The image of Spain in Dutch travel writing (1860-1960)
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POSTSCRIPT
View Spain and her inhabitants *en couleur de rose*, and it will go hard if some of that agreeable tint be not reflected on such a judicious observer, for, like a mirror, the Spaniard returns your smile or frown, your courtesy or contumely [...] (Ford 1845: 45).

Apart from the study of the shaping of the image content of hetero-images, the interaction between auto- and hetero-images also merits further research. In Spain, the preoccupation with the foreign image of the country has a long history. Early examples of outraged defenders of Spain’s merits are Pedro de Medina, who wrote *Libro de grandezas y cosas memorables de España* (Book about Great and Memorable Things of Spain) in 1548 and Alfonso García de Matamoros, whose *Pro adserenda Hispanorum eruditione* (In Confirmation of Erudition in Spain) appeared in 1553. And in the beginning of the 17th century Francisco Quevedo wrote his *España defendida* (In Defence of Spain), in which he criticised both the negative stereotypes from abroad and the tendency in his own country to accept and interiorize the foreign image instead of defending the country’s merits. Examples of this defensive and apologetic reaction to negative stereotypes from inside Spain have regularly cropped up until the present day, Juderías’s *La leyenda negra y la verdad histórica* (The Black Legend and the Historic Truth, 1914) being its most famous case in the 20th century.

In recent years, in studies about the image of Spain and the way the country’s history has been described in and outside of the country, a growing amount of attention has been given to the role of the meta-image, the way in which the views of foreigners have influenced the auto-image of the Spaniard. Carmen Iglesias (1998), for example, argues that a study of *la mirada del otro*, the images projected by foreigners, is particularly relevant because, in the course of history, these images have strongly influenced the self-perception of the Spaniards and many of the stereotypes have been ‘interiorized’. It is now generally believed that Spain was not more intensely and more excessively attacked by other countries, but that the negative judgments themselves affected Spain more than any other nation. In his book *España inteligible* (1985) Spanish philosopher Julián Marías looks for the causes of what he calls “the global disqualification” of his country in the rest of the world. While the origin of the Black Legend can be clearly related to Spain’s powerful position at the beginning of modern history, the reactions within the country have undoubtedly strongly contributed to its persistence. Marías distinguishes two damaging reactions in particular: that of the “contaminated”, those who totally accept the veracity of the foreign judgments and that of the “outraged”, those who reject any form of criticism and defend their country without question. In his opinion the problem of the interiorization of foreign images remains unsolved in Spain. The “contaminated”,
those who share the black view of foreigners, according to some critics, not only react to, but sometimes also precede the accusations from abroad and have, more than once, inspired or at least stimulated the negative stereotypes. Famous examples are Fray Bartolomé de las Casas, who criticized the colonial politics of the Spanish crown in his Brevisima relación de la destrucción de las Indias (1552) and Antonio Pérez, secretary to Philip II, who, after having been fired, painted a very black picture of the monarch in his Relaciones which was written and published in England in 1591.

Not only the Black Legend was inspired, or at least fed by the Spaniards themselves; the same is argued about the Romantic image of Spain. Jesús Torrecilla establishes in his book España exótica. La formación de la imagen española moderna (2004), that the Romantic travel writers of the 19th century mainly repeated, enlarged and generalized images that originated in 18th century Spain. He argues that the strong influence of French culture after the Bourbon dynasty ascended the Spanish throne in the early 1700s, produced an anti-French reaction in (part of) the higher classes. Torrecilla calls it an aplebeyamiento (vulgarization) of the aristocracy, who adopted the ways of the lower classes as typically Spanish. While Frenchness was associated with high culture, civilization, sophistication, rationality and moderation, a defensive patriotism created an “originally Spanish” prototype that was unpolished, spontaneous, frank and high-spirited.

However one thinks about who was first and who was influenced by whom, the interaction between hetero and auto-image as well as the preoccupation with la mirada del otro has remained an important topic of debate in Spain until the present day. In 2006 the book La imagen de España y de los españoles en el mundo included an introduction by the then Prime Minister José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero who voiced his concern about the fact that foreign visitors still relied more on what they had read and heard about Spain than on objective and impartial observation.

In 2001 The Real Instituto Elcano was founded, to offer a platform for discussion about Spain’s international relations. The image of Spain abroad is one of the specific areas of investigation in Elcano’s programme. Furthermore, even the Spanish tourist industry, at the beginning of the 21st century, felt the need to get rid of the old slogan “Spain is different”, which was officially sanctioned in the 1960s by the then Minister of Information and Tourism, Manuel Fraga Iribarne. In 2010, the Spanish government launched a publicity campaign with the new tag line “I need Spain”, to promote the country both culturally and touristically in a different way. In the scientific community as well, the image of Spain abroad remains a popular theme. Two random examples of a recent date: Michael Iarocci’s Properties of Modernity (2006) relates the Northern
European idea that Spain did not produce Romanticism to the country’s persistent displacement to the periphery of European modernity. David Miranda Torres’s doctorate thesis *La imagen exterior de España, tal como España la ve* (2010) establishes a relationship between the meta-image of Spain and its economic position in the world.

To find objective answers to the question of the position of Spain within the context of Europe, a combined study of auto-, hetero- and meta-images would be a useful, as an instrument to clarify the raison d’être of a North-South opposition in Europe that does not seem to have lost any of its relevance today.