELA

It is the year 2011, a few months after the Holy Year, or *Xacobeo*, of 2010. The city of Santiago de Compostela has experienced an increase in the number of tourists and visitors it receives, most of them from within Spain. Supply and demand of souvenirs associated with the city and the Way of St James have also risen, and the streets of the old city, particularly those closest to the Cathedral, continue to receive the greatest number of tourists.

The walk chosen to illustrate this case study took place precisely along those streets closest to the Cathedral, being the most visited streets by tourists included into the local tourism planning, beginning in Rúa do Franco, continuing through Praza das Praterías, Rúa do Vilar and Rúa Nova, Praza da Quintana, Acibechería, Praza do Obradoiro and Rúa de San Francisco to end in Avenida de Xoán XXIII, as can be seen on the map below, in which we also indicate the location of souvenir shops, excluding those specifically dedicated to the sale of craft goods and confectionery and catering establishments.

In Rúa do Franco we found 17 souvenir shops, offering a wide range of goods and prices, but focusing particularly on items associated with the Way of St James, the figure of the Apostle himself, the *botafumeiro* or giant incense burner, and religious elements. The same was true of Rúa do Vilar, where we counted 16 shops: between the two streets they occupy 35% of all commercial premises. In Rúa Nova, somewhat further away from the Cathedral, there were 7 shops, 8 in Acibechería and 7 in Rúa de San Francisco, in addition to the stalls set up in Praza do Obradoiro and Xoán XXIII, where there are two or three handcarts selling souvenirs such as pilgrim staffs, bagpipes, scallop shells, hats or replicas of the figure of the Apostle, amongst others. (a sum total of 55 souvenir shops and 2 handcarts), as illustrated in the photographs in Figure 2 below. The most prominent items on display in the souvenir shops themselves were T-shirts, mugs, postcards, key rings, replicas of landmark buildings, magnets, witches, traditional Galician granaries (*bórreos*), Celtic symbols and motifs, rosaries, badges, etc. The identity of the Way of St James is particularly associated with the pilgrim staff (with its scallop shell, Cross of St James and gourd). A yellow arrow, representing the way markers used along the pilgrim route, was a popular decoration for T-shirts, other screen-printed items and a variety of souvenir products. The scallop shell is still the historical souvenir most closely related to the Way of St James, as evidence and proof of a visit to the city and as an element of Jacobean culture. Several studies have already looked at this phenomenon, amongst them one by M.A. Castiñeiras (2007) on its meaning as an insignia of the

pilgrim to the shrine of St James. It has also recently been used by the photographer Xan G. Muras to produce postcards and posters that immortalise the stone scallop shells carved on the facades of historic buildings in Compostela.



**Figure 1: The route followed, indicating the location of souvenir shops.**

*Source: Authors' development*



**Figure 2: Souvenirs of Santiago de Compostela.**

*Source: Authors' development*

We observed that the presence of traditional and historical arts and crafts along these streets, once the province of craftsmen's guilds that lent their name and prestige to many areas of the old city, is now re-

stricted to a handful of shops in Praza de Praterías or Acibechería, occasionally making itself found in other establishments such as restaurants or confectioners' shops where visitors are invited to sample the local speciality, an almond tart known as Tarta de Santiago. The main products on sale tend to be items made of silver and/or jet, as well as other traditional hand-crafted articles such as engravings, sketches or Camariñas lace. They are in strong contrast to the keepsakes on sale in souvenir shops, which even go so far as to offer cheap replicas of hand-produced engravings. This is a source of concern for the traditional shopkeepers, who see that their goods and window displays receive a lot of attention, but sales on the other hand are low. In other words, large numbers of customers enter, look around and admire the products on display, but then leave empty-handed and do their shopping in souvenir shops. They consider this situation to be a form of competition against which they are relatively powerless, and one that adds to the feeling that their shops are relics or museums where people can look, but not touch. Quality and price are the main factors that determine the decisions made by most consumers, who finally opt for small low-cost items. This is the case of the majority of pilgrims, and even more so of day-trippers visiting the city who want to buy something small and cheap to prove they have been there, remind them of their visit and take back to friends and family at home. In this regard, the souvenir shops that have opened in recent years and are increasingly occupying more and more space in the old city have now eclipsed much of the traditional offer of hand-crafted items for tourists and visitors.

Below we indicate the ten most representative souvenir items identified in the shops we visited:

**Table 1: Souvenir items by shop**

ITEM	SHOPS	%
1. Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela	53	96,36
2. The Way of St James	53	96,36
3. The pilgrim staff, gourd and scallop shell bearing the Cross of St James	51	92,73
4. The scallop shell	48	87,27
5. The Botafumeiro, or giant incense burner	44	80
6. The bagpipe	37	67,27
7. Celtic symbols and motifs	26	47,27
8. Crones and witches	19	34,55
9. Stone granaries and wayside crosses	15	27,27
10. Religious symbols (rosaries, crucifixes, figurines, chalices, etc.)	39	70,91

The score shows the souvenir items found in the 55 souvenirs shops that we have visited. A huge amount of items (more than 90%) are linked with the Cathedral, the Way of St James and religious symbols. The presence of other territorial elements is very low.

## CONCLUSIONS

By way of conclusion we summarise some of the topics analysed above, organising them in two major thematic areas:

### *The relationship between souvenirs and tourist destination image:*

1. There is a direct relationship between the primary or experiential image of a tourist destination and souvenir design, since we consider the latter to be elements that form part of the reminding message due to the fact that they were purchased during or at the end of a stay. The experiential image tells us more about the tourist than it does about the destination itself, at times to the extent that tourists' personal experiences are able to modify the image of a place (Santomil, 2011).
2. Stereotypes lead to a progressive loss of a tourist destination's personality and identity in favour of a personality or identity imposed by consumers and/or stereotypers (Turner, 1987).
3. It is our view that souvenirs habitually constitute a materialisation of stereotypes associated with a given tourist destination, and that through them it is possible to identify the main elements and attributes that define its brand image. This image may or may not correspond to the real identity of the destination, which represents a threat to local culture and traditions by imposing consumers' views of territorial identity over the reality, thereby creating an artificial identity. In other words, the idea we have about a place is untrue, and bears little resemblance to reality (Santomil, 2011).

### *Souvenirs vs. traditional arts and crafts:*

1. The case-study carried out in Santiago de Compostela has revealed an upswing in the number of souvenir shops, which are taking over a growing number of commercial premises in the old city and driving out traditional shops selling hand-crafted goods, as local tourism planning has established.

2. Although the items sold in souvenir shops are of worse quality than hand-crafted items they sell for a lower price, thus placing traditional shops in the area at a commercial disadvantage.

3. The catalogue of items on sale in souvenir shops reveals the existence of stereotypes linked to the Way of St James, whilst many of the elements that go to make up the city's image, such as its university, cuisine, fountains and water, stone-paved streets, night-life or the use of the Galician language, amongst others, are absent. This has a direct repercussion on the fact that the city is mainly known for its religious nature, related to the Way of St James and the Cathedral, when in reality it possesses a variety of unique identifying elements that should be showcased to a greater extent (Santomil, 2011).

4. The concentration of tourist and visitor flows along the streets closest to the Cathedral has favoured the appearance of souvenir shops. There is a growing trivialisation of commercial activity in the area, increasingly linked to the sale of poor quality low-cost keepsakes, as the strategic planning of the city has established.

5. It must be recognised that the mass selling of souvenirs is an unsustainable activity that threatens the existence of traditional shops as well as reducing the degree of differentiation and specialisation in the tourist offer. Possible solutions to the steady expansion of souvenir studies have to be analysed, with an emphasis on providing incentives for the revival of traditional arts and crafts and the guild culture that once characterised the streets in the immediate proximity of Santiago de Compostela Cathedral. Any financial support for the promotion and encouragement of hand-crafted goods should go hand-in-hand with the production of items that are competitive, small-sized and of superior quality, based on the history of the guilds, the value added supplied by differentiation and Galicia's own identity.

Finally, we would like to point out that the commercial activity relating to keepsakes or souvenirs should be seen as a strategic pillar of tourist policy. It would thus be advisable to produce a coherent land-use plan and monitor more closely its expansion in the historic districts of our cities. There is a duality between local economic interest and its effect on the image of a place, which can at times prove to be incompatible. The potential short-term benefits of such activity for the local economy are unsustainable and

will have a negative impact in the future, particularly with regard to quality and the disappearance of traditional shops.

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